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December 2020



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It is so good to be back even if it is back to the new normal. Even writing this newspaper brought a different experience after not being able to create a summer edition. I really hope you enjoy reading about what the children have been up to this term.

We have created a new role this year of Wellbeing Mentor and Miss Boyle is now available to help families if you need a bit of advice or support, especially at this time. You can read more about this inside.

As part of the 'Catch Up' curriculum, Year 2 have had to complete the Phonics Assessment they missed in Year 1. Every single child excelled and smashed their personal target. We could not be any more proud of their achievement's. Year 1 will now complete their assessment in the Summer.

Christmas has been full of fun too, COVID friendly of course! Whilst we didn't have a nativity we have had a great singing concert, Santa Dash, parties and crafts.

COVID will make Christmas different this year but please do enjoy the time with your families. All the staff at Discovery Academy wish you a happy and safe Christmas and we look forward to seeing you in the New Year.



day filming If you haven't already checked it out, take a look at our virtual tour on the website! Even if I do say so myself, we really do have a fantastic school we should all be proud of.

We spent the day filming with a crew from Tameside reporter and what an experience. Hearing the children laugh, seeing them smile but more importantly learning lots and achieving great things throughout the day was amazing!



# SCIENCE DAY 2020

On Thursday 22nd October we had report of strange objects appearing in the sky above Discovery Academy. As the next morning dawned it was clear that

something cosmic had happened. As children arrived at school our emergency extra-terrestrial taskforce were on guard as aliens had landed!

Classes were introduced to the friendly but demanding little beings who had left tasks for them all to complete. Throughout the day children took part in activities that ranged from helping our new friends find suitable clothing, build shelters and even help them with alternative ways of getting home.



We were treated to some amazing pieces of writing through the day as well as we help to describe the aliens in Year 1. Document the day with newspaper articles in Year 2 and helped the little Green Purple men to make sense of the moon. The visitors also brought with them some amazing stories to tell from far across distant galaxies. EYFS children found that Aliens really do love underpants! KS1 heard a story about a lost little alien called Beegu who found friendships on the playground whilst KS2 learned that there is no place like space. It really was a fun filled day and after lots of huffing and puffing Mr Hopwood and Mr Evans managed to clear away the wreckage.

But incredibly that's not all. The news of our discovery had reached the home world of our new friends and with the sun beginning to set over the school and half term calling, a rescue ship appeared and collect our brave galactic travellers. They said that if all humans were as caring, kind and as generous as the children of Discovery Academy were, then the future of Earth would be in excellent hands.



#### **WELLBEING DAY 2020**

On the 13<sup>th</sup> November, we celebrated Well-Being Day at Discovery Academy. We encouraged the children to dress in non-uniform with the theme of 'something to make you smile'. The children more than rose to the challenge – even the children who were learning from home

participated! All the teachers were so impressed with the outfits that the children wore, such as unicorns, pyjamas and the amazing use of face paints. The staff at Discovery stepped up to the mark as well with some great outfits including appearances from Mario & Luigi, elves and Wonder Woman!



In their classes, the children took part in a number of different activities, all focused on improving our well-being and giving ourselves time to think and talk. As a school, we improved our physical health by joining in with Joe Wicks at the end of his 24 hours of exercise. Some year groups, went out and played games. It was great to see the way that the children collaborated with each other and made sure that they took turns so everyone could enjoy themselves.





In Key Stage 2, the classes looked at how to meditate effectively and watched some videos on Class Dojo that helped us to relax. They then looked at some 'Thunk Its', which are philosophical questions for children. As staff, we were so impressed with the way the children discussed them and identified the things that are important to them. We finished the day by relaxing and decorating biscuits as we talked about how it is important to treat ourselves and one another.

on our Well-Being Day. Throughout the school, each class raised money for the great cause. We were so thankful for all the donations that we received. We thought that it was fitting that the two days coincide with one another as the day was not just focusing on the well-being of ourselves but also the whole community. As a school, we would like to thank all the families at Discovery for getting on-board with the day and making it really special for the children.







### CHILDREN IN NEED

#### WELLBEING MENTOR

Hi I am Jen Boyle and since September 2020 I have been in a new role of 'Well-being mentor' here at Discovery Academy.



During the afternoons I work with

children and families in the new family room (situated on the ground floor.) The role of well-being mentor is to support the children and the families to be the best they can be.

We work with all children to build positive mental health and wellbeing and support children to recognise and understand their emotions. I run weekly well-being groups with



children and offer a range of different interventions suitable to the child's Individual needs to ensure they are able to thrive in all areas of school life. Our aim is to ensure pupils feel safe, secure and supported, and the extensive support we give to our families and community ensures that the whole child is supported to make the best progress.

As soon as your child starts at Discovery Academy you become part of the Discovery family and everyone here matters to us. We work with a number of outside agencies to offer families support if they require it such as The Food Bank, The School Nurse, Tameside Parenting Group, Tameside Citizen Advice and The Tameside Women and their Families Centre to name a few.

At Discovery Academy the safety and well-being of our children is paramount and we are here to help work together to make sure everybody is healthy and happy.



Take a look at our virtual tour where you can find out more. www.discoveryacademyhyde.org.uk/virtual-tour-2

## PHONICS

Phonics means using letter sounds to help you read words.

The reason phonics is so widely used is that research shows it works! That's why the official school curriculum says that children need to be taught to read using a systematic phonics system.

In pre-school or nursery, before they even start learning letter names and sounds, children begin developing their listening skills so that they are tuned into the different sounds in words.



Then, usually in reception or year one, the letters of the alphabet are introduced in a set order, and children learn one sound for each letter. At that point, they can sound out and read simple, short words like 'c-a-t, cat' and 's-u-n, sun'. Next, children learn that some letters make different sounds when you put them together, like 'sh', 'ee' and 'ai'.

Once they've learned to read words with the most common letter-sound combinations, children move on to learn lots of alternative combinations. They practise reading increasingly complex words. By the time they finish their first year, most children will be well on the way to reading pretty much any familiar word in English! In their second year, children develop their skills still further, practising using phonics to read and spell words that are less familiar and more challenging.

#### Ways to help with phonics at home

- **Speak to the teacher.** Ask how you can highlight phonics and reading outside of class, and share any concerns.
- Listen to your child read daily. If your child stumbles on a word, encourage them to sound it out. But if they still can't get it, provide the word so they don't get discouraged.
- **Boost comprehension.** Ask questions like, "What do you think will happen next?" or "What did he mean by that?"

**Revisit familiar books.** It's okay if your child wants to re-read favourite books from earlier years. In fact, it's actually beneficial!

- **Read aloud.** Choose books on topics that excite your child and read using different voices for each character.
- **Spread the joy.** Show your child how much you value reading by having plenty of books and magazines around the house. You'll teach phonics as well as cultivate a lifelong love of reading.

#### If your child is struggling with phonics

- Keep reading to them it's especially important to do this if they're struggling a bit with their own reading! By picking stories and non-fiction books that appeal to their interests, you'll be continuing to show them that reading can be fun and worthwhile.
- As ever, keep reading sessions short and focused, and stop if your child is tired or fed up. A short, happy reading session is so much better than a long, difficult one!
- Look for books on topics that really excite them, and don't be afraid to let them read a book that looks 'too easy' or 'too difficult' for them. Any reading practice is good reading practice and if your child is enjoying the book, they will want to put their skills into action.
- Gently encourage your child to practise their reading skills in real-life situations.



#### **Useful websites**

Here are a few suggested website that you may find useful.

www.phonicsplay.co.uk

www.readingeggs.co.uk

www.phonicsbloom.co.uk

https://www.youtube.com/jollyphonics

#### MANCHESTER CITY PE LESSONS

We are very lucky again this year as a school to be able to continue our lessons with MCFC Coach Jamie for our Nursery and Reception classes. The children thoroughly enjoy these sessions and thrive off all of the great games and ideas Coach Jamie brings to us. So far on our P.E travels we have discovered dinosaurs, transport, jungle animals, the sea, people who help us and Paw Patrol to name a few.

This year started with learning how to run avoiding obstacles, turn taking and working as a team in big and small groups. This has given us stronger relationships in the classroom and has showed us that we can get stronger physical ability with effort and support from our peers.





in sports is.

Our biggest improvement has been with our football skills. We can now throw a small ball to one another and then catch it with two hands. We can kick small and large balls and dribble a small ball around objects. Some of the children have developed particularly great balancing skills too. All children have massively grown in confidence and now know what their own capability

We have achieved skills with Coach Jamie such as determination, persistence, listening to follow instructions and most of all the ability to support each other in defeat. We are excited to see what we will explore next and how much more we can improve in our upcoming lessons.

## AFTER SCHOOL CLUB

In After School Club, we have really adjusted to our new routine. The children have enjoyed helping to make their own snack this term and even liked the cleaning up. We have found ways to play whole group games whilst still remaining in our own bubble. It is nice to see such team spirit and watch everyone being supportive of their friends.

We have made lots of fabulous things, like autumn pictures, Halloween decorations and bonfire pictures. We have made a lovely display of poppies for our window and even used different painting techniques to create a poppy picture. The children enjoyed decorating biscuits and having fun for Children in Need. We have even had the chance to do some extra sports games and dance with our sports coach.

We have also had fun with Christmas crafts and games. This is our favourite time of the year because the children love to make some amazing things for our displays and baubles to hang on the tree.

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### EYFS REVIEW

As Early Years Foundation Stage Lead I have been very impressed with the way that our children have approached all areas of school life this term with big smile on their faces. It's been a busy term and our classrooms have been filled with lots of learning and every day I am delighted with what I see on Twitter and how our children represent our values: Discovering, Inspiring, Caring, Improving and Achieving.



Nursery

All the children have settled in well, made new friends and are working hard to follow the class rules. We have enjoyed the topics, All About Me, Nursery Rhymes, Colours and Christmas.

The children have been working hard in phonics tuning into sounds, listening and remembering them. We have been counting, representing numbers in different ways and linking this to shape, size and measure.



It has been a pleasure to watch the children's confidence and can do attitudes grow during circle time discussions with Ginger Bear. The children have worked particularly hard with their health and self-care and understand the importance of washing their hands.

We have worked hard on re-telling stories this term. The children have particularly enjoyed reading about Elmer the

patchwork elephant and innovating their own version of the story

The children have been very creative and enjoy focused and independent activities. I have been equally impressed with the fantastic home learning and amazing homework the children complete each week. Thank you to all our families for your support.

We have recently been learning about the Christmas story and enjoyed singing Christmas songs. We have talked about why Christmas is important and how this is celebrated.

We are very proud of the progress the children have already made and look forward to new challenges and achievements in the new-year!



### Reception

What a busy and exciting first term we have had in Reception!

Our first topic was 'All about me' and we joined with the rest of the school in exploring this first through the book 'Here we are' by Oliver Jeffers. We enjoyed learning about space and our planet before discovering how we are all unique and important people. We enjoyed learning about our families and our likes and dislikes as well as our body parts and our senses.



Before half term, we enjoyed learning through Traditional Tales. We enjoyed using the areas inside and outside to help us act out stories especially our home corner to act out 'Goldilocks and the 3 Bears' and the climbing frame to act out 'The Billy Goats Gruff.' In our Literacy lessons, we have learnt how to write a card and how to make a poster. We enjoyed putting our posters up around school to warn everyone about the Wolf from Little Red Riding Hood.

This term we have also enjoyed learning about different celebrations and discovering that we sometimes celebrate different occasions and celebrate occasions in different ways. We especially enjoyed learning about Bonfire Night and Christmas, but also enjoyed learning about Diwali, Hanukah and special days such as Remembrance Day and Children in Need.



In our 'Light and Dark' topic, we have enjoyed discovering through science activities. We have learnt about light sources, shadows, nocturnal animals and how lights can help us. We have been learning to predict what might happen and explain our answers clearly.



We have enjoyed our Maths work, especially watching an episode of Numberblocks each week. These videos help us to understand that numbers are everywhere and that there is so much we can count. We have enjoyed discovering the shapes and coins linked to different numbers and learning lots of number facts.

Though this term has been different, we have not let the current situation stop us having fun and making friends.

#### KS1 REVIEW Year 1

It has been a rollercoaster start for the Year 1 class. We met for the first time as a class in September and we have made such massive strides as a team. Both of us want to say a massive thank you to the children and the parents for all of the hard work and support that has gone into making Year 1 the Fantasticos here at Discovery Academy.

In September our classroom burst into life as we welcomed you all back through the doors. In a new look Year 1 class room complete with new teaching team, Mr Hopwood and Mrs Parkinson were impressed with how children settled into the routines and adapted to a different structure within school. It wasn't long before we were seeing fantastic work being produced. In English we looked at a classic story. We chose Goldilocks (Secretly one of Mr Hopwood's favourite stories). We looked at what language is used in these stories and learned about verbs and adjectives. We also looked how to build a story from start to finish before having a go at writing an adapted story for ourselves. Most recently we have



been writing letters. Not just to Santa Claus but also to Mrs Oldham. We want an Australian themed Christmas party so the children thought asking Mrs Oldham was best.



We have covered lots in our Maths lessons as well though! We are recognising numbers up to 20 now in lots of different ways and we can also write these numbers as words and draw them as pictures. Plus we are now able to add and take away with these numbers and these skills are helping us with our reasoning and problem solving (key tools for Year 2 Mr Hopwood always tells us).

In our Science we have looked at Sir Isaac Newton, a man famous for being hit on the head by an apple. We looked at early life for Mr Newton and then learnt about what he was famous for. We loved completing some of the different experiments that he conducted

whilst learning about gravity (Mrs Parkinson even let us throw eggs, twice!).

In History we learned about the struggles and triumphs of Rosa Parks. We discovered how she stood up for what she believed in, didn't give up, and showed huge resilience even when she was prosecuted. We were fascinated how one person could make such an impact. Our Geography topic has been just as exciting as we have been learning about the amazing place that we live. We have learnt lots about some important places in our everyday life as well as finding out what else is out there for us to go and see. We looked at the seas around the UK, the capital cities for each of the four countries as well as some of the brilliant landmarks.

It's been an amazing term and we are really excited to see more of the same in the New Year.

#### Year 2

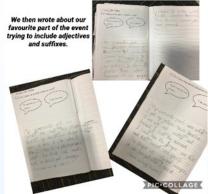
All the children have settled really well into Year 2 this term and their effort and commitment to their work has been commendable. They have enjoyed discovering and learning so many new things from how to spell



some of the Year 2 Common Exception Words to Walter Tull and Albert Einstein to what it is to be a hero and understanding the value of numbers up to 100.



We've had visits from the Queen and the Dragon, completed rescue missions (poor Miss G), re-enacted football matches from the past, been on a trip to India and visited a tropical beach on an island just to mention a few. From these inspiring



experiences the children have written newspaper articles, character descriptions, reviews, setting descriptions and diary entries and have started to improve their written work independently by developing their editing skills.

They have enjoyed using practical apparatus in Maths to explore new concepts and have shown a deep understanding of these through their reasoning and problem solving.

Year 2 have worked super hard and we are proud of all they have achieved this term!



# KS2 REVIEW

#### Year 3

We have been having great fun in Year 3 this half term learning all about the UK. We have been able to make links between our Geography work, English work and DT work.

First we found a strange handbag, filled with expensive looking items which we later found out belonged to the Queen. After that, we received a letter from the Queen thanking us for returning her handbag and asking. Then we wrote a non-chronological report all about the capital city of the UK, London at her Majesty's request. She was so impressed with our drafts that she mentioned it to the Mayor of Manchester, Andy Burnham. He then wrote to us and asked us to try and persuade tourists to visit



Manchester as he is worried about our economy. To say thank you, the Queen sent a little treat of gold coins to us here at Discovery Academy.

In DT our topic was food. We have researched what different foods the UK is known for,



tried a variety of local foods and made a family favourite, Potato Hash with a pie crust. It was hard work slicing, chopping and peeling all the vegetables, then kneading the pastry for the topping! Then we had to evaluate the final product which meant taste testing it! I fully



expect to see Year 3 on MasterChef or Bake Off in the future.

This term has seen many ups and downs due to Covid but the strength and resilience shown by all children, staff and families has really shone through. We have really pulled together to make this Christmas time as safe and special for the children as possible. We started Advent with a wonderful Zoom visit from Reverend Denise which the children really enjoyed. They have also loved performing (at a distance) for their friends in other classes, producing art work for the Believe and Achieve art competition and have even had a virtual visit from the big man himself!

Year 3 have had a great Autumn term and we couldn't be any more proud.

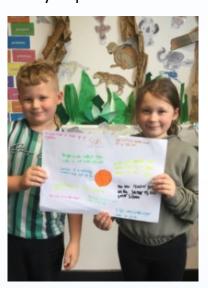
#### Year 4

Year 4 have had a superb first term back! It has been jammed pack with lots of exciting activities as well as learning about a variety of interesting topics. This is just a quick recap of all the fun we have had exploring our subjects!



We began the year by studying the Aborigines in history. Throughout the term we learnt all about how the tribes of Australia developed throughout their 40,000 years on the continent. The children looked at all different parts of the Aboriginal culture: the art that they produce; the spiritual world that they believe in; how a tribe is structured; and how the Aborigines have been treated throughout time. We finished the half-term with our Aboriginal art piece, which were really impressive!

During our second half-term, we have been focusing on the Amazon Rainforest. We have researched just how important the rainforest is to our planet and fully understand now why it is call 'The World's Lungs'. Due to this, we were shocked to find out the damage that is being done through deforestation and we now feel confident in the steps we can take to help to stop this process. Another area that we have looked at is the Amazon River. We could not believe the sheer size of it as well as the amount of water that it is able to carry! Overall, it is fair to say we have learnt lots of mind-blowing facts this term.



Within Maths, Year 4 have explored number and calculation. The children have really concentrated on understanding the value of a number and then how to manipulate it through partitioning. After that, we then began to look at the four calculations. We are so impressed with the way that the children have improved their ability to calculate efficiently. To finish the term, we applied our knowledge through area and perimeter.

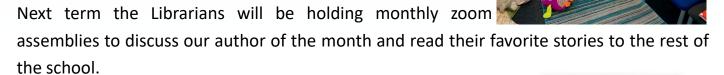
In English, the children have produced excellent pieces of writing. We began by reading lots of creation stories told by the Aborigines. We then adapted these and planned our own creation story around an animal that brought the World into being. Our second major piece in English was a non-chronological report on The Amazon Rainforest. The children researched their own facts and learnt how to structure a piece of non-fiction by using paragraphs effectively.

Great term Year 4!

### LIBRARY

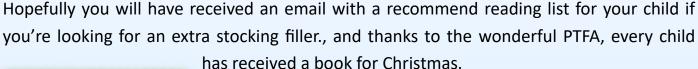


During this year we have had a little extra time to give the Discovery Library a little make over. We have taken extra care to insure it is Covid secure so all children will get the opportunity once a month to visit and borrow a book starting in January. Take a sneak peek at some of the pictures.



This December all classes received an Advent package off the library elves. Each day the whole class have enjoyed a winter or Christmas themed stories. Check out some of the lovely pictures on Twitter @disco library.

Also we have launched Epic reading and it's such a joy to see so many children reading some fantastic books. So this Christmas @disco\_library will be watching to see which class reads the most.





Buddles

# CHRISTMAS 2020

























# CHRISTMAS 2020



























