

Headteacher's Message



Dear Kestrel House Families,

Kestrel House always makes me so proud, and you will see in this newsletter all the fun and exciting learning opportunities and experience your child has been involved in this term.

Unfortunately, we have said goodbye to some of our amazing LSAs for pastures new this term, Giulia, Sonny, Emily, Max, Izzy, Ivana and Rebecca. However, we will be welcoming new staff at the beginning of the summer term.

So now that the clocks have gone forward, we can welcome brighter and warmer weather. This is where even more fun starts. I look forward to seeing you in the summer term, and for those of you who will be sending your child to the Easter Camp on the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th of April, thank you! They will have so much fun.

A huge thank you finally to all of the Kestrel House Team. You continue to be amazing. You have been brilliant and worked incredibly hard this term. Well done!

We look forward to hearing about how the Easter break has been for all our families. School starts back on Monday 15th April as normal.

To everyone, have a wonderful break, and of course, stay safe!

All the best,

Marc

Angel Class

During this term in Literacy, Angel class have been engaging with lots of sensory stories such as the 'From Head to Toe' story, the 'Spring-time Story' and the 'Exploring Fruits' story. These contain different types of sensory input such as music, sound effects and props for them to explore. The learners enjoy reading along with the sentences and anticipating the different parts of the stories.



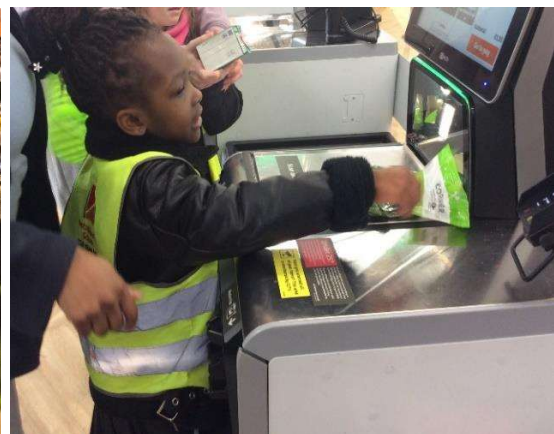
As well as the sensory stories, Angel class have been using the reading corner within the classroom to engage with during calm times and choosing times. The learners enjoy choosing their favourite books and sitting with an adult as they read and look at the pictures. Angel Class also took part in World Book Day this term, everybody really enjoyed getting dressed up as their favourite characters and taking part in lots of reading out loud.



Towards the end of the term, we have been focusing on the 'Easter' theme, with lots of fun and interactive activities to take part in such as an Easter egg hunt, creativity tasks and different baking activities making biscuits and cupcakes. The learners have been able to let their imaginative juices flow by getting involved with messy play, creating artistic Easter eggs and egg baskets. By taking part in Easter egg hunts, this has enabled the learners to hold a sense of autonomy and gratification in an exciting way by independently finding their eggs to add to their personal baskets.

Victoria Class

In Numeracy, Victoria class have explored numbers up to 10. For our 'Ready to Learn' activities the learners helped design their own movement breaks by choosing different exercises/movements and decided how many repetitions there would be, up to 5. During the lessons, the learners have shown interest in participating in activities such as: 'Number Hunt' by looking for numbers around the class or in messy trays, mark-making using different resources, matching door/road numbers around the community, following a shopping list, counting items in the shops, listening to Numeracy songs, using Numicon resources and using/following countdowns during transitions. They also have been offered different games and taking turns activities.



Pimlico Class



Pimlico class have had a brilliant term and have done particularly excellent work in numeracy! We have been choosing from a variety of different activities and working hard to learn new numeracy skills. We have been matching numbers with amounts, adding and subtracting up to 20, learning the 2,3,5, and 10 multiplication tables, and tracing numbers with pens and in sensory trays. We have also been integrating numeracy into other lessons, particularly life skills and trips to the shops. Well done Pimlico!!

Westminster Class

Our topic this term has centred around 'springtime' and the seasonal changes seen around us. Our sensory story was 'From Head to Toe' which has been amazing to explore space using our bodies. We also loved creating arts and crafts about the animals in the story. Maths topics are presented through our Numeracy-based Attention Autism sessions and carousel sessions. Learners have shown increased engagement with activities at their own pace and have been able to access the classroom environment sharing with peers. We celebrated Valentine's Day by: decorating cards using fingerprints, paint brushes, or other sensory material such as paper hearts and cotton wool.



Paddington Class

Paddington Class have had a great Spring term; we've been doing lots of new and exciting learning and really building on our independence and developing our life skills. We've been exploring the community and are looking forward to venturing out more in the Summer term. We've been enjoying weekly cooking sessions as a class and will have our Paddington class cookbook ready to send home at the end of the school year, with lots of yummy recipes. We've all been working really hard this term and have produced some great work. We're looking forward to what's in store next term!



We've been exploring lots of different topics in Numeracy, such as: money, number recognition, sequencing, matching, addition and subtraction. We've had fun playing shop in class and using actual money when we go shopping. We've been exploring quantities and practicing addition sums up to 20. We have engaged well in all of the activities and are showing a good understanding of what we are learning.



In Literacy we are continuing to develop our phonics, practise our writing and typing and have really enjoyed our class story 'Goodnight Everyone' featuring different animals getting ready to go to sleep in the forest. We have done lots of activities based on this story.



We have been doing lots of hands on and sensory based activities in Science and focusing on a range of topics such as: the five senses, colours, material, and textures and animals.

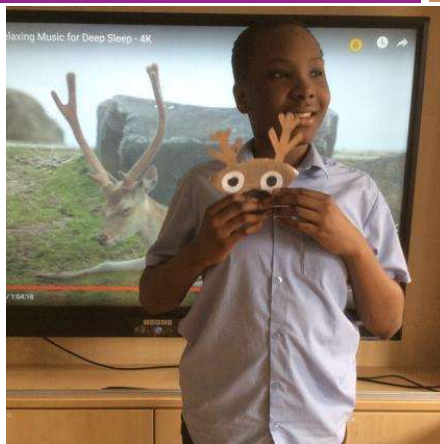


We've been very busy learning about lots of different holidays and events and creating wonderful art pieces based on them. We've learnt about and celebrated Valentine's Day, World Book Day, Ghanaian Independence Day, World Oral Day, lots of birthdays and loads of other national holidays.



Hampstead Class

Hampstead have enjoyed classes this term which have revolved around the 4 animals they have met during the story read as part of topic learning. The story is called Goodnight Everyone by Chris Haughton featuring mice, hares, deer and bears all settling down to go to sleep in the forest.



Waterloo Class

This term our theme is 'everything just makes sense'. Waterloo class have been exploring this theme through science our focus has been on the 5 main senses; smell, taste, touch, sight and sound through fun experiments during science lessons. Waterloo class have really enjoyed participating in a range of activities based around the five senses with a particular focus on light and sound. The class have focused on 'sense of the week' with a lot of intention they really enjoyed taking part in practical activities such as blindfolded taste test, smell tests and sound bingo which enabled them to really get their guessing hats on and have fun making estimations based on the information that they have been provided. Our learners recorded their guesses through different types of methods, spoken to an adult, written down on widget (communication software).

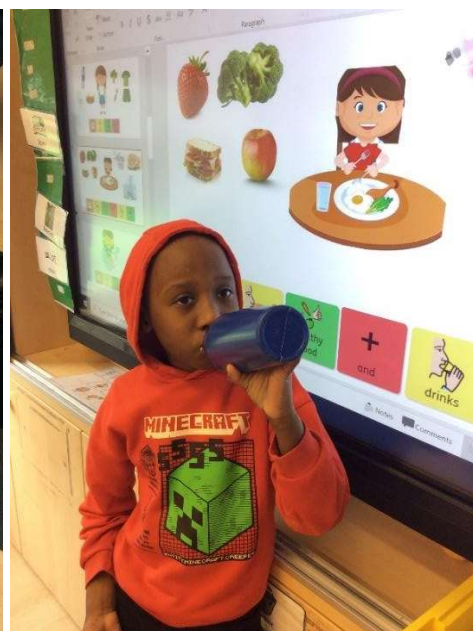


PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic education)

Angel class we had gone out on a lot of community walks; we are learning how to cross the road and how to feel secure in the community. We have been on short trips on Parkland walk and to Stationers Park. The learners love to climb, exercise and being outside. Angel Class have also been working on brushing teeth using a Social Story to understand the process.

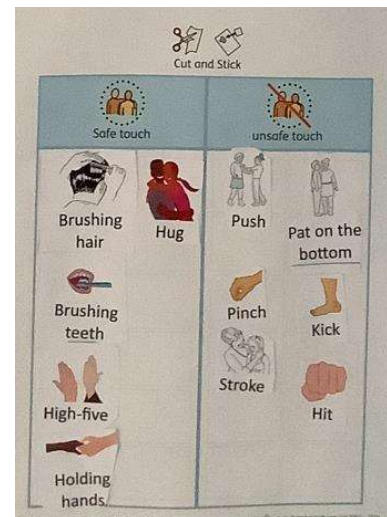


Victoria Class have also been working on independent living skills. They have had particular success exploring and developing personal care skills (toileting), with feeding, and with healthy eating.



RSE (Relationships and Sex education)

This term in RSE, Waterloo Class have been following the NSPCC 'Love Life' programme. It is a programme designed to support children and young People aged 11-25 in understanding feelings, privacy and boundaries, friendship, different kinds of love and online safety. It uses short movies and activities that have been adapted to help encourage our learners understanding of these areas. The learners have enjoyed making posters to demonstrate how different activities make them feel and have also been able to demonstrate an understanding of safe and unsafe touch. A big hit has been the 'Pantosaurus' song, which encourages learners to take autonomy over their bodies and develop an awareness of what is and isn't okay.



Wellbeing Team

This term the Wellbeing team have been busy supporting the learners, their families and staff through trainings, workshops and therapy.

Workshops and Trainings

In January, Molly supported staff to learn about the different types of Alternative and Augmentative Communication (AAC) that exist and how each learner benefits from a different approach.



Catherine also explored different music therapy techniques and approaches with the staff, providing them with the tools to use music therapy in the classroom to support wellbeing and participation. In February and March, Lucy and Molly delivered trainings to staff about 'Sensory Strategies' and 'Intensive Interactions'. Both topics provided staff with practical strategies they can use all day, every day with the learners.

Playground Parties

For another year, the team has continued to host 'playground parties' during the morning break time. By doing so, they have provided fun and structured opportunities for the learners to socialise and play with staff and each other. Playground parties involve music, singing, dancing and games which everyone can access and get involved with. Parties have been run by Klea and Coryn from the team as well as Wayne and India from other classes.



Communication Books

As some of you may be aware, the school has transitioned from using PECS folders to other forms of AAC in line with neurodiversity-affirming practice. This term the staff have been working hard to make lots of personalised communication books containing all the words and phrases that are important to our learners. These usually include people, places, foods, drink and activities. Please do keep an eye out for messages from staff about this and send in any photographs and vocabulary you would also like to be included!

Kestrel Family Nest

The Wellbeing Team at Kestrel House School, as well as our Family Liaison, hosted the second Kestrel Family Nest – Morning coffee. The team was excited to meet many of the parents and provide information, activities as well as answering any queries and offer advice.

The Wellbeing Team is also happy to announce that we will be hosting another coffee morning during summer term, this time discussing how to use visuals to support communication. All parents of Kestrel House School are welcome to join this event on **Friday the 3rd of May**.

Welcome!

Understanding Autism and the Kestrel House Wellbeing Offer

15th March 2024 Kestrel Family Nest

Schedule

- What is autism?
- The KHS Therapy Offer
- The Autism Wheel
- Group Activity
- Yoga



Family Liaison

We have had a very busy spring term here at Kestrel House School.

I have been working with some families directly: by getting support for the home environments, liaising with external agencies to provide support (such as: Social Services, housing and CAMHS), and making contacts within our local communities to provide support for our families.

During our first Kestrel Family Nest meeting back in January, I focused on showing our families what sort of activities we do in school and how we set out our timetables to work with our learners.

The families worked on making some playdough with ingredients that they can find in the kitchen cupboard.



The Wellbeing team have been working with families to help support them with understanding their child's diagnosis and how to help their child communicate their needs via speech and language communication systems that we use in school.



Events

This term we welcomed back Performing Pets and met lots of animals including a wallaby and an owl.



We celebrated bubble week with bubble arts and crafts as well as a visit from a bubble entertainer who put on a bubble party in the playground



... and finally



A massive congratulations to Marco (who is one of our LSAs) and his partner, on the birth of their brand new baby girl. We wish them all the best in this exciting new adventure.



Acorn Education And Care
Options Autism

