Preston Primary
Unit 1 Puffins and Penguins Newsletter
Friday 27th November 2026



Love to Learn | Be a Good Citizen | Ready for Work



Let's Celebrate

This half-term, we have been learning about celebrations and festivals. We have been talking about and answering the following.

1.Understand what a celebration is. Develop an understanding of different cultures and traditions.

2.Why, where, and how do people celebrate? Develop an understanding of similarities and differences.

3.What are my own celebration experiences and that of others? Develop respect for others and own understanding of their beliefs and values.

4.What is the significance of performing a Nativity?

Over the past two weeks we been exploring the celebrations Diwali, birthdays, and Christmas. We have been talking about why, where, and how people celebrate. Developing an understanding of similarities and differences. We used visuals to help us compare the different celebrations. The children noticed some similarities, that most celebrations are usually celebrated with friends and family, and that people celebrate by having special food and visiting special places.



Diwali

Learning about different festivals gives us an understanding of different cultures and traditions. Recently, we have been learning about the celebration of Diwali. Diwali is a festival of lights that celebrates the triumph of light over darkness, good over evil.

We used clay to make our own Diya pots and decorated the classroom with lights. We enjoyed painting our diya pots in bright colours and making rangoli patterns. People draw Rangoli on the floor by the entrance of their homes to welcome the gods and bring good luck. We created our own Rangoli patterns using chalk.









We are currently focusing on the significance of performing a Nativity. The children have been busy practising their words and songs; they are very excited about being on stage. We will send home your child's line for the nativity today. You are not required to provide a costume – we have all the costumes in school. If we need anything extra, we will let you know on an individual basis.

We would like to invite you into school on **Tuesday 8th December at 9:30am** where the children will perform their Nativity for you. Due to capacity in the hall, we can only accommodate two adults per child.

Trips to St Pauls Church and Preston Community Preschool

Linked to our learning we will be visiting St Pauls Church on **Tuesday 1st December** to talk to Reverend Nathan about the importance of Christmas for Christians. We will have a tour of the church and sing some nativity songs.

Also, on **Monday 7th December** we will be visiting Preston Community Preschool to watch their nativity. This will be a wonderful opportunity for the children to watch a Nativity performance before performing their own. It will also mean that the children who went to the pre-school will get a chance to meet up with old friends and teachers.

We will transport the children in groups on a minibus for both trips. We will be returning in time for lunch, so lunchtime arrangements will be as normal. There is no cost to you for these trips.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to speak to a class teacher.

Remembrance

On 11th November, the children held a two minute silence to remember those who have fought and lost their lives to protect us. We talked about the significance of the poppy and made our own poppies. The children demonstrated Respect and Responsibility.



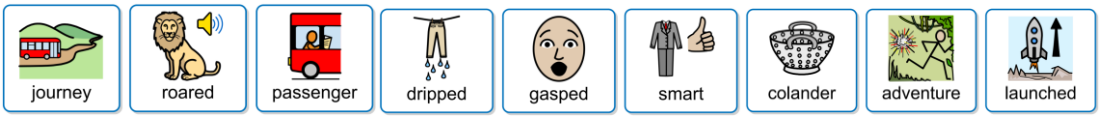






Literacy – Whatever Next!

We have been exploring the story book 'Whatever Next' by Jill Murphy. We began by reading the story and creating a story map. The children then cut out pictures to sequence the story. We learnt new vocabulary linked to the book; journey, adventure, colander, launched, roared, dripped, gasped, passenger, and smart.

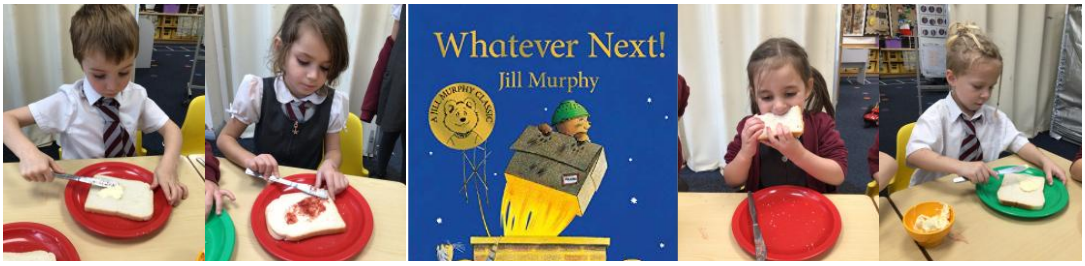


We made the story come to life with props. The children (and adults) have enjoyed using these props during choosing learning.



We have also enjoyed making jam sandwiches so that we could have a picnic on the moon – the children followed the instructions and enjoyed making (and eating!) their tasty snack. We used the vocabulary 'spread' and 'cut'. The children evaluated their sandwiches by deciding if they liked or disliked their sandwich.

The children were also challenged to create models and draw pictures of rockets. We have been impressed by their creativity and determination.



Maths Workshop

This week we held an early years maths workshop, talking to parents about the importance of Number Sense. We discussed the three main areas of number sense; complexities of counting, subitising and composition of number. At the end of the presentation there was an opportunity for the children to take their parents into the classroom to try some of the many wonderful math activities. It was wonderful to see the children so excited to share their mathematical understanding. Thank you to everyone who attended the event. It was wonderful to be able to share our passion for maths with so many families.

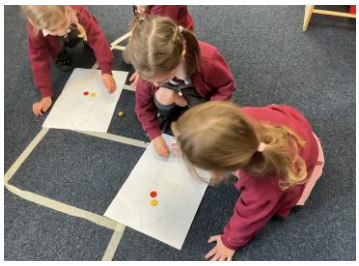
If you were unable to attend the event, we have put a summary of the points at the end of this newsletter. If you would like to know about Number Sense, please come and talk to a class teacher.

Mathematics

In maths we have been exploring subitising in familiar patterns – particularly dice patterns. The children have enjoyed playing dice games together as a class and in pairs. We made a giant board game on the carpet and took it in turns to roll the dice. The children made their own dice games and enjoyed playing in pairs.

Home learning

Play a dice game together and practise subitising the numbers on the dice.






Woodland Camp

In the Woodland Camp, the children have been exploring the signs of Autumn, observing the leaves changing colour and falling from the trees. They enjoyed collecting a variety of fallen leaves, noticing the different shapes, sizes, colours and textures before using them to create beautiful leaf rubbings.

This hands-on learning experience encouraged the children to develop their observational skills, creativity and fine motor skills, whilst developing their understanding of seasonal changes and appreciation of the natural world.





Art – Self Portraits

This week we have been learning about self-portraits and what this means. The children looked at the features of their own face to draw detailed self-portraits. We talked about the shape of features and where they are located on the face. They used the iPads to take photos of their faces to help them draw their own self portrait. The children took great care and were very proud of their achievements. We will post the images on Seesaw soon.







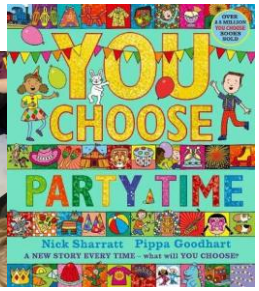
A Virtual Visit from an Author and Illustrator

Recently, Puffins and Penguins enjoyed an exciting virtual author and illustrator session. The children were joined live by Nick Sharratt and Pippa Goodhart, creators of the book '*You Choose Party Time*'. This linked perfectly with our current learning enquiry, 'Celebrations'.

It was a wonderful opportunity for the children to engage with a real-life author and illustrator, discover how stories and illustrations are brought to life and explore their own ideas using their imaginations. They were also able to join Nick Sharratt in a live draw along where he helped the childern to draw a robot and a unicorn.

Experiences like these help to inspire a love of reading, nurture creativity and encourage children to see themselves as future authors and illustrators.



Spreading Christmas Joy in Our Community

This Christmas, we would love every child at Preston Primary to create a Christmas card for someone in our local community. Children are encouraged to get creative, designing their own festive cards and including a thoughtful message or Christmas wish.

As the cards will be delivered to different members of our community, please ensure that the message inside is a general festive greeting that could be received by anyone, rather than being addressed to a specific person. For example, 'Wishing you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year' or 'Sending you happiness and festive cheer this Christmas'.

We will collect the cards and deliver them to members of our local community, helping to spread happiness, kindness and festive cheer. Christmas can be a particularly lonely time for some people, and a handmade card could make a real difference to someone's day.

This is a wonderful opportunity for our children to demonstrate kindness, develop an understanding of the importance of giving to others and make meaningful connections beyond our school gates.

Together, we hope to bring a little Christmas magic to our local community and put a smile on as many faces as possible!

Return cards to school by Tuesday 8th December.






Home Learning for children and parents

- Enjoy the story on Seesaw - read by Mrs Fox
- Play a dice game together and practise subitising the dots on the dice.
- Create a community Christmas card and return it to school by Tuesday 8th December
- Check your child's book bag or Seesaw for phonics activities and reading to complete at home.

Important Dates for your Diary

Tuesday 1st December – Foundation Visit St Pauls Church

Wednesday 2nd December – Christmas Jumper Swap

Friday 4th December – Non- Uniform Day and FOPPS Christmas Market. (Bring a bottle for the Tombola stall)

Monday 7th December – Visit Preston Community Preschool to watch a nativity

Tuesday 8th December – Foundation Nativity at 9.30am in the school hall

Thursday 10th December – FOPPS Elfridges shop – bring £1 - £2 to spend in the shop.

Monday 14th December – Foundation Rock Up and Read 2.50pm – more details to follow

Wednesday 16th December – Christmas Lunch in School (children can wear usual school uniform with Christmas tops/jumpers, if they wish). Please order on Arbor.

Friday 18th December - Last day of Autumn Term – Unit Christmas parties for all children during the school day (children can wear usual school uniform with Christmas tops/jumpers, if they wish)

More information can be found in the 'Dates & Festive Events' e-mail sent from the school office.

Kind Regards Mrs Bastin, Mrs Fox, and the Foundation Stage Team

PRESTON PRIMARY SCHOOL | LOVE TO LEARN

Number Sense in Reception

A guide for parents and carers • Building strong foundations for mathematics

What is number sense?



Number sense is much more than counting or recognising numerals. It is understanding quantities and how numbers relate to each other.

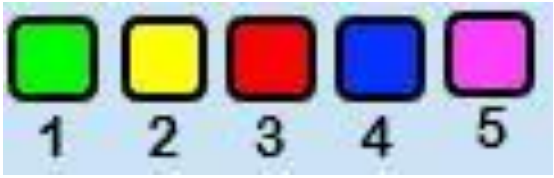
In Reception, children develop number sense through purposeful play, practical experiences and mathematical conversations.

We encourage children to notice patterns, make connections and explain their thinking. This builds confidence, flexibility and independence.

Talk about maths

What do you notice? How do you know? Can you show me another way?

Counting



Counting involves more than reciting numbers i

Stable order – Say number names in the correct order.

One-to-one correspondence – Match one numbe word to each object.

Cardinality – The last number tells us how many altogether.

Conservation – The quantity stays the same wher objects are rearranged.

Abstraction – Anything can be counted, including and movements.

TRY IT AT HOME

Count stairs, toys or claps. Touch or move each object as you count.

Maths is everywhere

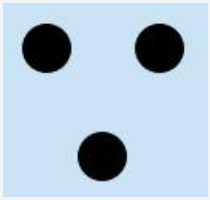
Shopping, cooking, setting the table and going for a walk are all opportunities for mathematical learning.

Questions to ask

What do you notice?
How many can you see?
How do you know?
Can you show me another way?
How many altogether?
What is the same or different?

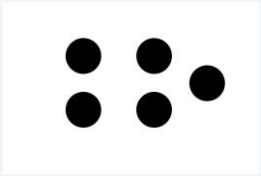
Subitising

Recognising how many there are without counting each object.



Perceptual subitising

Instantly recognising a small quantity. “I can see 3.”



Conceptual subitising

Seeing smaller groups within a larger quantity. “I can see 4 and 1. That makes 5.”

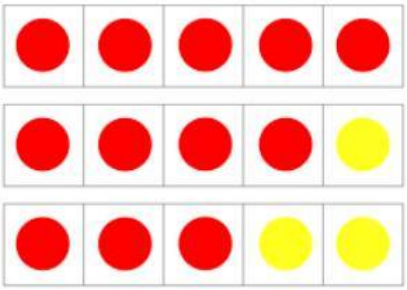
TRY IT AT HOME

Play dice and domino games. Ask: What do you notice? How do you know?

Composition of number



Composition means understanding that a numl can be made up of smaller numbers. We call th the numbers inside a number.



5 can be made from 5 and 0, 4 and 1, or 3 and 2 This builds foundations for addition, subtractio and number bonds.

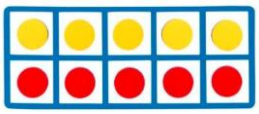
TRY IT AT HOME

Share five objects between two plates.
How many different ways can you make 5?

Mathematical representations



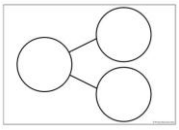
Five frame



Ten frame



Numicon



Part-whole model

Useful websites: www.ncetm.org.uk • www.nrich.maths.org • www.mathsnoproblem.com