



Curriculum Update

Autumn Term



Message from the Acting Principal

The Autumn term has been a wonderful term at Pickhurst Academy. The children, across all four year groups, have learnt about exciting topics such as: Treasure, Myths & Legends, Space & the Universe, the Tudors, Evolution & Inheritance and much more!







I always love visiting the classrooms each day to see the children working hard and enjoying their learning. A particular favourite moment of mine, from the Autumn Term, was visiting 6ST to see their beautiful dragon-eye sculptures, which had been painted with metallic paints. They looked fabulous! It always astonishes me to see the level of talent our children have here at Pickhurst – I am always so proud and excited to see the children excel in the areas they are passionate about, whether that be in their studies, in PE, in art, in drama or on the playground!


The Autumn term saw our children visit the Life Bus, where they enjoyed learning about vital life lessons involving our physical, mental and emotional health. I am sure the children will remember these key lessons forevermore. In addition, Pickhurst opened its brand new library to all the children this term! The PTA from last year worked incredibly hard to make the new library an inspiring and interesting space to enjoy our favourite books. Ms Preston has thoroughly enjoyed leading library clubs during two lunchtimes each week, as well as organising reading sessions once a week for each class. I would like to take this opportunity to, once again, thank the PTA from last year for all their hard work and dedication to making the library what it is now; we are so thankful and proud of the environment you have created for us.

Another highlight for the school, and our Y3 children and staff, was the visit from BBC London News at Christmas time. We were very lucky to have been chosen by the BBC for their news item about our nativity show; it was amazing to see our Y3 children (...and Mr Barret!) on television singing and dancing on stage. Well done to everyone involved, and I would like to thank the Y3 staff for facilitating this wonderful experience for our young, budding actors!

Looking ahead to the Spring term, there are so many new initiatives and ideas to look forward to. Thank you to the parents & carers that took the time to complete our recent school survey, we had over 150 responses! As I stated in my letter, prior to the Christmas break, I am committed to making everyone's time at Pickhurst Academy the best it can be. I am incredibly proud to be the Acting Principal of Pickhurst, and I will always strive to make it the best environment for my pupils and staff.

There were some great suggestions made in the recent parental survey that have been discussed by the Senior Leadership Team, and I would like to take this opportunity to, once again, outline how I plan to further increase communication between school and parents, and provide parents with more opportunities to be more involved with their child's learning, from January 2019:


-  **'Work-Share Wednesdays'** - Every half-term, the school will invite parents to visit their children's classrooms and to say 'hello' to their teachers. It will also be an opportunity for parents to discuss any questions they may have with the staff. Look out for a list of dates in the new year...
-  **Parent Workshops** - The school will offer a selection of workshops for parents to attend across the academic year, ranging from: English, Maths, Science, e-Safety, Behaviour and Special Educational Needs, led by subject leaders & members of the Senior Leadership Team.
-  **Class Dojo** - Pickhurst staff will continue to use this fantastic app to share snapshots of learning with parents more consistently and more often. The expectation will be for each class teacher to post something every day on their class' Dojo page to enable parents daily updates on their child's learning.
-  **Weekly Principal's Award** - One child, from each year group, will receive a school badge & letter from me to celebrate their work and/or attitude towards their learning each week.
-  **'Breakfast with the Principal'** - The four nominated children will have a 'breakfast' with me one morning the following week, where we will discuss what the children have been learning and celebrate their successes. This will then also be shared in my weekly newsletter to parents.
-  **Curriculum Bulletin** - This will be a termly bulletin for parents, outlining new initiatives and updates within each area of the curriculum. Subject Leaders will be able to share photos and key moments from the term, and how the subjects are being taught across all the year groups.


-  **Social Media** - If you are users of Facebook and/or Twitter, please do follow the school's official pages to keep up-to-date on exciting events and moments during the school day.

 @PickhurstAcademy

 @Pickhurst_Jnr

 @Mr_Siggs

-  **Playground display board & 'Pod'** - School & PTA events and key calendar dates will be displayed on these boards for parents to read whilst the children are being collected from the playground at the end of each day.

-  **Homework** - The Senior Leadership Team will be monitoring and reviewing the homework policy, particularly for children in Y3. This will be actioned in the Spring 2019 term.

Finally, I need to congratulate our current PTA on an absolutely brilliant first term. It was a very successful term with several popular events, ranging from a glow disco, fabulous fireworks, a Christmas fair and competitions for the children to take part in. Thank you so much for your hard-work and enthusiasm; it is much appreciated!

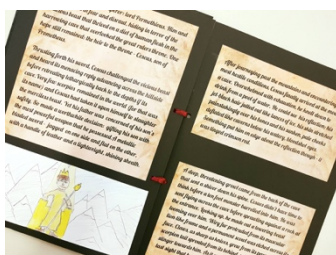
As always, I would like to thank you all for your continued and ongoing support, and I look forward to the Spring term ahead.

Kind Regards,

Mr Siggs
Acting Principal



Mr Siggs' Highlights from the Autumn Term:



English - Autumn Term

There have been many successes so far this term in the children's writing and reading in English at Pickhurst. As well as exploring a greater variety of literature in English lessons, Bug Club on the iPads has been very successful in helping children read and develop their comprehension skills in an exciting and interactive way!



Reading Vipers

Vocabulary
Infer
Predict
Explain
Retrieve
Sequence or Summarise

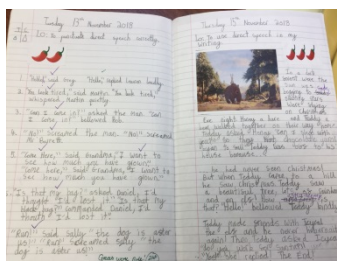


Reading:

At Pickhurst, our approach towards teaching children to be life-long readers is centred on the key skills of reading, known as VIPERS. This stands for:

1. Vocabulary.
2. Inference.
3. Predict.
4. Explain.
5. Retrieve.
6. Sequence and summarise.

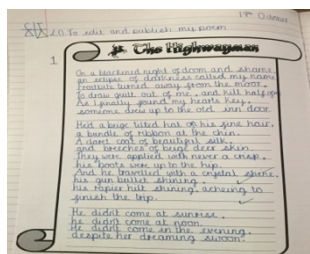
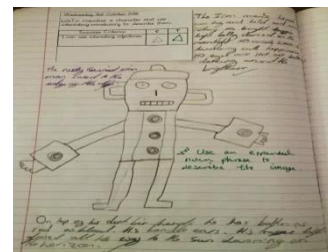
Reading skills (VIPERS) sessions are taught daily to improve comprehension skills using a range of high quality texts, images, picture books and film. As well as an interactive computer program, now used within reading lessons, children can now continue their learning outside of school, by signing into their own personal account of Bug Club to help develop the love of reading through a bright, colourful and child friendly interface, which can be accessed from anywhere in the world through an internet connection. These areas are secured through various tasks throughout the school week by applying these skills in all areas of the curriculum, not just within Reading Skills lessons.



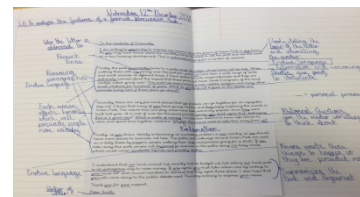
Writing:

Year 3 have been reading Anthony Browne's 'Into the Forest', a traditional fairy tale with a modern twist. Within lessons, the children have particularly enjoyed investigating how the author has been able to create intertextual links through the illustrations as well as develop their understanding of prepositions, fronted adverbials and through creative writing.

Year 4 have been reading Ted Hughes' 'The Iron Man' adventure story about a gigantic metal robot that appears out of nowhere, crashing onto the beach and shattering into many parts. The book is centred on the idea of challenging preconceived ideas about people. The children have used the text as inspiration to design their own adventure stories centred on their own creations through the use of figurative language.

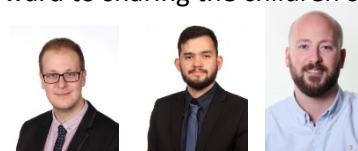


- In Year 5, children have been reading cross-curricular texts linked to science which has helped to stretch and develop their curiosity. Frank Cottrell Boyce's 'Cosmic' follows a young boy's journey into space overcoming various trials and tribulations. The children have also enjoyed challenging their creative writing ability through the use of poetry, exploring syntax and rhyming patterns.



In Year 6, the children have enjoyed developing their deep understanding of writing forms and purposes through careful analysis and discussions of chosen texts which have included persuasive writing, instructions and descriptive writing.

We are very proud of the children's achievements at Pickhurst in English and look forward to sharing the children's successes throughout the year.

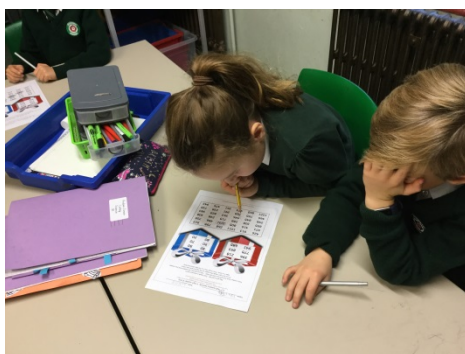


Maths -Autumn Term

With our whole school focus on reasoning, problem solving and developing critical thinking, it is fantastic to see the teachers and children really embracing their learning and challenging themselves through a range of different topics.

Year 3:

The learning that has gone on in Year 3 is exceptional and is a credit to the hard work of Miss Crisp, Mr Barrett, Ms Ryan and Mr Spencer – as well as the amazing young mathematicians we have in the year. With a focus on number and reasoning, the children have really begun to develop their reasoning skills from just describing, to now being able to explain the mathematical processes used to achieve a deep understanding of areas learnt. These are the first steps in the 'Progression in Reasoning' (NRICH 2014) and will help develop critical thinking within the subject. The children have worked effectively with a partner and challenged their own understanding.



Year 4:

Year 4 have been focussed on explaining the actions they have taken, leading to the development of the next step of progression. Being able to verbalise why they have made their decisions and convince others that their chain of reasoning is correct, is a high level skill the children are beginning to develop. It will help them embed the fantastic learning they have had this term on a range of topics from place value to decimals. Continuing to build on small group work, the children have really started to develop the ability to talk, listen, discuss and solve a range of intricate problems, such as the work on decimal numbers with one decimal place.



Year 5:

It is fantastic to see the children and teachers of year 5 tackle the concept of reasoning and problem solving so well. Now the children are becoming more fluent with their explaining and convincing, they are also starting to justify a correct logical argument that has a complete chain of reasoning. This is very exciting and requires a really secure factual and procedural knowledge to enable them to justify what decisions they made and why they made them. Applying this to a range of topics including the four main operations, fractions, shape and measurement has embedded their learning and is developing some very skilled mathematicians in the year. What is even better is that the children are now beginning to take this learning out of the classroom and in to their homes, enjoying problems and games with family members and increasing their love of learning!

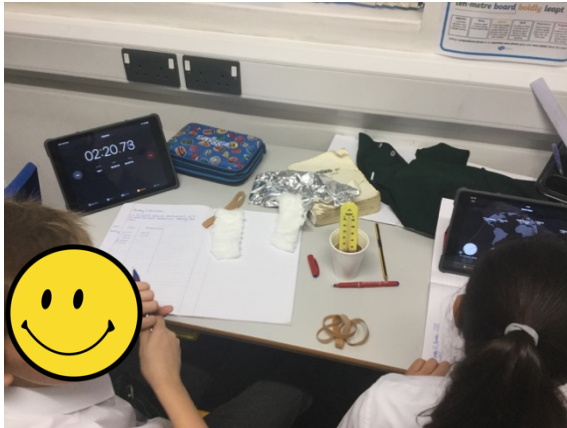
Science – Autumn Term

Our Learning

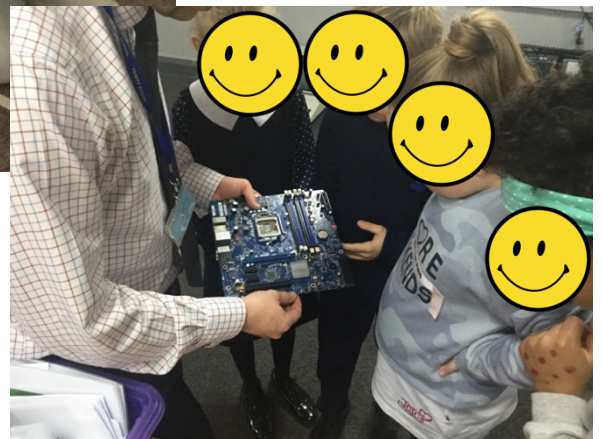
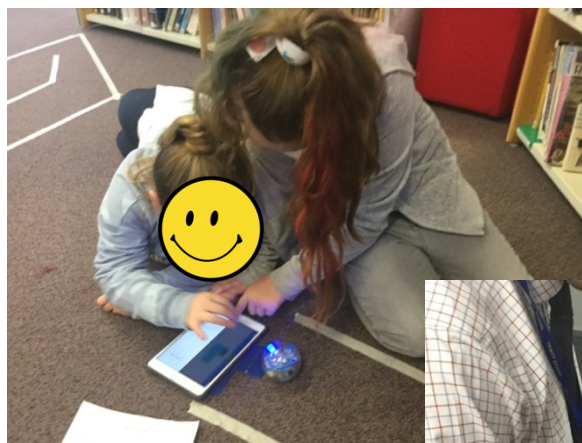
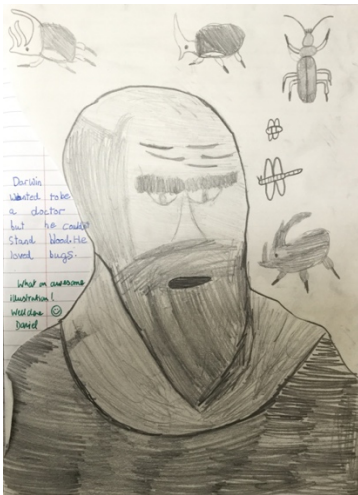
There has been so much happening in science since September. Across the school, children have been engaged in practical learning, with a focus on developing their subject knowledge too. Here is a snapshot of the learning across the school.

In Year 3, children have been learning about magnets and how magnetism is a non-contact force. They looked at floating a cork with a magnetised needle attached in water, to show that the needle will point towards the magnetic north.

In Year 5, children have been investigating different properties of materials. We have investigated the best material to keep tea warm and the best thermal conductor to melt butter.



Year 6 have explored evolution and inheritance. As part of their learning, the children have studied key scientists, such as Charles Darwin.



Trips & Visits

This term, eleven lucky children from Year 5 were chosen to attend a computer science workshop at Trinity school. They learned how to programme robots and learned about how programming has changed as science and technology has improved over the years.

More science learning!

In addition, a 'virtual science club' has been launched with Year 5 and Year 6 children. To date, over 50 children have joined on Google Classroom. This 'virtual science club' is an online platform for children to discuss science related news and videos and share experiments and investigations they complete at home. The aim is to develop collaborative learning, and extend the learning happening in school.

If, like me, you are keen to continue learning about science when school finishes at 3.20pm each day, here are a couple of websites with exciting science learning.

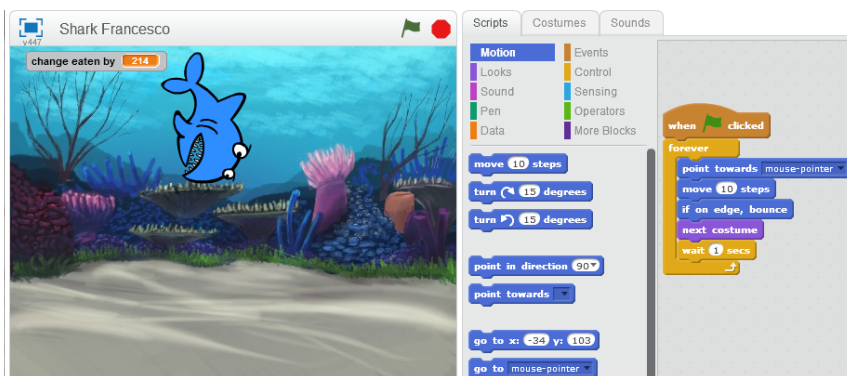
- 1) <http://www.sciencekids.co.nz>
- 2) http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/websites/4_11/site/science.shtml



Computing – Autumn Term

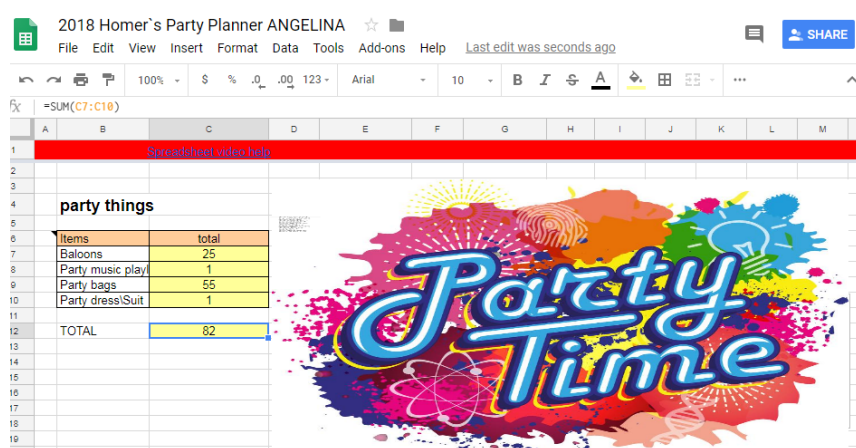
Year 3 students get to grips with tech in Mr Barrett's classroom. Mr Barrett has impressed with the implementation of speech-dictating technology for pupils with barriers to learning such as dyslexia, through Google Drive.

Year 4 students are getting to grips with sharks in their Scratch project. Year 3 saw these students use Junior Scratch on the iPad – now it's the laptop version, with lots more functionality!

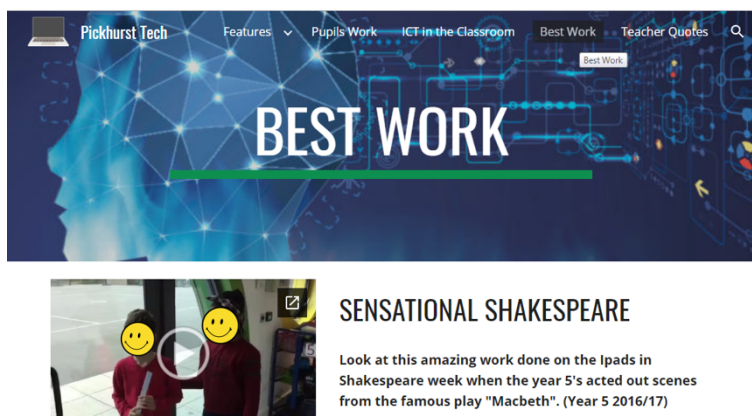


Year 5

Great work by Angelina in 5D, building a spreadsheet to help Homer plan a party.



Finally, our Year 6 Digital Dudes have been had at work on a Tech website, showcasing student work from this and previous years. Technology features have also been written for this, by the team.



International Primary Curriculum – Autumn Term

It has been a very busy and exciting term across the school. Here are some of the things that the children have been doing in their IPC studies:

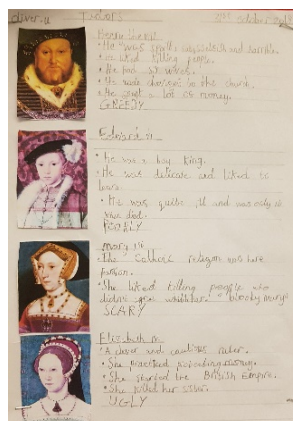
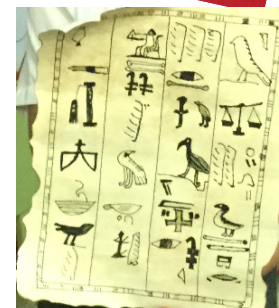
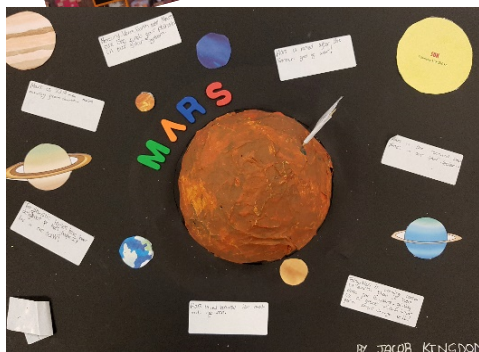
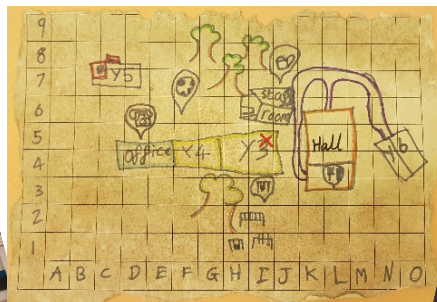
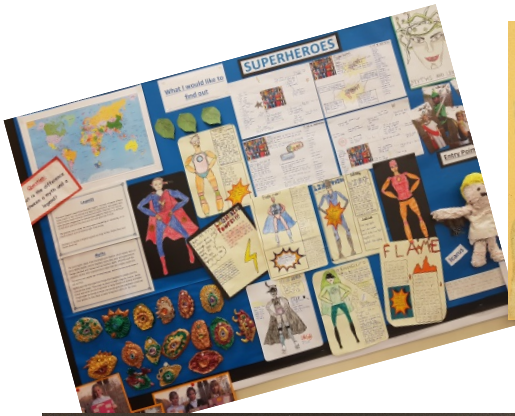
Year 3 children- making Egyptian masks and creating treasure maps,

Year 4 children- writing fact-files about Henry VIII and his wives as well as designing Tudor rose,

Year 5 children- finding out about our Universe and planets,

Year 6 children- exploring myths and legends from around the world and how they have influenced present times.

We have also had IPC awards in assemblies to celebrate and recognise the amazing variety and quality of work and the effort our children have put into their topics.



PSHCE (Personal, Social, Health & Citizenship Education) – Autumn Term

In PHSCE this year we enjoyed a visit from the Life Bus where we learnt about making the right decisions to stay healthy, how to be a good friend, what an amazing organ our brain is and that everyone is unique and how we should celebrate diversity.

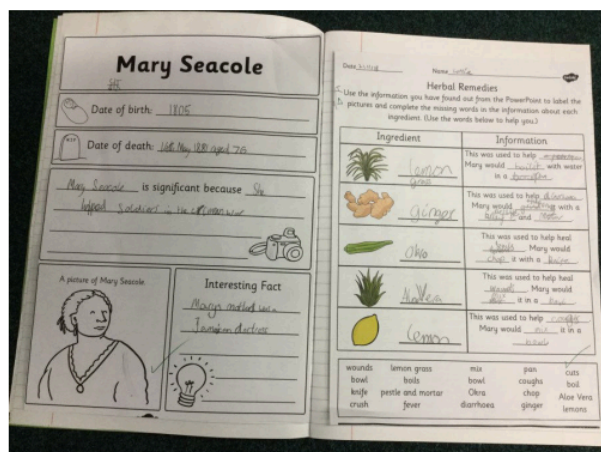
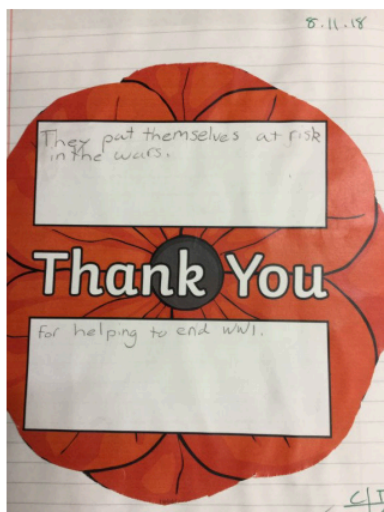
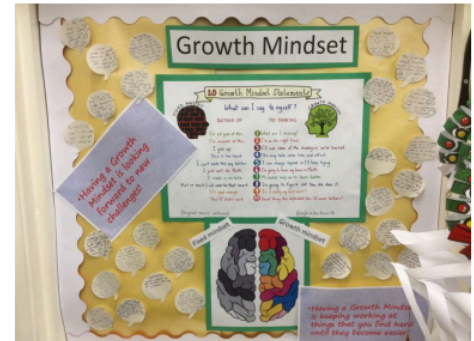
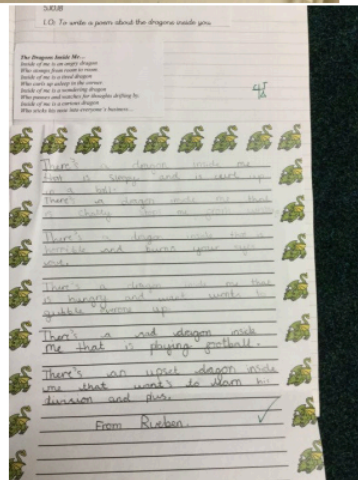
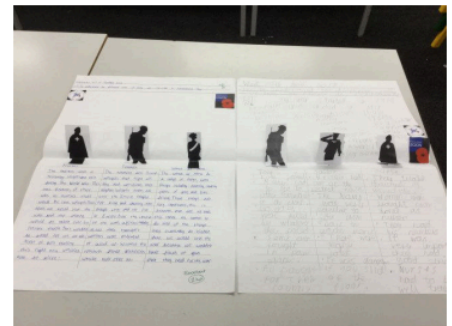
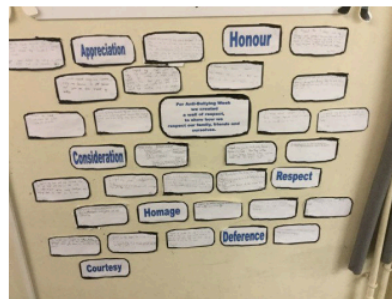
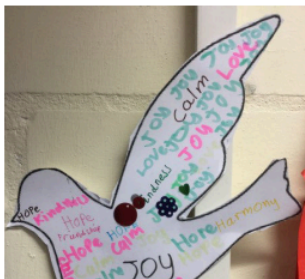
The children took part in a Remembrance Assembly and produced some beautiful work to recognise the sacrifice that others made so we may live in peace.

We have celebrated International Day of Peace and made Doves of Peace using words that mean peace to us.

As part of Anti-bullying week we discussed in lessons and assemblies what bullying is and what to do if we are being bullied or witness bullying. We also made a wall of respect to show ways in which we had been respectful to others.

We have learnt about British Values and why it is important to uphold these and to recognise how we use them everyday in school and in the wider community.

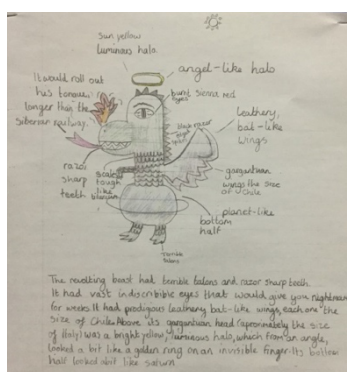
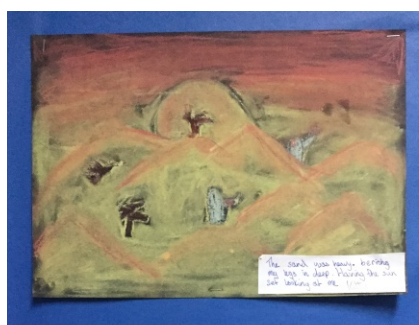
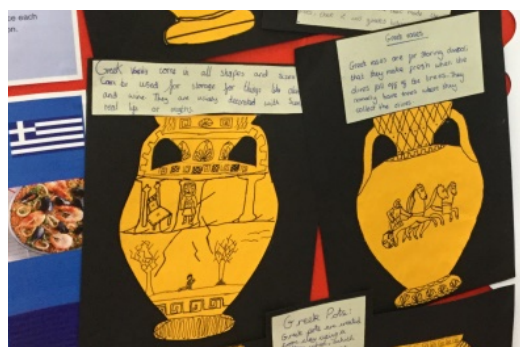
As part of Black History Month we learnt about important figures in Black History.



Art & Design – Autumn Term

It is wonderful to see Art being used across the school to build on the children's creativity and imagination whilst learning new skills at the same time. It is so positive to see cross curricular links used particularly in English and IPC, which is both allowing the children to help build and form ideas and help them plan work. A range of media and skills are being used through the school.

Take a look at some of the fantastic art produced in the Autumn term:



Religious Education – Autumn Term

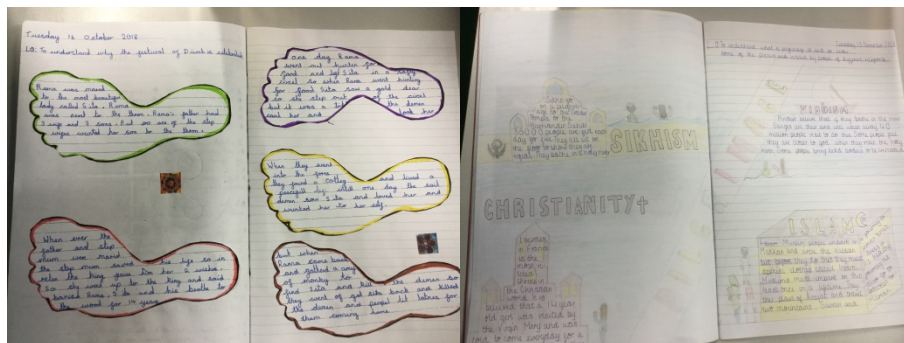
The Autumn term started with learning about harvest festivals and how it relates to our everyday lives. The children were able to create some wonderful work which was celebrated in our Harvest Festival on October 5th. The food collected was given to local charities to support those in need.

Later in the term Year 3 learned about the importance of light in their lives through the topic of Diwali, where they created some beautiful Rangoli patterns using coloured rice.

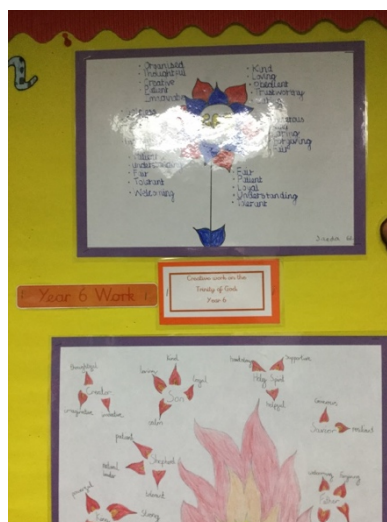


Year 4 developed their understanding of religious symbols and their underlying beliefs. As part of this topic they made some posters about Guru Nanak.

Year 5 have learned about Jewish customs and the Holy books that Jewish people use.



Year 6 have studied the Christian missionary movement, concentrating on modern missionaries.



Physical Education – Autumn Term

A lot has been going on in regards to P.E. and sport in the last term at Pickhurst!

Year 3 have been playing a range of invasion games, learning the basic principles of how to attack and defend effectively!

Year 4 have been practising their dancing skills! Showing off a range of moves taken as inspiration from Spanish dances.

Year 5 have been testing their fitness and building it over the last term, they have really noticed improvements!

Year 6 have been developing their gymnastic moves and used this to help them practise some yoga.

And not to mention all of the wonderful competitions children from Pickhurst Academy have taken part in!

The boys and girls football teams are through to the quarter finals of the Bromley Schools cup.

The boys and girls football team have won their leagues to progress to the champions league after Christmas.

The boys and girls football team are through to the southern England finals having won the Bromley schools 6aside competition.

The boys 7-a-side football team have won the Bromley schools competition, they then became Kent champions and will now represent Kent at the South East England finals.

The golf team were runners up in the Bromley Schools competition.

The swimming team were runners up in the Bromley Schools competition.

The netball team were bronze medallist at the Netball finals.

We are so proud of the children's achievements at Pickhurst so far and look forward to hearing about many more over the course of the year.

