

Reception Newsletter – Friday 13th February 2026

Phonics – Level 3

Our digraph focus for this week have been **'th' (loud voiced as in this & that), 'th' (quiet unvoiced as in thin & three) & 'ng'**. I have said to the children that the only time they can stick their tongues out at me is when they say the 'th' sound (both loud voiced & quiet unvoiced). If they're saying them both properly, this is what I've said:

'th' loud voiced – your tongue should tickle

'th' quiet unvoiced – they should make me cold when saying this digraph

Please remember that a digraph is where '2 letters make 1 sound'. When reading words using the 'th' digraph, children must segment and blend using each sound to check which word it is. The game on Phonics Play will help practice this skills.

The Parent Support Sheets and regular words to match are on the class 'Phonics & Reading' webpage: <https://www.st-annes.walsall.sch.uk/phonics-reading/>. Please stick these sounds into your child's sound book and play the corresponding games on Phonics Play website.



<https://www.phonicsplay.co.uk/>

We have revised spelling to write the Tricky Words we've learned so far from Level 3 independently. Children should now be able to write the words **'he', 'me', 'she', 'be' & 'we'** without having to copy whilst also thinking carefully how to form letters and use the lines. We have talked about the importance of taking your time when writing.

Handwriting

Our letter focus for the week was **'q' (queen)**. All the letters we have focused on so far this term start with the formation of **'c'**.

The children are getting very good at knowing how to be **'Ready To Write'**. Many children are doing this without adult reminders.

We are 'Ready to Write' by:

- Sitting on a chair correctly
- Holding a pencil using 'duck fingers'
- Holding paper / whiteboard with the spare hand – no hands on heads
- Forming letters or numbers correctly
- Trying to sit letters on the lines
- Take your time

Maths

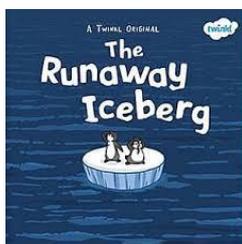
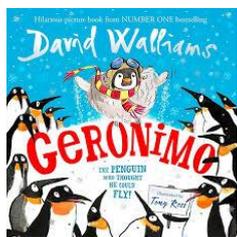
Our focus over the past week has been counting and making sets of **5** and seeing the patterns of objects that make up the set of 5. The children's number formations are also good now being able to write the numerals 1-5 using the correct formations. Ask your child to show you how they can do this.

We have introduced this week the idea of addition to begin learning number bonds of 5 orally so that children can say:

- 0 and 5 makes 5
- 1 and 4 makes 5
- 2 and 3 makes 5
- 3 and 2 makes 5
- 4 and 1 makes 5
- 0 and 5 makes 5

Understanding the World – Penguins

This week our focus has been learning about Penguins using the stories 'Geronimo' & 'The Runaway Iceberg' (video on class webpage), along with the song 'Penguin Dance'. The children have thoroughly enjoyed Mrs Longs favourite song of the year and doing a Pedro the Penguin Cosmic Yoga challenge. There are many other Cosmic Yoga videos on YouTube Kids if this is something your child might like to try.



Song - Penguin Dance by Jack Hartmann



All About Penguins



Pedro the Penguin - A Cosmic Kids Yoga Adventure



More Facts About Penguins



<https://www.st-annes.walsall.sch.uk/video-clips-spring-1/>

The children have learned many facts about penguins. Ask your child what they can remember. There are several videos on the class webpage you might want to watch with your child. We have also watched the film 'Penguins' from Disney+ over a few days.

Safer Internet Day

We continued our Safer Internet Day work this week. The focus for this year is the use of AI. For children in Reception, this is knowing that AI means Artificial Intelligence, that AI is a computer robot (not a real person), the difference between AI and humans and some forms of AI we use in homes (Alexa, Echo, Siri etc). At home, please help your child identify the forms of AI in your house. We spent time this week using Siri to ask to sing/play songs or show pictures.

More information around keeping your child safe online can be found on our school Online Safety Webpage: <https://www.st-annes.walsall.sch.uk/e-safety/>

Day of Witness

Thank you to those family members who joined us for prayer yesterday. It was lovely that the children were able to share their faith with you and you enjoyed designing your own family crosses.

General

We have enjoyed watching a variety of winter sports with the Winter Olympics currently taking place. This continues through half term so you might want to continue this on a wet day at home.

Schools have had some new guidance around the teaching and expectations of Literacy for early years. This means ensuring the basic skills are solid and secure before moving on and having gaps. This is why we have had a bigger focus on oracy (speaking), dictation, spelling and handwriting skills rather than children writing their own sentences this half term. This will continue next half term so that by the end of the year children write 1 clear sentence (dictated or their own) independently using the correct grammar, spelling words correctly and forming letters carefully. This term I have seen a marked improvement in children's handwriting and spelling skills, so thank you for your support. Mr Caddick was very impressed with the progress children have made since September when I showed him their books this week. Well done to all the children for their efforts this year so far.

Your child's PE kit came home yesterday to be washed and returned on the first day after the half term break.

Please make sure that your child only has 1 small keyring on their reading packet. Those with larger or more keyrings mean they do not all fit in the reading packet boxes.

Dates for your Diary

- Friday 13th February – Break up for half term holiday
- Monday 23rd February – Return to School - Lent
- Saturday 28th February – Special Friends Family Mass at Church
- Monday 2nd March – PTA Meeting
- Tuesday 3rd March – Little Kid Town Day in school
- Friday 6th March – World Book Day. Please recycle a costume or wear PJ's to support our Live Simply focus in school ***Note the day NOT Thursday***
- Monday 9th March – PTA Mother's Day Shop in school open
- Friday 13th March – Parent & Child Reading Together Session at 2.30pm
- Tuesday 24th March – One Life Music Whole School Lenten Retreat Day in school
- Wednesday 25th March – Whole School Mass at Church at 10am (normal start to the day)
- Thursday 26th March – Celebration Assembly at 9am
- Thursday 26th March – Parent Meetings from 1pm
- Thursday 26th March – Break up for Easter at 3.15pm

Have a wonderful half term break – perhaps you could put a photograph of something you do with your child on the Padlets page to share with others.

Mrs Turley