

Back with a bang!

We were pleased to welcome back the children this week and hope that you all managed to have an enjoyable half term.

As always, Blackthorns has been a very busy place this week, with a fantastic STEM week of learning to get children enthused and intrigued about the world of Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths. Well done to all of the teachers, teaching assistants, parents and learners who have all contributed to making this week a success.

World Book Day Friday 3rd March

Blackthorns always enjoy a celebration of reading and books on World Book Day and this year will be no exception! The official World Book Day is Thursday 2nd March, but as strike action is taking place in many schools on that day, we made the decision to move our celebrations to Friday 3rd March. Look out for the [BBC Live Lesson](#) on Thursday 2nd March. On Friday, we will enjoy a day of book related fun.

N.B. If your class swim on a Friday, please keep outfits simple (no hair dye, face paint). If you need to wear simple sports kit and change into something back at school, please keep it in a named bag.

BECOMING BOOKY!

Dress up as a favourite book character, a book title or something from a book. We love the chance to dress up on World Book Day and would love to see all of your book themed outfits on World Book Day!

READING ALERT!

Listen out for the book alerts, which will signal 5 minutes of intense reading in your classroom. These could happen at any point during the day!

SMILE, IT'S WORLD BOOK DAY!

We will set up a 'Book Booth' and you and your friends can go and snap your photos with the books that you love! Get your paperback pose on and give us your best library look!

MAKE YOUR MARK!

Create a book mark that is all about your favourite or most recent read! Design the bookmark with the title and illustration on one side and then why you would recommend it on the other side!

STORY TIME!

What better time to get together in a small group and listen to a good book? Three year 5 or 6 pupils will lead a book reading experience for small, mixed groups of pupils.

ELECT A BOOK!

It's election time! What is the most popular book or author in Blackthorns school? Choose from the list and cast your vote in the book box polling stations in your room.



Celebrating in school Friday 3rd March!

Pond Overhaul

We welcomed Mr. Conquest and his team of volunteers this Friday. They showed us a great kindness by coming in to begin a rejuvenation project by clearing the pond site, which has been overgrown and out of use. It has been great to see some of the rotten boarding removed and even some actual pond water beneath the suffocating weeds. This is a great start to a project, which we hope will result in the pond coming back to life and becoming a part of our outdoor curriculum once more.

Sports News

14 of our budding runners took part in the Mid Sussex Active Year 3&4 Cross Country festival held at Mr. Luckhurst's home football pitch at Newick. The children took on a course measuring 1.3km which included two laps of the Newick recreation ground with one lap that went down a track to bring a bit of cross-country authenticity of the event. The children were extremely determined and battled to out-run 107 other runners from 8 local schools.

Congratulations to all the children for such great results especially the boys' team who won the event!

Boys' Results

1	Blackthorns	51
2	Lindfield	69
3	Bolnore	102
4	Harlands	115
5	Birchwood Grove	127
6	Holy Trinity	133
7	St Wilfrids	152
8	Northlands Wood	178
9	St Josephs	231

Girls' Results

1	Lindfield	36
2	Bolnore	82
3	St Wilfrids	102
4	Blackthorns	116
5	Birchwood Grove	118
6	Northlands Wood	149
7	Holy Trinity	No team score as fewer than 5
	St Josephs	
	Harlands	



Dates for your diary:

27th February Butser Ancient Farm Visit

27th February Stuart Foster Author Visit

1st March - Year 5 trip to Hever Castle

1st March - SEN Parents' Meetings to review ILPs

2nd March—Strike Action Partial Closure

3rd March - Blackthorns celebrates World Book Day

13th and 14th March - Parents' Consultation Evenings

17th March—FoBs Quix Night

31st March - FoBs Fundraising Fortnight begins

31st March—End of Spring Term - break up for Easter

17th April—INSET Day

Inside Our Classrooms



The Hive

This week has been a busy one in The Hive. For Stem week we looked at saving the bears from the lava by creating bridges, and we worked together to build a lookout tower from lolly sticks and pegs. We were proud of our teamwork and determination, because we sometimes felt like giving up, but we didn't. On Thursday we had our trip to Kings Cross station to see Platform 9 $\frac{3}{4}$. We had an amazing morning and everyone displayed beautiful Blackthorns behaviour. Finally, we started our new learning focus for this half term, The Happiness Project on Shrove Tuesday by learning about Lent and challenging ourselves to perform acts of kindness every day until Easter. Look out for Hive children showing kindness around the school!

Thinkers

STEM week has been super busy here in Thinkers class! At the start of the week We had a special treat with a visit from Bea's Daddy, Ian, who came in to tell us all about his job as an Architect. He helped the children to design their own bespoke animal homes by thinking about special features that they would need to survive and be comfortable. Ian gave us 5 requirements that each home would need. We have also created pet rocks, made 2D and 3D structures with marshmallows and cocktail sticks, and have taken part in two experiments! In other exciting news, Thinkers class have set up a class fish tank and look forward to welcoming some fish very soon! Watch this space.

Inventors

This week in Inventors, the focus was STEM week! As it is the beginning of a new half-term, we have a new topic focus 'Travel and Transport'. We started our week by introducing our new topic and researched early modes of transport. The early mode of transport that we were going to focus on this week was Viking Longships. We looked at the structure, purpose and necessities a Viking Longship needed and then got designing. The children's designs were absolutely amazing! We had shields,

flags that represented their families, Viking puppets, ores and more! Once they had their design, they used recycled materials to turn their designs in to real life creations! Today, they have been testing their Longships to see whether they used the correct materials to help them float. To help understand which materials would float or sink, they first took part in a float and sink investigation! Many Longships survived and Inventors had a great STEM week!

Explorers

Explorers have had such a 'nICE' STEM week! We started by exploring where ice will melt the quickest around our school and the quickest way to melt an ice cube to free the Polar Explorers! We learned that salt can change the state of ice and will melt ice much quicker than sugar! After that, we watched some videos of vehicles used in the polar regions and designed our own polar vehicles – Explorers had some amazing ideas! Then the fun part came in making the vehicles – oh what a lovely time was had by all! Finally we tested them to see if they moved and spent time playing with them and evaluating them.

Warriors

Year 3 have had a fantastic STEM week thinking carefully about how the Romans used STEM throughout their era. We started looking at their architecture and how arches helped support weight by testing different shaped arches and seeing how much multilink they could support. We also looked at columns and spotted these across many Roman buildings and tested which column shapes were strongest. Measuring and folding paper to make triangular prisms, cuboids and even octagonal prisms was a challenge but we persevered well! The rest of the week saw Roman chariots take centre stage as we researched, designed, tested and evaluated models that we made with our new talk partners. We looked at what chariots were used for; how toy vehicles moved; the different axles and wheels we could use as well as making paper models to practise folding and cutting. We finished the week designing and then making our models! What a great week!



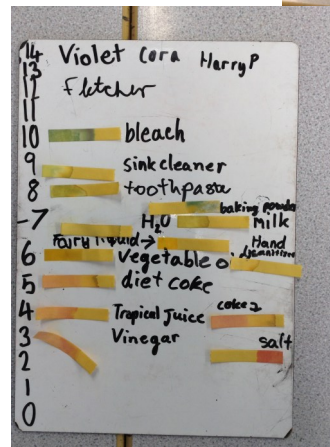
Groundbreakers

Groundbreakers have jumped head first into all things STEM. We began the week by investigating which materials best muffle sound and created our own ear defenders that we pitched in a Dragon's Den themed panel - we may have some entrepreneurs on our hands! Our visitors this week have been phenomenal and on behalf of all of Groundbreakers, thank you to Karen Ashworth (engineer) and Esther Kissling (epidemiologist) for making our week extra fun. The week ended with a bang as we put mentos in a bottle of coke; made lava lamps and ate lots of white skittles...



Innovators

The engineers of the future took centre stage in Innovators this week. We have had a great week with a STEM focus and lots of fabulous events and speakers to whom we are very grateful. We don't know if moon buggies will one day need to be powered by balloons, but if they do, NASA will know where to come knocking! The children had a great time designing, making and refining their buggies and testing them out across the school hall.



Trailblazers

Trailblazers have had a fabulous week. They started the week investigating the 'dunkability of a biscuit' with some very serious investigating going on. There is a Rich Tea biscuit, in a cup of water, still holding its shape in the classroom 3 days later!

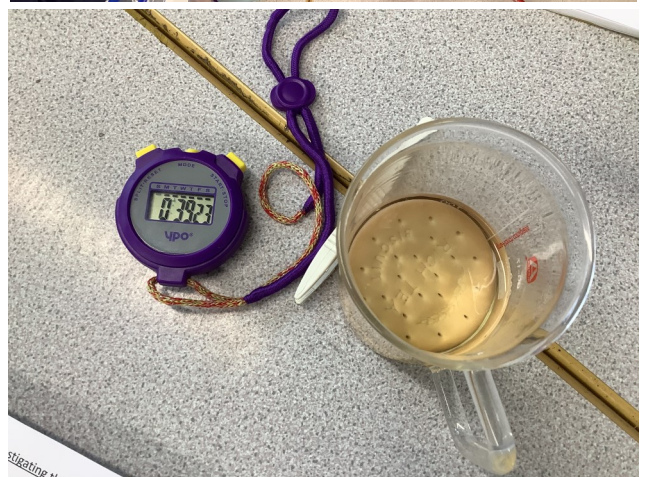
They then investigated the refraction of light, and how this still proves light travels in a straight line. We had a fantastic talk by Mr Kent who designs the software for Radiotherapy machines. He showed how to 'define a problem' - using an ice cream machine as a fabulous example.

Chemistry was the theme on Thursday. Children learned all about acids and alkalis, and then tested lots of different products using Litmus paper to see if they were acidic or alkaline.

Did you know a wasp sting is alkaline and a bee sting is acidic?

Continuing with chemistry, we learned about the Periodic Table and each chose a particular element to research.

We are finishing the week with more fantastic visitors and learning about how the human eye works - linked to our science curriculum and learning about light.





STEWART FOSTER

AWARD WINNING AUTHOR

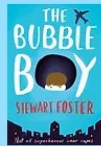


STOP PRESS!

Author Visit Monday 27th February

At the eleventh hour, Mrs. Jago has managed to secure a visit from one of her favourite current children's authors! Although Stewart Foster has an incredibly busy schedule this World Book Day Week, he is able to come to talk to our pupils and sell some of his books. He will be giving an assembly to years 3, 5 and 6 and a subsequent workshop with year 6 pupils.

He will be selling some of his books for £7 each. Children who are interested in his books can purchase the books with cash on the day. [Check out his website](#) for more information about available titles.



FoBs Update

The FOBs Quiz: Friday 17th March

There's still time to get your team together and take part.

FOBs need team details and pizza orders – and don't forget to make payment!

A booking form was sent via Parentmail, or follow the link to book online <https://forms.gle/m8jrD79U2HSLCJA88>

Doors open @ 7pm in the School Hall and the quiz starts at 7.45 pm

There will also be a raffle and fabulous prize hamper.

Friends of Blackthorns

QUIZ NIGHT

Friday 17th March



Doors 7pm, Quiz starts 7:45pm
Teams of up to 6 people
Pizzas and bar

At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one of many issues which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit www.nationalonlinesafety.com for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

10 WAYS GAMING CAN SUPPORT POSITIVE OUTCOMES in Children and Young People

Gaming, of course, is phenomenally popular with children and young people. In 2021, for instance, more than three-quarters of teenagers played online games, with almost 70% of primary school aged children doing likewise. If enjoyed in moderation and supported by a healthy routine (staying hydrated, good sleep habits, taking breaks and so on), gaming can actually benefit a person's mental health. As long as we stay alert for potential risks, games can be much more than what we see on the surface: they can be a way to socialise, an avenue for creativity and a route to solving problems. Check out our top ten tips on how gaming online can sometimes work to your child's advantage ...

THE FEEL-GOOD FACTOR

Gaming is so popular because at the base level, it's enjoyable for the player. Succeeding in any game or contest releases dopamine in our brains: the 'feel-good' chemical that makes us happy or excited. Those emotions can be incredibly beneficial for mental wellbeing – as long as young players don't become reliant solely on playing video games to make themselves feel happy.

ACHIEVEMENT & PRIDE

A sense of achievement is incredibly important to all of us and can be particularly valuable to someone who's feeling unhappy or distracted. It's easy to get caught up in our thoughts, which can sometimes take a negative turn. So even achieving something small – like finishing a difficult level in a Mario or Sonic game – can feel like conquering Everest and give us renewed optimism.

SOCIAL SALVATION

Gaming can be an incredibly social activity. When playing online with trusted friends, what usually start out as chats specifically about the game can often develop into conversations about school and life. Even if they've had a bad day, simply knowing that a friend is there, on the other end of their headset, can provide young gamers with a sense of security and some welcome laughs.

TEAMWORK MAKES THE DREAM WORK

In many online games, teamwork is crucial to winning. Often, people who are struggling with their mood tend to feel like they fail or let others down a lot. Working as a team with trusted friends or family in a game can reinforce a young person's self-importance; striving for a common goal and succeeding together can remind them that they're an integral part of something bigger.

REAL-WORLD RELATABILITY

Because many major releases are shooting or action games, when some people hear "gaming" they think of guns, explosions and violence. What's less recognised is how many titles explore relatable issues such as overcoming anxiety or coping with grief. These games allow young players to understand their emotions more deeply and realise they aren't alone in how they might be feeling.

A DIGITAL COMFORT

Video games can provide a reliable constant. No matter what happens in school or between friends, playing a favourite game is something that youngsters can look forward to all day and can help them de-stress. Let's not forget, games are fun – and, when approached safely, an interactive activity in which the player has a degree of control over what happens next can feel immensely reassuring.

PROBLEM-SOLVING PRACTICE

It can be difficult for young people to handle the feeling that nothing is going right or that their problems are insurmountable. Gaming can help alleviate that by presenting challenges to be overcome, either solo or alongside trusted friends. Defeating a powerful monster or solving a tricky puzzle reminds young gamers that even the most daunting obstacles can be faced and conquered.

THE GREAT ESCAPISM

A certain amount of escapism is fabulous – allowing us to temporarily park some stress while exploring a world other than our own. For children, gaming can be like reading a novel or watching a film: a moment in the day when the fantastical becomes real, firing their imagination and immersing them in a story. Who wouldn't want to venture to the stars? Or battle monsters to save the planet?

TRIED & TRUSTED

There can be reassurance in repeating tasks. It often promotes a controlled outcome, which is ideal when life feels overwhelming or out of control. Replicating an experience, such as playing the same level of a game over and over to perfection, gives the player a sense of control and familiarity: it's like listening to a favourite song that always makes you feel happy or confident.

ENCOURAGING CREATIVITY

Inventiveness is a huge part of many modern games: in Minecraft and Roblox, for example, players regularly dream up amazing structures or new ways to play. Using our imagination to create something (whether digitally or physically) is massively beneficial for the brain: that's why Lego is sometimes used in the medical sector as both a stress reliever and a brain injury rehabilitation tool.

Meet Our Expert

Daniel Lipscombe is a writer who specialises in technology, video gaming, virtual reality and Web3. Author of 15 guidebooks for children on games such as Fortnite, Apex Legends, Valorant, Roblox and Minecraft, his work has also been published in the likes of PC Gamer, Kotaku, Pocket Gamer and VG247.



Source: https://www.ofcom.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0024/234808/childrens-media-use-and-attitudes-report-2022.pdf

