Weekly Learning Update

23rd January 2026

Nursery

It has been a fantastic week within Nursery, the children have continued to settle well and are gaining confidence with exploring both classrooms and the outdoor area. We are developing routines and have been begun small group work.

Within Maths, our small group focus has been to count out a quantity from a larger group. Children have had opportunities throughout the week to explore with a range of different resources to count out a specific quantity from a larger group.

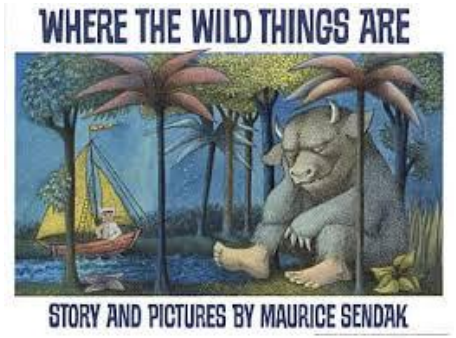
What a messy week we have had! Within our areas of learning, there have been lots of opportunity to explore and get messy, from mark making in gloop, painting with kitchen utensils, paint printing with vegetables and experimenting with colours by using pipettes!

With our learning continuing to be creative next week, we will be utilising the indoor and outdoor area. Please ensure children have named coat, scarves, gloves and hats each day.

Reception (King Class and Parks Class

What a wonderful week complete with our Festival of Hope! It has been amazing to promote our children to be courageous advocates for such a worthy cause. They have been courageous advocates - supporting, championing and speaking up for a great cause that is important and meaningful to us. The children have shown so much love towards the welfare of animals. They have learnt the importance of caring for animals and promoting change to ensure our wildlife are protected.

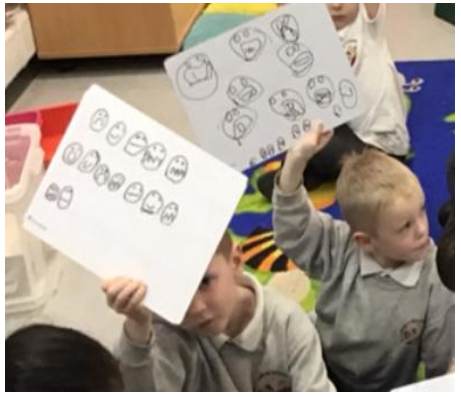
Communicating **Love**; Inspiring our Community to Flourish



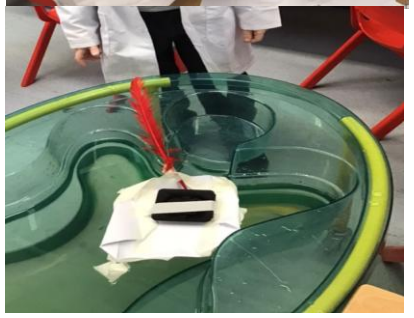
In English, we have been authors, creating our own books which we will add the finishing pages to next week. As the week has progressed, the children have developed their understanding of stories and how they consist of a beginning, middle and end. We have considered the events of 'Where The Wild Things Are' and been able to identify the main parts and sequencing them.

In Maths, we have moved onto subtraction and welcomed subtraction snake into our classrooms. The children have developed an understanding of the concept subtraction in that it means to take away, resulting in having less. We have practised this with objects, images and numerals.

In Expressive Arts, music was linked to feelings as we revisited our learning of the colour monster. Listening to different styles of music, we considered how each piece made us feel and recorded this in an image of a face displaying an emotion.



In Science this term, we have explored light and the objects it can pass through and properties, deciding which are best for making a boat. This week has seen our investigation area turned into a bed factory as we explore which materials are best suited for making a bed.



Year 1 (Bell Class and Windsor Class)

We've had another wonderful week of learning in Year One, full of creativity, exploration and thoughtful discussion.

In English, the children have been writing descriptive sentences inspired by *The Proudest Blue*. We focused on describing Asiya's hijab and the children chose some lovely vocabulary to help create a clear image in the reader's mind. We also enjoyed sharing and celebrating our writing with friends from both Windsor and Bell classes - everyone was so proud of their work!

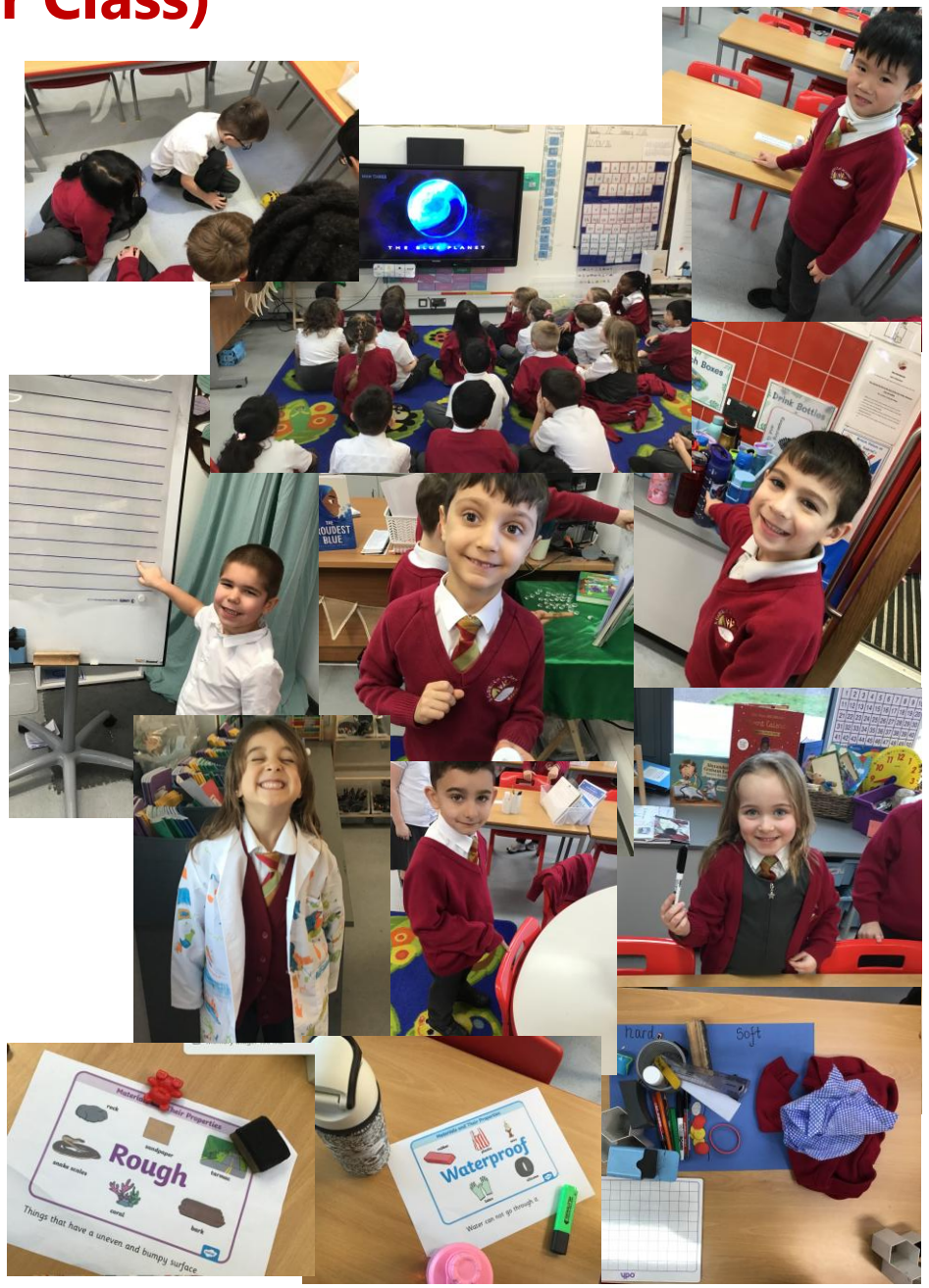
In Maths, we have continued to strengthen our fluency with numbers up to 20. The children revisited the terms *more* and *less*, using number lines and concrete counting equipment to deepen their understanding. They also challenged themselves by completing word problems and writing number sentences to demonstrate what they know. We have been very impressed with their perseverance.

This week in Geography, the children learned to identify left and right and explored positional language such as *near* and *far* when giving directions. A highlight was programming a Bee-Bot to move between two objects - thinking carefully about each step in the route. Their excitement and problem-solving skills really shone through!

As part of our RE learning, we took part in the Festival of Hope. The children became courageous advocates for protecting our environment from plastic pollution and showed great compassion when discussing the dangers plastic poses to our world. They also created wonderful designs for a whole-school display using plastic bottle tops.

In Science, we learned actions to help us remember the different properties of materials. The children worked together confidently to group objects according to these properties, showing very accurate science knowledge.

In Art, we explored the work of Giles Davies, a collage landscape artist. The children learnt about what inspires his artwork and showed great interest, recalling key facts about him with enthusiasm.



Year 2 (Braille Class and Kerr Class)

What a brilliant week we've had in Year 2!

In Maths, we have continued our work on money. We practised making £1 in different ways, worked with change and tackled two-step problems that really made us stop, think and hunt for those key words that tell us whether we're adding or subtracting. It was a challenge, but we showed great determination.

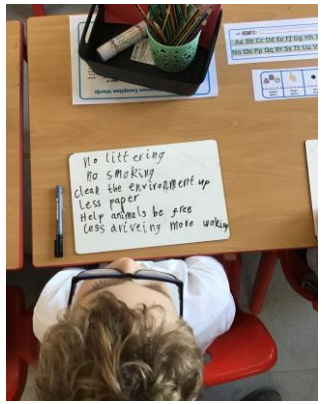
In Science, we explored balanced diets and the five food groups. The children discussed why the food pyramid is arranged the way it is, which led to some very entertaining ideas about what might happen if sweets suddenly became the base of the pyramid or if vegetables were moved right to the top.

In English, the class finished writing instructions for looking after their teddies. They used bossy verbs and time words brilliantly. We're now confident that no matter where their teddies end up - under the bed, in the garden or mysteriously in the fridge - they'll be extremely well cared for.

In Geography, the children used a range of maps and atlases to locate Peru. They practised using grid references, compass directions and map keys, building their confidence in navigating different types of geographical information.

In RE, we celebrated the Festival of Hope. We learned what it means to be courageous advocates - people who help their school, community and the wider world. Our focus was sea pollution, especially plastic waste. The children came up with thoughtful ideas such as organising a "no-plastic day" at school and creating posters to remind people to recycle properly.

We also wrote songs together to raise awareness of ocean pollution. It was a joyful experience and your child may even be able to perform their song for you at home.



Year 3 (Malala Class and Anning Class)

It's been another brilliant week for Year 3!

In English, we have continued to focus on the key features of a diary entry in preparation for writing our own next week, inspired by Escape From Pompeii. The children explored time sequencing words and descriptive language, including similes and powerful adjectives. They then planned their own diary entries, filling them with lots of thoughtful and imaginative ideas.

In Maths, we have explored grouping and sharing, using the 3 and 4 times tables. The children worked hard to apply their multiplication knowledge in different ways and showed great progress and confidence.

On Monday, the children enjoyed taking part in a Dodgeball Festival where they learned and honed their dodgeball skills. They demonstrated excellent determination, resilience and teamwork throughout the event, showing great sportsmanship and enthusiasm.

We also celebrated the Festival of Hope this week and chose to support the UK charity Books 2 Africa. The children have been busy creating posters to share key information about the charity and how we can help to improve the quality of education in parts of Africa. We would be very grateful for any donations of gently used or new books to support this cause. Please see the letter sent out earlier this week for more details, or feel free to ask one of us at the door.

Year 4 (Tagore Class and Turing Class)

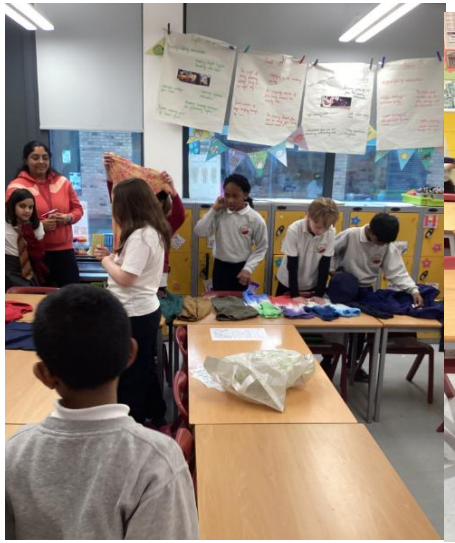
We have had another busy and exciting week in Year 4, with lots of fantastic learning taking place!

In English, we have been preparing to write our diary entries. We began by developing our ideas using mind maps, allowing us to think deeply about thoughts, feelings and events. We then turned these ideas into formal plans, carefully organising what we want to include in our writing. We are now ready and fully prepared to write our diary entries next week – watch this space!

In Maths, we have been learning how to multiply using the formal written method. To support our understanding, we used counters and expanded multiplication to break problems down into manageable steps. We have also completed lots of fluency practice to help improve our accuracy and confidence when multiplying.

In RE, we celebrated the Festival of Hope, where we learned about courageous advocacy and explored how individuals and communities can make a positive change in the world. We learned about pollution, with a specific focus on clothes waste. The children explored the problems linked to fast fashion and discussed practical ways we can reduce our impact on the environment. To share their learning, the children created informative posters and then took part in a clothes swap, showing how we can recycle clothes we no longer want or need.

Monday was especially exciting as we took part in the KS2 Dodgeball Tournament. The children showed our school values throughout the event. Most importantly, everyone had lots of fun and demonstrated excellent teamwork and sportsmanship.



Year 5 (Attenborough Class and Rauf Class)

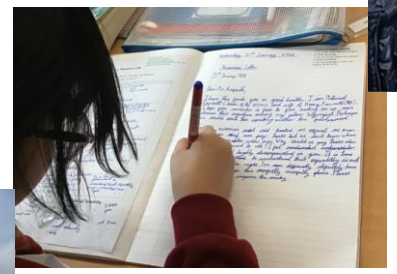
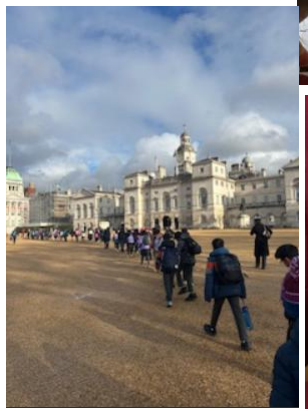
We ended last week on a real high with our fantastic trip to London. The children gained so much from their tour of the Houses of Parliament and it was especially exciting to see it in action during a live discussion around new laws. They asked thoughtful questions and showed great curiosity throughout the visit.

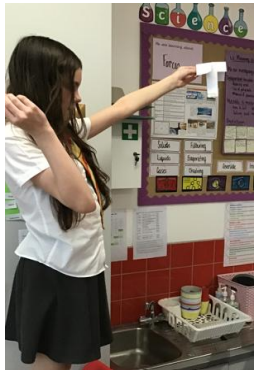
In English, we have been fully immersed in writing persuasive letters to the Prime Minister, taking on the role of Millicent Fawcett in 1908. The children have been working hard to include all the key features of persuasive writing as they encourage him to change the law and allow women the right to vote. Their engagement and empathy have been wonderful to see.

In Maths, we are nearing the end of our multiplication and division unit. The children are becoming increasingly confident using the formal written method for division, successfully dividing 4-digit numbers by 1-digit numbers, including calculations with remainders. Our final focus will be applying this knowledge to solve a range of problems.

In Science, we carried out the experiment planned last week as part of our learning on air resistance. The children investigated how the length of the wings on a paper spinner affects the time it takes to fall. We discovered that spinners with longer wings fall more slowly because the greater surface area increases air resistance. The children worked carefully and showed excellent scientific thinking.

In RE, we have been celebrating the *Festival of Hope*. We explored what it means to be 'courageous advocates' and discussed ways we can help make the world a better place. The children reflected on issues that affect us personally or as a community and shared thoughtful ideas for taking action. They have also begun decorating pebbles (as shown in one of the photos) and perhaps they can explain the meaning behind them at home!



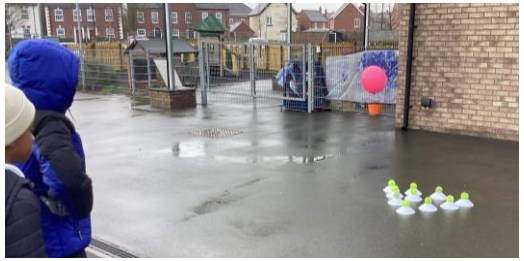
Year 6 (Pogson Class and Walker Class)

On Monday, we had our dodgeball festival, which was really exciting! We participated in a range of activities to practise the skills we need for a game of dodgeball. This included moving quickly between a line of cones for fast footwork; aiming a ball at a net and catching it as it bounces back; throwing and catching a ball with a partner and even putting these skills in action through a dodgeball mini game!

In English, we have written and edited our campaign leaflet to persuade either families to offer to a refugee family, or to hotels to offer their support to refugees. We used a range of emotive language and other persuasive techniques to make our reader think deeply about this. We included statistics too, so that our reader could verify the facts and truly understand how many refugees are seeking safety around the world.

In Maths, we have used our reasoning skills to solve problems related to ratio and proportion. It was really important that we used our times tables to help us explore the multiplicative relationship between numbers. We also started our new Maths unit on algebra, using one-step and two-step function machines to calculate a missing value or rule to calculate a missing value.

On Thursday, it was our Early Islamic Civilisation Workshop. It was fantastic to apply our learning so far about the Early Islamic Civilisation and significance of Baghdad and begin to learn more about other aspects of the Civilisation. We learned about the Silk Road, which we will be developing upon in History lessons in the next few weeks.



Bedtime Stories

On Thursday, we held our first **Bedtime Stories** event for Years 1 and 2.

We would like to say a huge thank you to all the parents, carers and children who joined us for such a lovely, cosy evening. It was a pleasure to see everyone snuggled up and enjoying a selection of wonderful stories read by familiar faces.

Reading for pleasure is so important for children's wellbeing and we were delighted that so many families chose to spend this special time sharing stories together.

We hope you enjoyed the relaxed atmosphere and that you left feeling calm, cosy and ready for a good night's sleep.

Thank you again for helping to make the evening such a success – we are looking forward to the next one already!

Parking and Supervision on the Playground

If you're parking near the school during drop-off or pick-up times, please park considerately to maintain good visibility for other drivers and pedestrians.

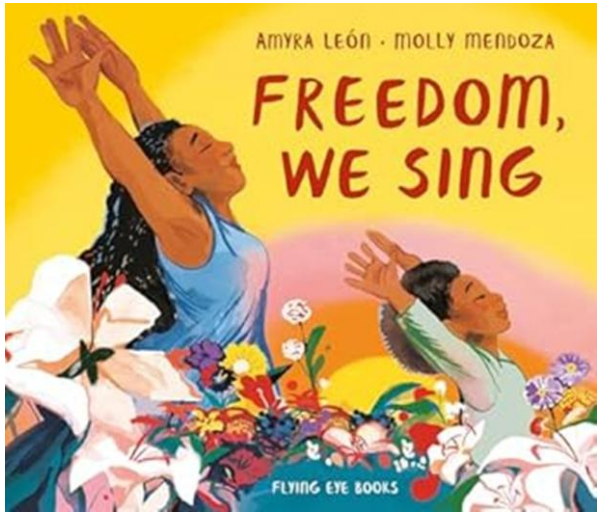
Please also ensure that children are supervised by a parent or carer at all times while on the playground. For drop-off and collection, children should be taken directly to their classroom doors and picked up from the same place, remaining with the parent/carer at all times whilst on the school site. We ask that children are not left to walk from the school gate to their classrooms on their own.

Children in Year 5 and Year 6 may walk to and from school independently, but only if permission has been granted by a parent or carer.

Thank you for your support in helping us maintain a safe and welcoming environment for everyone.

Collective Worship

During Worship Through Story, we read *Freedom, We Sing* which discussed the diversity of humanity and the connectedness that unites us all. After reading the story, we reflected on the values Respect and Community, which are highlighted throughout the book.



This week, Turing Class led Friday's Celebration Collective Worship. They shared their fascinating learning so far in Year 4. Well done, Turing Class!

Collective worship at St Gabriel's always aims to be **inspirational** for all, **invitational** to all and **inclusive** of all.

Worried about a Child?

If you have concerns that a child is suffering any form of abuse, neglect or cruelty, contact the Warwickshire Children and Families Family Connect immediately by calling 01926 414144.
Lines are open Monday to Thursday 8.30am - 5.30pm, Friday 8.30am-5.00pm.

If you need to get in touch out of usual office hours, please contact the Emergency Duty Team immediately by calling 01926 886922.

If you think that a child is at immediate risk, contact the police immediately by calling 999.

Community Events

Monday 26th January 2026
7pm until 8.30pm
18+

Sound Bath Meditation

Class Rate £17

With Evelyn Frain

Join us for an hour of deep relaxation, where you will receive the benefits of sound bath.

Refreshments available afterwards.

Taking place at St Gabriel's C of E Academy. Houlton, Rugby

To reserve a place, please contact office@stgabrielscofeacademy.org

Key Dates

Monday 26th January – Sound Bath Community Event
All proceeds from ticket sales will contribute towards further enrichment opportunities for the children and school projects.

Tuesday 27th January – Understanding and Managing your Child's Emotions - a Parent and Carer information session (2.15-3.10pm)

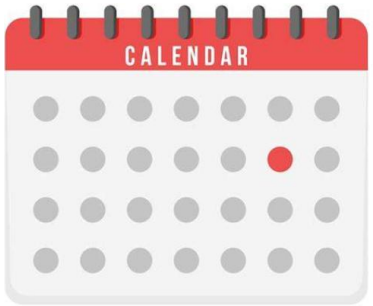
Friday 30th January – Walker Class Celebration Worship

Friday 6th February – NSPCC Number Day
Celebrate Number Day by dressing up as a robot or rockstar!

Wednesday 11th February – Parent and Carer Coffee Afternoon (Children's Mental Health Week)

Thursday 12th February – Children's Mental Health Week Cake Sale

Friday 13th February – Rauf Class Celebration Worship



Recommended Read

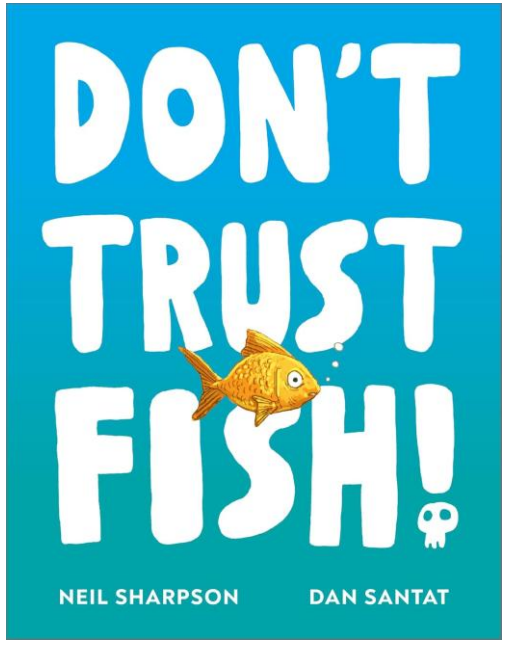
Don't Trust Fish by Neil Sharpson, illustrated by Dan Santat.

Have you ever noticed that fish spend all their time under water? What are they plotting down there? Did you know that a group of fish is called a 'school'? Exactly what are they learning in these 'schools'? We must find answers. But one thing's for sure. Whatever you do:

Don't. Trust. Fish.

Laugh along as you learn lots of fishy facts from a very suspicious narrator, who believes that there's something more than a bit fishy about fish...

Prepare to laugh, learn and maybe even look at your pet goldfish a bit differently! With deadpan humour from celebrated Irish author and playwright, Neil Sharpson, this is a laugh-out-loud picture book that will be loved by children and grown-ups alike. Perfect for fans of Jon Klassen's 'I want My Hat Back' and B.J. Novak's 'The Book With No Pictures'.



Online Safety

National Geographic Kids is a fantastic website to explore with your children. It offers a wealth of information, captivating photos and engaging games that support children's geographical understanding. The site provides a safe and child-friendly platform where learners can interact with fun, educational content while developing curiosity about the world around them.

https://www.natgeokids.com/uk/

Maths Problem of the Week

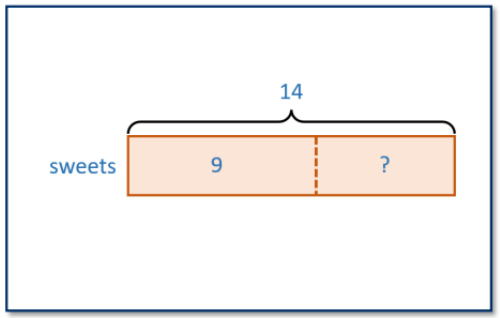
KS1

1 Mo has 14 sweets.

9 of the sweets are red.

The rest are green.

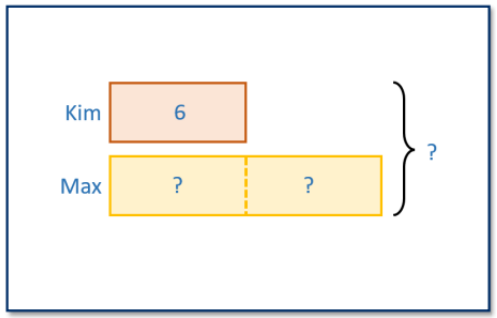
How many sweets are green?



2 Kim wraps 6 presents.

Max wraps twice as many as Kim.

How many presents do they wrap altogether?



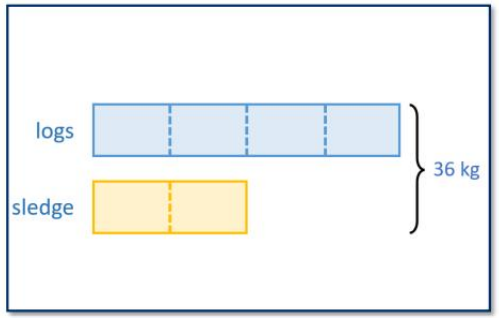
KS2

3 A sledge carries 4 identical logs.

The sledge is twice as heavy as 1 of the logs.

The total mass of the sledge and logs is 36 kg.

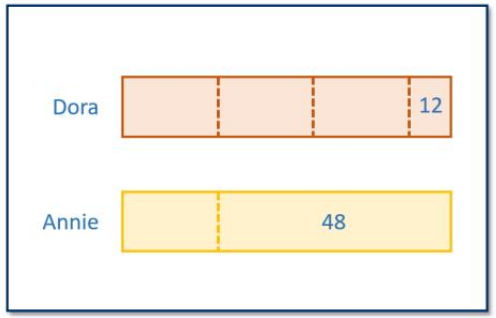
What is the mass of 1 log?



4 At the Christmas Fayre, Dora and Annie take part in a quiz.

- Dora gets 12 questions wrong.
- Annie gets 48 questions wrong.
- Dora answers 3 times as many questions right as Annie.

How many questions are in the quiz?



Challenge

A shop stocks 216 hats and scarves.

- $\frac{1}{6}$ of the items are hats.
- More hats are then delivered.
- Now $\frac{1}{4}$ of the items are hats.

How many hats were delivered?

Answers

Answers

1 There are 5 green sweets.

2 Kim and Max wrap 18 presents altogether.

3 The mass of 1 log is 6 kg.

4 There were 66 questions in the quiz.

5 There were 24 hats delivered.

Family Support

Understanding and Managing your Child's Emotions - a Parent/Carer information session

On Tuesday 27th January, join the Mental Health in Schools Team to learn more about supporting children's emotional regulation. The session will run in the main hall, between 2.15 and 3pm. Refreshments will be provided.

Please let us know you are attending by completing the short form.

St Gabriel's CofE Academy, Houlton Way, Houlton, Rugby, CV23 1AN

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