

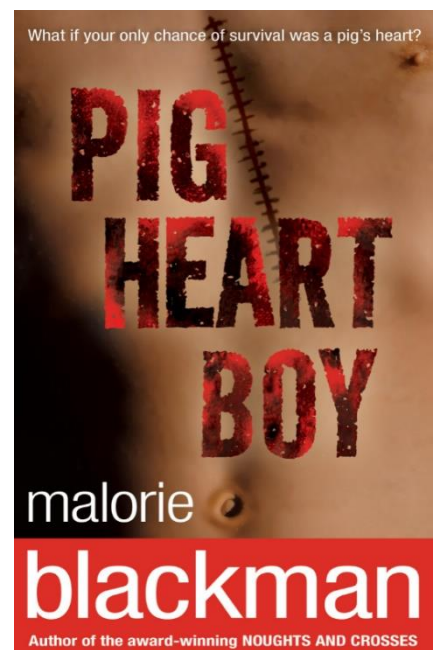
Autumn Term at Alverton.

Welcome back to school! After a tumultuous eighteen months or so, we are now looking forward to being back at Alverton again, the children now entering Year 6. The last year at primary school is always an action-packed time, as the children begin the journey of leaving behind their junior school days and getting ready to embrace the independence and challenges of life in secondary school. It was unfortunate that the summer term ended in such a rush, but at least the children were able to go on their first trip in over a year, to the Cod Beck Reservoir at Osmotherley, where I know they had a fantastic day making dens and splashing about in the water. It was lovely to see the class being so free and having so much fun, and we will hopefully be able to visit again sometime later in the school year. I know that Mrs Turner and I are keen to continue last year's good work with the class and this time round we are joined by Mrs Gomersall, who I know is greatly looking forward to getting to know the children.

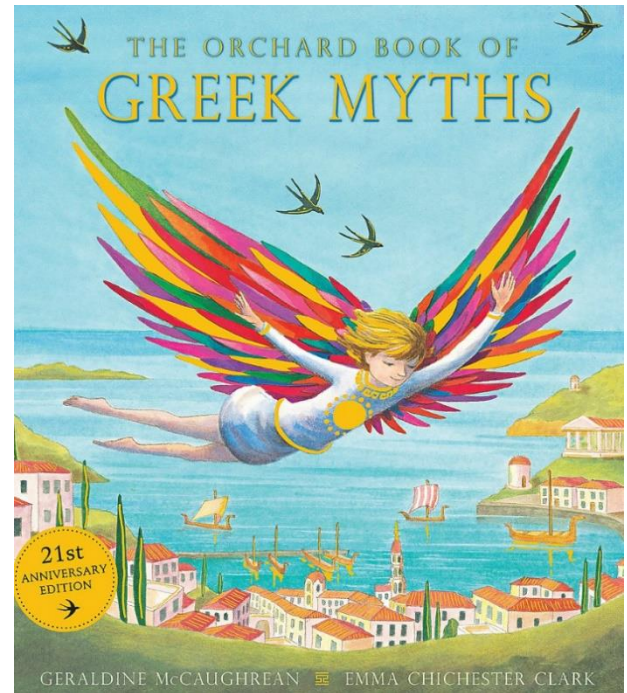
The gardening the children began last year has resulted in a bumper crop of plants and Mrs Turner is anxious to get things going again this year as soon as possible, so those children who really enjoyed to opportunity to get away from all things academic can once again immerse themselves in the soil. On that note, it is wonderful to see the lovely wild-flowers finally take seed and blossom in the wild-flower meadow by the entrance to KS2. The children put in so much hard physical work to creating this and I hope they get a chance to take pleasure in the flowers, much like the bees and the butterflies have been doing, before it is dug over and made ready for the next crop.



Our book for this term is 'Pig-Heart Boy' by Malorie Blackman. You may have seen the TV adaptation of her book 'Noughts and Crosses' last year, so you will know that the author is not one to shy away from contentious issues. Having read the book to a previous Year 6 class a couple of years ago, I am pleased to say that the children are already gripped by the first-person story of Cameron and his family. Most of our writing will be centred around this science-based topic and will include reports on investigations into cardio-vascular fitness and health-related matters as well as focusing on aspects of the story itself.



Later in the year, we will be switching focus from science to history and geography with a new topic based around Greek Myths. This will be a great chance for the children to study ancient history, not to mention becoming better acquainted with myths from the past and writing their own!



Consolidation is key to maths success in Year 6, so maths will be more of the same topics as last year: place value; calculation methods; fractions; measuring and so on, with extensions into concepts now being introduced – percentages with fractions, for example, and squared and cubed numbers together with measuring the area of triangles. Practical problems will be solved too, with the children applying their knowledge to calculate problems familiar and new.

Miss Headley will be teaching the class French, music and RE this year, whilst for the first time in a long while, swimming will be recommencing very soon. This will take place on Mondays/Wednesdays and will continue throughout the autumn and spring terms.

As before, we would like all children to read for at least ten minutes each day, with an adult on hand to listen and to sign the children's planners. Homework will now be set on Wednesdays and will need to be brought into school for marking on Mondays.

Children also have access to these websites, where work will be set from time to time:

[www.readingeggs.co.uk](http://www.readingeggs.co.uk)

<https://login.mathletics.com>

<https://play.ttrockstars.com/auth/school/student/15840>

[www.purplemash.com/alverton](http://www.purplemash.com/alverton)

<https://www.learningvillage.net>

<https://web.seesaw.me>

The children have been given all their passwords at the start of the year, which will be written in their planners for safe keeping. With your support, I am certain that the children will do very well this year and really achieve their potential. They are a great bunch and I hope we can make their last year at Alverton rewarding in many ways.

Here's hoping for a great term!

Mrs Alexander

## **Design Technology**

At Alverton, we believe that Design and Technology helps to prepare children for the developing world and encourages them to become creative problem-solvers, both as individuals and as part of a team.

Through the study of Design and Technology, the children combine practical skills with an understanding of aesthetic, social and environmental issues. Design and Technology helps all children to become discerning and informed consumers and potential innovators. It provides children with a greater awareness and understanding of how everyday products are designed and made.

Across EYFS, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, we plan Design and Technology activities so that they build upon prior learning of the children. We give children of all abilities the opportunity to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding and ensuring progressive challenge, breadth and depth to their designing and making. Each year we aim to begin a new term with a bold and innovative Design and Technology project based around a song or book.

Design and Technology at Alverton can be summed up by asking of the children that they:

- make something that has moving parts
- make something using needles and thread
- make something nutritious and tasty to eat.

Subjects such as English, Maths, Science and Computing are reinforced through Design and Technology by giving children the opportunity to:

- apply methods of calculation and measurement to real-life situations.
- write plans, instructions, rationales and evaluations.
- articulate ideas and compare and contrast their views with others.
- discuss views and clarify design ideas.
- use a range of increasingly technical vocabulary.
- apply scientific knowledge to designs and inventions.
- use a range of resources including computer design.

We believe that children at Alverton will leave school being fully prepared to meet the challenges ahead and be thoughtful, questioning, resilient and diligent in all aspects of Design and Technology.

## **Computing**

The Computing curriculum at Alverton goes from strength to strength. Children are taught specific computing skills in a series of formal lessons. These skills are then applied independently by the children in a variety of contexts so that pupils are able to consolidate their computing teaching by applying their knowledge to report on, compare and generally explore all aspects of the rest of the curriculum. As well as the iPads available on both sites, children have access to a range of laptops and tablets as part of their everyday learning. The ICT suite, much envied by other schools, has been updated with new computers, enabling children, regardless of ability, to work and research better than ever before, as well as using the Green Screen to create all manner of films and backdrops. The CTOUCH boards in every classroom allow all kinds of multi-faceted learning to thrive. The results of these improvements in hardware mean that children become fluent in using different operation platforms, manage a variety of browsers and become competent with working with many different apps and programs. Our Digital Leaders are always on hand to help out where needed in order to facilitate the smooth delivery of the Computing Curriculum...or to ensure that everyday technology applications are primed and ready to go.

E-safety is at the heart of everything we do in Alverton. Children are taught from an early age how to spot signs of inappropriate behaviour by others when online, how to report abuse and how to be responsible and caring users of the internet. Every time children go online, adults in school question the children to ensure that they understand what is and isn't appropriate. Each year, we participate in Safer Internet Day activities and we encourage parents to come to us with any concerns over their child's internet use, providing them with a variety of resources that they can access to help develop their understanding.

The recent hiatus in formal, school-based learning has meant that apps such as Seesaw have really been pivotal in helping children to remain in touch and connected with each other. Used in school as a metacognitive learning tool, Seesaw, in conjunction with Teams, has allowed children to continue with their collaborative learning out of school whilst providing much-needed reassurance of still being part of a class with the Alverton school community.

We are justly proud of our Code Club. As well as teaching the children how to work both independently and alongside others, having to persevere through many steps to try and identify what has gone wrong and how has meant that children who attend Code Club have been able to really develop resilience. Now in its sixth year with Richard – our Code Club volunteer tutor – at the helm, the children have been able to embark on all kinds of projects using not only Scratch but also using Microbits hardware and programming in Python and HTML. Code Club has provided an opportunity for children across KS2, from the youngest to the oldest, to really get to grips with debugging and problem-solving, using a variety of creative methods.

At Alverton, we understand clearly our responsibility in preparing children, whatever their needs, for their next stage of education and for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life, laying the foundations so they can take their place successfully in modern British society and the wider world.

Useful websites:

- <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/>
- <https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/online-mobile-safety/>
- <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>