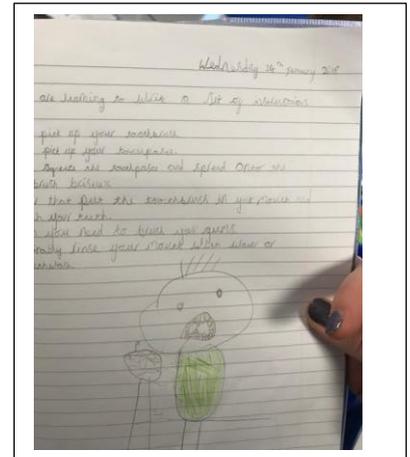
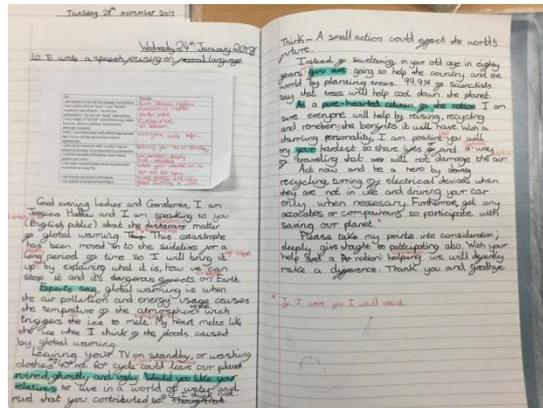
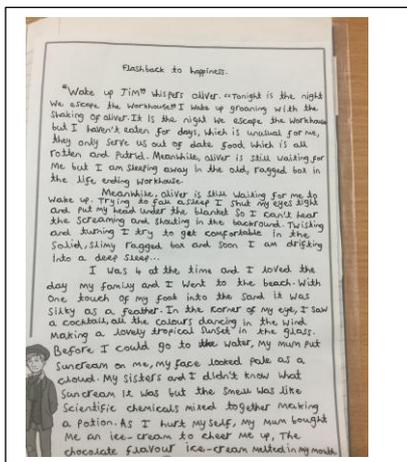


It's all about fractions!

Welcome to the third Principal's news blog for the week starting 22<sup>nd</sup> January. On Monday the whole school were treated to a production of Aladdin. I thought it was a lovely way to spend a grey January Monday afternoon and the children absolutely loved it. One year 4 pupil said 'It was good, it was scary and it was funny!' It is a great way to enrich our lives and as we know from the way year 6 are engaging with Macbeth, everyone is able to immerse themselves in the human drama, acted or written out for them.

I have seen some fabulous writing across the school – all the way from Reception to Year 6. Here are some beautiful examples from year 5 and year 1.



What one piece shows, in addition to the high quality writing, is the way that teachers mark so children know what to do next. The 'over the shoulder' approach that teachers and teaching assistants are using in class, helps children get instant feedback about the work they are doing and also gives the teachers an insight into the strengths and areas which need further teaching for individuals and as a class. Children know that green is used to show they have done something correctly. Children edit in red and teachers use a yellow highlighter for spelling to correct and orange for grammar.

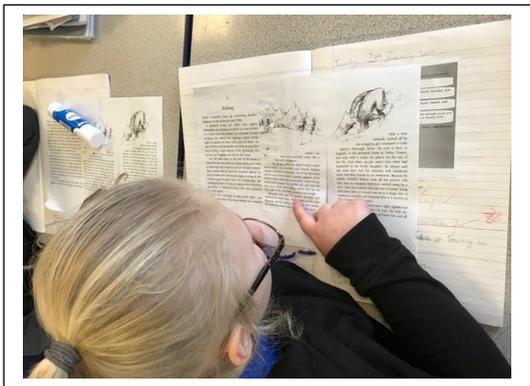
On Tuesday this week, Mrs Maddox and Mrs Polson attended a launch event of Mentally Healthy Schools, which has The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and Prince Harry as patrons. The event explained about a website which will have resources available to schools including teaching PowerPoints, strategies and tips for teachers to support children. The website is supported by The Royal Foundation, together with The Anna Freud Centre, Young Minds and Place2Be. The Duchess of Cambridge was also present for part of the morning and gave a speech on the importance of mental health and getting this right from the start and how important schools are in supporting young children. She also spoke about being aware of the pressures put on school staff and the wish not to add further to this, but for it to support staff. Elstow was one of only two Bedford Primaries to attend and we are

proud to be associated with the initiative. We are determined to drive forward a better understanding of how to keep our young people safe and happy.



They attended the event which explained about and provided access to resources particularly for primary schools.

Here is a display up in the school and I particularly like the Random Acts of Kindness on there too. I will be discussing with the children in assembly about how to smile and be kind to make someone else's day!



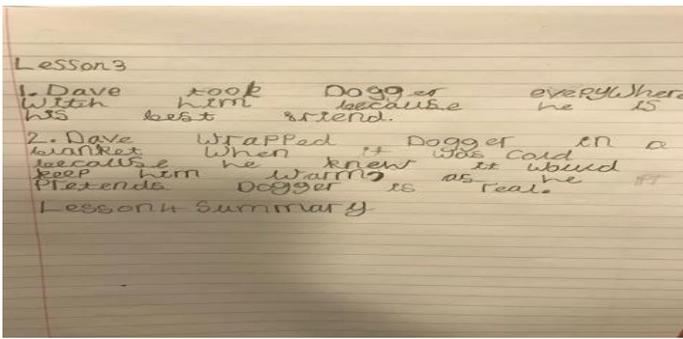
Our reading is coming along in every class now – here is a year 3 pupil modelling how she follows the text and practises reading out loud. Texts are always challenging and then all the children are supported by the teacher or friends if it's a little tricky. We are seeing children using new and exciting vocabulary now – a word I heard used this week was 'drench'.

Miss Holmes met with the Head and Literacy lead from Bedford Free School this week about extending the way reading is taught here in secondary school. Exciting! I look forward to sharing with you all how the reading has really helped our children deepen their vocabulary and enjoyment of books.

This week has seen a real focus on fractions in Mathematics. This is as a direct result of the updated assessment in each year group for mathematics. Mrs Whiting and Mrs Ciantar have analysed all the papers and identified the weaker areas. There are ideas for how to support the teaching of fractions on the curriculum tab on the website. If you are not sure or would like some ideas please ask the class teachers. Fractions can be difficult to understand but are a key essential part of Mathematics.

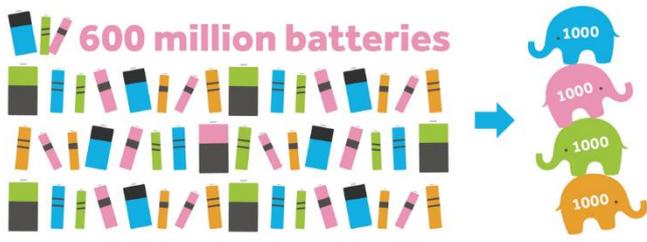
A big shout out goes to the year 1 team for their phonics in house assessment this week – year 1 are on track to achieve 95% pass! Some children have made enormous progress between the end of autumn and now. We are always delighted when children have support at home in decoding; year 1 are thoroughly enjoying reading interesting and challenging

texts now in class and below is an example of the writing they do following their reading.



Next week....

**Did you know?**  
Each year, we throw away about 600 million batteries.  
Over 20,000 tonnes of batteries end up in landfill sites – that's as heavy as 4,000 elephants!



We are going to be collecting used batteries as part of a school initiative led by Duracell. Please send in used batteries next week and we will get children to put these in the recycling bins we have on order.

**Which batteries can we recycle?**

Only collect these types of battery:



They will have been used in things like:  
TV remote control, toys, torches, scales

I am telling the children all about this in assembly on Monday!

Have a great weekend

*Samantha Baxter*