

Year 2, Autumn 1, Curriculum Learning

Dear families,

A warm welcome back!

We are so excited to begin another wonderful school year with you and your child. It has been a joy to welcome everyone back into Penguin and Elephant Class. The grown ups working in our Year 2 team are: Shireena, Lucy, Iqra, Zainah and Samia. From all of us, we hope you enjoyed a splendid summer and made lots of new memories with your loved ones. The children have settled in beautifully and have made a fantastic start to the year. They are already eager to dive back into school life and their learning journeys. At the heart of everything we do is the wellbeing of our pupils. We believe that happy, well-regulated children are able to thrive and achieve their very best, and we are committed to supporting each child with care and attention. If there is anything you would like us to know about your child, please don't hesitate to keep us informed as working together helps us to support every learner in the best way possible.

This newsletter will give you a snapshot of all the exciting learning taking place this half term across different subjects. You will also find key dates and upcoming events to add to your calendar. We encourage you to use the Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary at home with your child to help consolidate their learning. We'll be using the CUSP curriculum for many of our subjects this year. CUSP is based on research and helps children learn in a way that really lasts. It focuses on key skills and concepts while keeping lessons exciting and engaging. A big focus for Year 2 will be reading. Reading is the gateway to accessing all curriculum areas, opportunities and independence. We will be working hard to strengthen children's fluency and comprehension skills so they can grow into confident, enthusiastic readers.

English:

Year 2 pupils will explore *The Lonely Beast* by Chris Judge, a heartwarming story about a rare creature's quest to find friendship. Through this unit, children will develop their reading fluency and comprehension by discussing story events, predicting outcomes, and exploring rich vocabulary. They will take part in a variety of writing activities including **character descriptions, letters, and their own imaginative Beast journey stories**. Pupils will also practise key grammar skills such as using **expanded noun phrases, coordinating and subordinating conjunctions, and correct verb tenses**. This unit will encourage creativity, empathy, and confidence in both reading and writing.

Pupils will also be diving into the imaginative and empowering story ***Billy and the Beast* by Nadia Shireen**. Children will explore the adventures of Billy and her friend Fatcat as they outwit a hungry Beast using clever thinking and the surprising tools hidden in Billy's curly hair. Through the engaging sessions, pupils will develop their reading fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary, while also building confidence in writing. They will write character descriptions, retell the story, and even create their own imaginative versions. Grammar skills such as using descriptive language, sentence types, and conjunctions will be embedded throughout. Our focus this half term will be securing letter formation and sizing and ensuring all sentences include a capital letter and full stop.

Phonics:

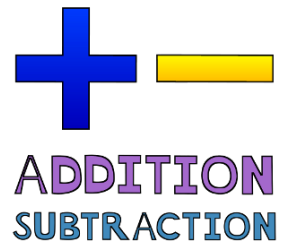
All pupils will continue their phonics learning through the Read Write Inc. programme. Half-termly assessments will guide reading groupings and inform your child's reading level. Phonics lessons last one hour and are carefully structured, consistently sequenced, and fast-paced. Lessons are taught by a trained member of staff of the Read Write Programme. Daily reading at home is essential to nurture positive reading habits and help your child experience success as a reader. This term, our main focus is on accelerating decoding skills to complete the phonics programme by the end of Autumn 2. This will allow pupils to build strong comprehension and inferencing skills for the rest of the year. Most pupils will focus on reviewing set 3 sounds and reading longer words known as 'multisyllabic' words. All pupils will have weekly access to three levelled reading books, levelled online quizzes via Oxford Owl, and virtual phonics videos. Your support in encouraging participation and engagement is always greatly appreciated.

Core book challenge:

This year we will embark on a new Core Book Challenge that consists of 30 new books for Year 2 pupils. It is a fantastic way for pupils to develop their love for reading. Your support means so much. All the children should have a 'Tell Me Grid' which they fill out with a grownup at home after immersing themselves in a core book. Wherever the children are in their core book challenge journey, please remember that all children have the whole year to complete this reading challenge. Pupils can hold onto a book for a maximum of 2 weeks to ensure everyone can read all the books. We would love for more children to share their grids at school and talk about which stories they have read so far and share their reviews. If you have any questions or are unsure on how you can support your child, please get in touch.

Maths:

This term in Maths, we are beginning with Place Value using numbers up to 100. Children will deepen their understanding of how to read, write, and represent numbers, as well as explore how numbers are structured. They will use their knowledge of place value to sort, compare, and order numbers confidently. To support their understanding, children will work with part-whole models and place value grids, which help them break numbers into tens (10s) and ones (1s) and explain their reasoning. They will also practice counting forwards and backwards efficiently in steps of 2, 3, 5, and 10, developing fluency and mental agility with numbers. You have access to the units of work and example maths questions on the website here [Mulberry Learn – Mulberry Wood Wharf](#) and these are broken down into half term units.



Our next unit will focus on Addition and Subtraction. Children will build on the number bonds to 10 learned in Year 1, which are crucial for developing a strong sense of numbers and mental calculation skills. They will learn to write fact families to understand the relationship between addition and subtraction and use one operation to check the other. Children will also be introduced to the concept of “make 10”, a strategy that helps with quicker mental calculations. Throughout this unit, they will have plenty of opportunities to practice using concrete resources, pictorial representations, and abstract calculations, ensuring they develop both confidence and mastery in their maths skills.

Science:

This half term in Science, Year 2 will be learning about Living Things and Their Habitats, a unit designed to spark curiosity about the natural world and develop children’s scientific thinking. The class will explore a variety of habitats, such as woodlands, ponds and gardens, and investigate the different plants and animals that can be found there. They will learn how living things depend on each other for food and shelter, and why certain habitats are suited to creatures. Children will also take a closer look at microhabitats, such as the damp spaces under logs or stones, to discover the small creatures that thrive in these conditions. As part of this learning, they will build their understanding of food chains, identifying producers, predators and prey, and begin to see how these links are vital for survival. Along the way, pupils will develop their scientific vocabulary, using terms like



carnivore, *herbivore*, *omnivore*, and *habitat* with growing confidence. They will also practise key skills such as observing closely, asking questions, classifying living and non-living things, and recording their findings in different ways. By the end of the unit, children will have a deeper appreciation of how habitats provide for the needs of living things and the importance of protecting them. Parents can support this learning by exploring local parks, gardens or outdoor spaces with their child, encouraging them to notice and talk about the plants, animals and habitats they see.

Geography:

This half term in Geography, Year 2 will be learning about physical and human features. Children will explore the natural parts of our world, such as rivers, mountains and beaches, as well as human features like houses, roads and bridges. They will work as geographers, using maps, photographs and key vocabulary to identify and describe different places. Through comparisons, problem solving and practical activities, pupils will learn to spot these features in their local area and further afield. As part of this learning, we will take a trip around Canary Wharf to explore our local area. Children will observe and discuss the different buildings, waterways, transport links and open spaces, applying their knowledge of physical and human features in a real-world setting. This hands-on experience will help pupils make connections between what they have learned in class and the environment around them, developing their skills as young geographers. By the end of the unit, they will be able to confidently explain the difference between physical and human features and talk about how these shape the places where we live.



Art and Design:

This half term, Year 2 will be exploring expressive drawing techniques in their Art unit. Pupils will experiment with a wide range of materials such as pencils, charcoal, pastels and paint while discovering how different surfaces and tools can create unique effects. Inspired by music, movement, and the illustrations of artist **Beth Krommes**, pupils will explore how lines, shapes, and textures can convey mood and atmosphere. They will learn to make thoughtful choices about the marks they use, from swirls and dashes to cross-hatching and stippling, and will apply these skills to create their own imaginative pieces of art. This unit will encourage creativity, confidence, and curiosity, as well as helping pupils develop their ability to talk about and reflect on their artistic choices.



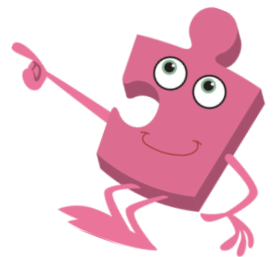
Waves



Pupils will also embark on an exciting artistic journey inspired by the abstract work of **Wassily Kandinsky**. They will explore how music can influence visual art by using colour, line, and shape to express different moods and emotions. Children will experiment with both traditional brushes and handmade tools such as twigs and feathers to create a variety of marks and textures. They will learn how to mix primary colours to create secondary ones and apply these in imaginative ways to paint concentric shapes and expressive compositions. This unit will help pupils develop their painting techniques while encouraging them to reflect on how art can communicate feelings and movement.

Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE):

In PSHE, through the topic "Being Me in My World," children will explore their role within the school community and reflect on what it means to be a responsible and respectful member of society, all with the help of Jigsaw Jo! They will learn about their rights and responsibilities, considering how their choices and behaviours affect themselves and those around them. The unit places a strong emphasis on developing key social skills such as **empathy, teamwork, and effective communication**. Children will engage in a variety of activities and discussions that help them understand different perspectives, resolve conflicts positively, and work collaboratively towards shared goals. We are excited to see our Year 2 children grow in confidence, develop meaningful relationships, and build a strong sense of belonging as they navigate this important topic. Through this learning, they will not only understand themselves better but also appreciate the important role they play in making our school a caring and supportive environment.



Religious Education (RE):

Over the course of this year, we will be looking at Christianity, Islam and Judaism. Pupils will begin the year by learning about Judaism and exploring the question: 'Who is Jewish and what do they believe?' This enquiry will encourage children to think deeply about faith, tradition, and belonging. We will begin by looking at what might be found in a Jewish home and how these objects reflect Jewish beliefs and ways of life. They will learn about the importance of Shabbat, the weekly day of rest, and discover some of the special traditions and rituals that families take part in during this time. Towards the end of the term, we will focus on Chanukah the festival of lights. Through stories, discussions, and creative activities, we hope to help children develop both their knowledge and their respect for different faiths and cultures, while making connections to their own lives and experiences. During the spring term we will look at celebrating sacred festivals of Easter and Eid ul Fitr as well as learning about the story of Passover. In the

summer term we will answer the question 'How should we care for others and the world and why does that matter? As always, we warmly invite you to share with us any festivals or celebrations that are special to you and your family. By doing so, you give us the opportunity to celebrate together as a community and to help the children appreciate the richness of the many traditions that make up our school.

Black History Month at School:

Throughout October, the whole school will be celebrating **Black History Month**. This is an important opportunity for children to learn about and celebrate the achievements, stories and cultures of Black people from around the world, as well as to recognise the contributions they have made to society today.

Across the school, every class will be **reading a different story each day** written by Black authors or exploring traditional tales from African and Caribbean countries. These stories will help children to understand different perspectives, traditions and voices.

We are delighted to welcome storyteller **Wendy Shearer** to school on **Monday 6th October**. Wendy's storytelling brings history and culture to life in a way that inspires children's imagination and deepens their appreciation of diverse stories.

In addition, we have a range of special events planned throughout the month, including parent workshops and African drumming sessions. Please keep an eye out for more information about how you can get involved.

Families may also wish to take part in **free children's events at the National Maritime Museum**, including puppet shows and workshops, or visit the **Discover Children's Story Centre in Stratford**, which usually hosts fantastic family activities. More information can be found here: [Discover Children's Story Centre](#)

French:

We are excited to share that this year we are introducing French as our Modern Foreign Language (MFL) and are delighted to welcome Tom, our French teacher based at Mulberry London Dock. While French is not a statutory requirement for Year 2, we are pleased to extend this opportunity to other year groups, and the children will work with Tom every Monday. This half term, Year 2 will focus on greetings, instructions, numbers, months, birthdays, and basic conversation. Lessons will be delivered through a multisensory approach, including words with actions, songs, games, and some worksheet activities, so children can also begin to develop reading and writing skills in French.

Computing:

This half term in Computing, with Junior Jam instructor Ridwan, pupils will be learning about digital communication and the different ways we connect with others in the modern world. They will explore seven forms of communication: emails, texts, voice notes, pictures, postcards, video calls, and music. Through practical activities, pupils will create mind maps of communication methods, practise writing texts and recording voice notes, role-play video calls, and discover how music and images can express feelings. They will also design and write digital postcards, including a creative task responding to Alex the Alien, and learn how to structure and write safe and effective emails to share what they have enjoyed most about the unit. Along the way, pupils will discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each method, develop their confidence in using apps such as Strip Designer, iMovie, GarageBand, and Voice Memos, and reflect on how technology helps us to stay connected both near and far in personal and professional life.

Music:

In Music this half term, the children will be working with our Junior Jam instructor, Dolvani, to explore music theory using keyboards. They will have the opportunity to listen to and study different musical scores and genres, gaining an understanding of how music is structured and expressed. Alongside this, the children will begin to learn the basics of composition, experimenting with their own ideas and creating short pieces. Using the keyboard as a practical tool, they will be able to apply their knowledge in a hands-on way, developing both their confidence and their creativity as young musicians.

Physical Education (PE) :

On Tuesdays, with dance instructor Effy, children will be exploring Latin and Ballroom dance, with a focus this half term on rumba and paso doble. Through these sessions, children will develop coordination, rhythm, and musicality, learn how to perform simple step patterns and sequences, work with a partner, building teamwork and cooperation and express themselves creatively through movement and storytelling in dance. The emphasis will be on fun, confidence, and creativity, while also giving children an appreciation of different cultures and dance traditions.

On Thursdays, with Junior Jam member Thomas, children will explore the unit of Multiskills. Multiskills provides a non-sport specific, fun, challenging, and enjoyable starting point for pupils' involvement in sport. Each session includes a wide variety of games and activities that help children develop key skills and attributes—such as balance, coordination, agility, and teamwork. These skills can then be applied to a wide range of sports and physical activities that children may enjoy in the future.

This term we will be doing the following:

Weekly PE lessons	Tuesday and Thursday
Spelling	Monday (spell check- Friday)
Celebration assembly	Every Friday
Give me 10	Every Thursdays 8:50-9:05

Homework:

Re-establishing a home learning routine this year will support your child and give them valuable extra practice to strengthen the skills they're learning at school. Year 2 's home learning will involve weekly spellings and daily reading of your child's phonics book. The additional books in their book bags can also be used for home reading.

Our half-term home project is ***“Printing Places: Celebrating Canary Wharf”***

This term, we are turning our eyes to the exciting shapes and sights of Canary Wharf! For your home project, you will choose **one local building or sculpture** and create a **print** inspired by it. Perhaps you'll pick a shiny skyscraper, a tall tower, or one of the wonderful works of art hidden around our streets.

This project links to our school's core values:

- **Community** – by celebrating the places that make Canary Wharf special to us all.
- **Creativity** – by experimenting with colours, textures, and printing techniques to design something unique.
- **Resilience** – by practising and improving your printmaking skills, even if it takes a few goes to get it just right.

Show us your imagination, your effort, and your pride in our local community as you bring Canary Wharf to life in print! If you need help with any resources please don't to hesitate to approach the year 2 team.

Submission date: Monday 20th October 2025

Daily reminders:

Our uniform consists of:

- A purple sweatshirt or cardigan with school logo
- Purple or white polo shirt with school logo
- Black trousers, black skirt or black pinafore
- Lilac/purple school gingham dress (summer)
- Black shoes
- If a headscarf is worn this should be black, white or purple.

Please can you write your child's name on all clothing items.

Water

Please make sure your child brings a water bottle to school.

Bookbag – Please check regularly and take out letters and communication. Pupils should bring their reading wallet to school **daily**.

This should carry the reading wallet with:

- RWI Reading book.
- RWI book bag book
- class library book.
- Reading Record
- Core Book Challenge
- Weekly spellings

Important dates:

- Monday 15th September 3:45pm - Year 2 Parent Workshop Core Book Challenge and Home Reading
- Monday 22nd September – Year 2 Poetry Performance
- Monday 29th September - Year 2 Trip – Exploring Our Local Area
- Tuesday 7th October –School Photo Day

Complex Speed Sounds

Consonant sounds

f	l	m	n	r	s	v	z	sh	th	ng
ff	ll	mm	nn	rr	ss	ve	zz	ti		nk
ph	le	mb	kn	wr	se		s	ci		
			gn		c		se			
					ce					

b	c	d	g	h	j	p	qu	t	w	x	y	ch
bb	k	dd	gg		g	pp		tt	wh			tch
	ck		gu		ge							
	ch				dge							

Vowel sounds

a	e	i	o	u	ay	ee	igh	ow
	ea				ā-e	ē-e	ī-e	ō-e
					ai	y	ie	oa
					a	ea	i	o
						e	y	oe

oo	oo	ar	or	air	ir	ou	oy	ire	ear	ure
ū-e			oor	are	ur	ow	oi			
ue			ore		er					
ew			aw							
			au							

Science Vocabulary

<div> <div></div> Tier 2 multiple meaning or high frequency </div>		<div> <div></div> Tier 3 subject specific </div>	
thrive	to grow and be strong	oxygen	gas essential to life
depend	to rely on	nutrition	process of taking in food
producer	something that makes its own food	respiration	process of using oxygen to release energy from food
consume	to eat, drink or use up	sensitivity	ability to detect and respond to changes
prey	animal hunted by another animal for food	reproduction	process of making new life
predator	animal that hunts others for food	excretion	process of expelling waste

Geography Vocabulary

<div> <div></div> Tier 2 multiple meaning or high frequency </div>		<div> <div></div> Tier 3 subject specific </div>	
contrast	comparing two or more things in order to show the differences between them	fieldwork	study that consists of practical activities that are carried out away from your school
record	writing or drawing that is an account of something that can be looked at in the future	settlement	the place people live, for example a village, town or city
surrounding	near or around something	coastal	near a coast
natural	existing in nature; not made or caused by humans	worship	an act of showing respect for a god
shelter	a structure built to give protection	location	a place where something exists
observe	to see or notice something	rural	rural places are far away from large towns or cities