Squirrels Class – Half-termly Round-up

Our topic this term has been *Celebrations*!

We began by celebrating Halloween, and the children were excited to share how their families mark this occasion at home. Our hook book was *Room on the Broom*, which inspired pumpkin carving, making spiders' webs and writing potions in our cauldrons.

We then moved on to Fireworks Night, exploring why it is celebrated each year on the 5th of November. After reading about Guy Fawkes, the children began to make links with historical events and noticed how the clothing worn by people—and even the king—in the illustrations looked different from today. We created colourful firework art and talked about how to stay safe around fireworks, sparklers and bonfires.

We also learned about Remembrance Day and discussed why people wear poppies at this time of year.

In RE, we have been thinking about our own birthdays, exploring how we celebrate them, and discovering that everyone has their own traditions. Our class book was *Little Glow* by Katie Sahota and Harry Woodgate. This beautifully illustrated story introduced the children to the idea that different families celebrate in different ways and it supported our learning about a celebration that is unfamiliar to many of the children.

We have also been enjoying learning about how Diwali is celebrated both in this country and around the world. Diwali, known as the Festival of Lights, is celebrated by Hindus, Jains and Sikhs. It symbolises the victory of good over evil and light over darkness, and is marked with decorated homes, divas (oil lamps), colourful Rangoli patterns, fireworks, feasts and new clothes. It is a time for new beginnings, joy and prosperity.

To deepen the children's understanding, we watched a short clip called *My First Diwali*. This helped them visualise what the celebration looks like and supported rich discussions. The children made thoughtful links between Diwali and celebrations they already know, noticing similarities and differences.

The children particularly enjoyed exploring Diwali-inspired creative activities. They created Rangoli art on foil, carefully dotting patterns inspired by one of our storybooks. They also used chalk on black paper to design mehndi patterns, decorating hand outlines with swirling, intricate designs. These activities supported fine motor skills, pattern-making and cultural awareness.
The children are very excited to continue their learning next week when they will be making their own diya lamps to celebrate the Festival of Lights.

In Maths, we have been developing our counting skills, recognising numerals and beginning to record our work. We have explored the concept of "one less", using practical activities, key vocabulary and number lines. The children particularly enjoyed pegging the ghosts and choosing resources that interest them; ponies were a firm favourite!

In SCARF/PSHE, the children have been learning about what makes us the same and what makes us different. They have been discussing their families, traditions and celebrations, and are

beginning to understand and respect each other's uniqueness. They recognise that we don't all look the same or celebrate in the same way—and that each of us is special.

Fine motor skills continue to develop through a range of activities, and we are seeing lovely improvements in handwriting. The children are working hard in phonics, which is strengthening both their reading and writing. Their resilience and determination when tackling their individual next steps has been outstanding.

We have been making the most of the dry weather whenever it appears! The children have loved playing the reading challenge game with friends, building incredible models in the outdoor construction area and making delicious pumpkin pies in the mud kitchen. With the arrival of colder, wetter and windier weather, they are very aware that winter is just around the corner!

The children have also been busy learning their parts for the nativity, singing the songs and performing a beautiful dance. The performance was spectacular and we think the children thoroughly enjoyed the whole experience.

Next term, we would like to invite parents to **"Welcome In Tuesday" on the 3rd February 2026.**

Wishing everyone a very Merry Christmas!