



MINERVA NEWSLETTER 1

22nd September 2023

A warm welcome to everyone as we start a new academic year at Minerva Primary Academy. It has been particularly lovely to meet our new children and families into our early years' classes. The children have settled quickly, developed positive relationships with each other and the team and are already enjoying learning in our fantastic environment. Children also look smart in their new uniform.

During our first whole school assembly of the year, children shared their personal triumphs they were proud of. These including completing the summer library challenge, using the new language they had been learning over the year, climbing the three highest mountains in England, Scotland and Wales and learning to swim. It was a perfect chance for children to use their improving oracy skills to speak confidently, project their voices and engage with others across our MPA community.

As you enter our playground you will see that our nature area has grown over the summer with all the rain. The plants, vegetables and seeds the children planted as part of our curriculum in term 5 and 6 have thrived. Classes of children have been going out to explore, look after and enjoy. Individuals have also been fascinated in the number of insects we now have living there. This area has further improved our playground making it more biodiverse. This project is a result of our ECO warriors and pupil council listening, discussing, making decisions, and working with the adults across the school to have impact. We are very excited to see the ideas that are prioritised this year.

Visitors into school during the last two weeks have all commented on how engaged and settled the children are with learning in each class. This is a fantastic start for everyone, and I look forward to another year of learning and achievement through our joy filled curriculum.

Jenny Harvey
Principal



THIS TERM IN CITIZENSHIP (PSHE) THE FOCUS IS *BEING ME IN MY WORLD*'

This learning sequence teaches and supports children to know they are part of different teams within our Minerva community. The children discuss, rehearse, and review our routines and expectations of **'safe, respectful, learning'**, in class, around school and within our wider community.

This unit is crucial in our curriculum to support children's **sense of self, responsibilities and belonging**. It also develops into pupils understanding their place in the global community.

In school we have many children modelling to others how they are **taking responsibility for themselves, our environment, and others**. Children in our morning wrap around club have been litter picking in the playground, year six have been watering and weeding in our new nature area and individuals have been helping children who are new to MPA. Well done for being fantastic examples of a **Minerva Global Citizen**.



ATTENDANCE

At Minerva we know that being in school every day will help your child to have the best school experience - not only learning lots of new facts and skills but also having lots of opportunities to socialise and develop emotionally. Being in school every day will help your child to feel happier and more settled.

While we have had a good start to the term with attendance, we want this to continue. As we move into the Autumn and Winter children can pick up minor illnesses. Even when a child has a runny nose, cough, or sore throat they are still ok to attend school. If you aren't sure, then please ring the office (0117 3772990) and a member of staff will be able to advise.

Over the last year we saw a big increase in families taking term time leave to go on holidays. Unfortunately, this has meant that children are missing out of significant amounts of learning and this impacts on their academic progress. It also can mean that when the child returns to school, they feel unsettled as they have missed out of key experiences and events that the rest of their classmates have been part of.

Sadly last academic year (September 2022- July 2023) 22 families at Minerva were issued Penalty Notices from Bristol City Council due to term time leave. Each Penalty Notice equates to £60 per parent per child so for a family of two parents and two children this would be £240. For a term time holiday of a significant length Bristol City Council may choose to prosecute, leading to a fine of up to £1000. If you need to take leave during the term time, please complete a form (from the office) at least 4 weeks in advance. You will be invited into Minerva to have a meeting to discuss the reasons for the absence.

WELCOME PICNIC

Thank you to all the families who joined us on Wednesday 6th September in the playground to enjoy our very hot and sunny welcome back picnic. It was wonderful to see parents, children and staff reconnecting after the summer break. Thank you also to the Friends of Minerva so providing us with refreshments and entertainment.

Please watch out for future whole school events support by FOM. The next event will be the Halloween sale after school on Tuesday 31st October.



FRIENDS OF MINERVA WELCOME PICNIC



A massive thank you to Friends of Minerva for a whopping £203 raised from the welcome picnic to go towards the school

A 'HELLO' FROM FRIENDS OF MINERVA (FOM)

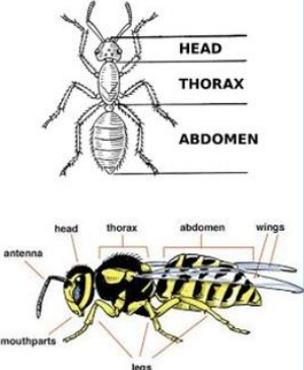
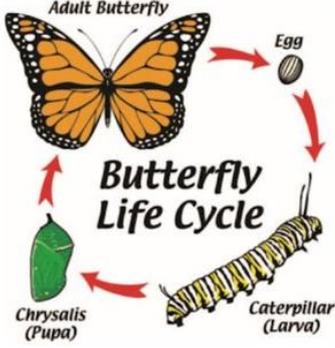
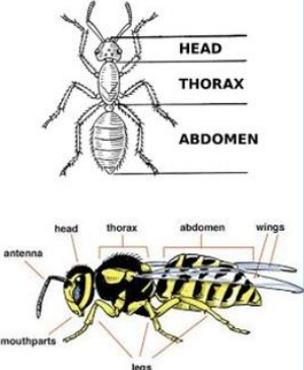
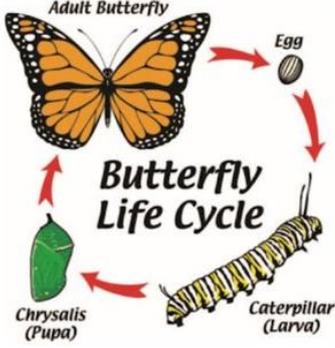
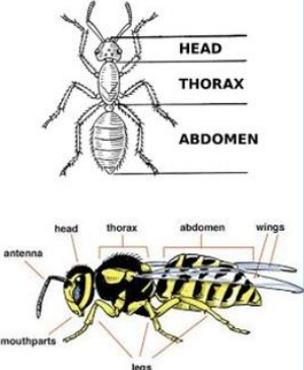
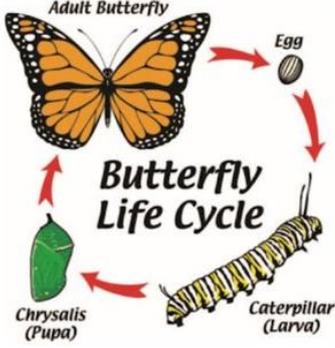
Hello Minerva Community. We are a group of parents who volunteer our time to run events and raise money for the school community. We hold seasonal events throughout the school year for everyone to enjoy. In addition to this, we run a weekly informal stay, play and connect afternoon every Friday from 1:45 - 2:45 in the Main Hall. All parents and carers are welcome to join, and they can bring along with any preschool age children (3 years old or under). During the afternoon there are refreshments, toys for children to play with and other parents to chat to. If you would like to join this there is no need to book, just turn up to the main office and you will be met by a member of FOM.

If you would like to be a part of FOM and volunteer some of your time to raise money to benefit all pupils at Minerva please give the team an email - friendsofminerva@mail.com. Even if you can't commit to every event helping out at just one or two event across the year will make a big difference.

KNOWLEDGE ORGANIZERS

Knowledge Organisers

At MPA we use Knowledge Organisers to share the key concepts and key knowledge (facts, vocabulary, images) with the children. They have a copy in their books and together as a class they create a large Knowledge Organiser on a display board as they learn through a unit. When a Year Group starts a new unit we send home a paper copy of the knowledge organiser so that you can discuss the learning with your child and so they can use it to support their homework. This is an example of a Year 3 Knowledge Organiser:

 <p style="text-align: center;">Year 3 Term 1 W/B: 13.09.21</p>	<h3 style="margin: 0;">Which ELLI animals can be classified as insects?</h3> <h3 style="margin: 0;">We are scientists</h3>					
<p style="text-align: center; color: #f4a460;"><u>Key Vocabulary</u></p> <p>abdomen – the rear section of an insect’s body. Contains organs which help the insect to digest and breed.</p> <p>antennae – organs which pick up smells from the air (a bit like a nose!) and help the insect to feel its way around.</p> <p>characteristics - A feature belonging to a person, place, or thing which helps to identify them.</p> <p>classification – putting things into a group based on particular characteristics.</p> <p>insect – a small animal with six legs and three body sections (a head, a thorax and an abdomen). Most adult insects have wings too</p> <p>Invertebrate - animals without a backbone or bony skeleton.</p> <p>exoskeleton - a hard, shell-like covering on the outside of an <u>insects</u> body.</p> <p>thorax – the middle section of an insect’s body. This is where the legs and wings attach to the body.</p>	<p style="text-align: center; color: #f4a460;"><u>Key Knowledge</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">There are 27,000 types of insect in the UK.</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%; padding: 5px; vertical-align: top;"> <p style="text-align: center;">Physical parts of an insect</p>  </td> <td style="width: 33%; padding: 5px; vertical-align: top;">  </td> <td style="width: 33%; padding: 5px; vertical-align: top;"> <p style="text-align: center;">Life cycles</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Butterfly Life Cycle</p> </td> </tr> </table>			<p style="text-align: center;">Physical parts of an insect</p> 		<p style="text-align: center;">Life cycles</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Butterfly Life Cycle</p>
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You may want to glue these in to the Orange Home Learning books that were sent home at the start of the school year so you can refer back to prior learning. At the end of each day we use the time to review and recap learning so the children are familiar with revisiting a knowledge organiser from a previous unit to help them to remember the key concepts and make links between their learning (Spider – ELLI).

WORLD AFRO DAY 15th SEPTEMBER

Friday 15th September was World Afro Day. We celebrated this with our children through our whole school assembly called the 'Little Big Hair Assembly' - a national initiative to celebrate and educate children about the natural hair of people from black and mixed-race ethnicities. We discussed key words like 'identity' and 'belonging' and it links to our planning forward for Black History Month which we'll be celebrating in the month of October -



WELCOME TO RECEPTION CLASS

Our reception cohort have made a good start to the new school year. They have all settled well and have been enjoying exploring both the inside and outside spaces. We have seen lots of mixing in the mud kitchen, pouring in the water area and performances in the music area. The reception team have enjoyed getting to know all of the new families and will continue to support our children to become safe and respectful learners.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Tuesday 3rd October	Nasal Flu vaccine Reception – Year 6
Tuesday 3rd October	KS2 CLIC (Children learning in class)
Wednesday 4th October	EYFS WOW Wednesday (Parents invited into class)
Thursday 5th October	KS1 CLIC (Parents invited to see children learning in class)
Tuesday 10th Oct & Wednesday 11th Oct 3.30pm 6.00pm	Parents evening
Thursday 19th & Friday 20th October	October Inset days
Monday 23rd –Friday 27th October	October Half Term
Monday 23rd October – Friday 27th October	The Sports Project half term holiday club