Coley Primary School – Knowledge Organiser

SUBJECT FOCUS:	History – The Great Fire of London	YEAR 2	TERM 3

The Great Fire of London

Key Events and Facts	
When and where did the fire start?	The Fire of London started on 2nd September 1666 in Thomas Farriner's busy **bakery** on Pudding Lane. The fire lasted for 5 days.
Why did the fire start?	Thomas Farriner was the baker for King Charles II and forgot to check the fire had been put out properly.
Why did the fire spread so quickly?	In 1666, he weather in London had been very hot and it had not rained for months. The buildings in London were mainly built out of wood, straw and a sticky black substance called **pitch**, which are flammable. Additionally, houses were packed tightly together and a strong wind was blowing which made it easy for the flames to spread.
How did people try to put the fire out?	There was no fire brigade so ordinary people used **leather buckets** and **water squirts** to try to put the fire out, but these did not work. Later in the week, King Charles II ordered buildings to be demolished with **gunpowder** to make **firebreaks** and stop the flames from spreading.
How did the fire spread and when was the fire put out?	Monday 2nd September 1666: Samuel Pepys wakes up and finds out that the fire had already burnt down 300 houses! Tuesday 3rd September 1666: The people try to put the fire out by using leather buckets of water and then pulling down houses with fire hooks. They hope this will make a fire break but the fire keeps on spreading. Wednesday 4th September 1666: **St Paul's Cathedral** burns down. Thursday 6th September: The wind had died down which meant that people were able to put out the flames. Many people were left homeless because their houses burnt down.
How many people died?	Only 6 people died as a result of the fire. Thomas Farriner's maid was the first person to die because she was too scared to jump from the burning building.
After the Fire	
What happened after the fire?	400 streets were burnt to the ground, 87 churches lost and more than 13,000 houses reduced to ashes. 70,000 people were left homeless with many leaving London to live elsewhere and some slept in tents in the fields.
How was London made safer?	Charles II made a decree that houses should be built out of stone and further apart. Any businesses that used fire (bakers, brewers) would not be allowed in the city centre.
What if another fire broke out?	Private firefighting services were set up to protect buildings during fires. People paid for the service so their buildings had fire marks to be identified by each company.

Diagrams and Symbols



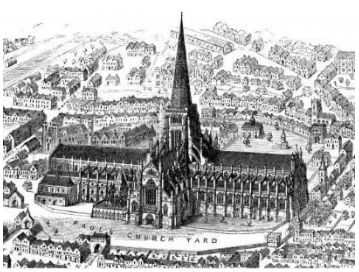
Water Squirts



Leather Bucket



Fire hooks



St Paul's Cathedral before the Fire of London.

People using buckets and fire hooks to stop the spread of the fire.



Key People



Samuel Pepys lived in London in 1666. He was a Member of Parliament and wrote a diary with an eyewitness account of the events of the Fire of London.



King Charles II ordered buildings to be pulled down with gunpowder to make firebreaks and stop the fire spreading. His home, the Tower of London, survived the flames.



Thomas Farriner was the baker to King Charles II. He had a busy bakery in Pudding Lane where it is believed the Fire of London started.



Sir Christopher Wren was the architect who designed St Paul's Cathedral in London and rebuilt 51 other churches in the City of London after the Great Fire in 1666.

Key Vocabulary

bakery	A place that makes bread, cakes, etc.	**St Paul's Cathedral**	A very large church in London. A new St Paul's Cathedral was built after the fire.
pitch	A sticky black substance	**leather buckets**	A container used for carrying water
water squirts	A handheld water pump	**Fire hook**	A metal pole with a hooked end that was used for pulling down buildings that were on fire
flammable	When something burns easily.	**gunpowder**	An explosive powder used to blow up buildings
firebreaks	When buildings are destroyed to make break so the fire doesn't spread to the next building.	**thatched roof**	Dried straw tied tightly together and laid on the roof of a building
timeline	The order in which events happened	**embers**	The burning remains of a fire
Eyewitness	A person who saw an event and can therefore describe it.	**Tower of London**	Where the King lived in 1666. It did not catch fire because the fire was stopped just before it reached the place.

Possible Experiences;

- Children make Tudor Houses at home and bring them to school.
- The Great Fire of London Game
- Fire of London Art
- Observational drawings of Tudor Houses
- Role play Fire of London
- BBC Radio Fire of London Songs about the River, Bakery, Rebuilding London, etc.
- Learning about the Fire of London on the giant London Map.
- Coley Fire of London in the playground

The Great Fire of London, 1666
Jan Griffier I (c.1652–1718))

