A Warm Welcome into Dubai Class!

Year 2 Team
- Mrs Issa (Class Teacher)
- Mrs Norman (LSA)
- Miss Greenwood (1:1 LSA)
- Mrs Mitchell (1:1 LSA)
- Mrs Cluely (Classroom Assistant Thursday afternoon)
- Mrs Hill will cover the class on a Thursday afternoon.

Welcome to Year 2
I trust you have all had a lovely summer and enjoyed some sunshine and rest. I am really looking forward to the upcoming academic year and hope the children are as excited about Year 2 as I am!

I would firstly like to introduce myself to those of you who don’t know me, my name is Mrs Issa and I will be your child’s teacher as they embark on the next stage of their journey into Year 2. I am sure that this year will be exciting and a valuable stage in your child’s learning curve. I am pleased to announce that Mrs Norman, Miss Greenwood, Mrs Mitchell and Mrs Cluely will also be highly valued members of the Year 2 team and they will be offering their support and guidance in order to aid your child in learning to the BEST of their potential.

Working collaboratively will provide endless opportunities for your children to flourish and will allow the children to become consistent as they learn, laugh and grow together. Year 2 is a very important year; it is the year that provides the children with a more structured approach to education which will allow them to take ownership of their own learning and development. During year 2 the children will become more confident and competent in reading and writing and will expand their knowledge across all areas of the curriculum. I firmly believe that you, as parents, are the first and most important educators of your children and feel that it is important that support in learning is provided at home as well as at school. The most effective way to do this is to encourage your children to read at home. Reading is the underlying factor to success in all areas of the curriculum, if a child can read competently they are already half way there! Reading books will be provided regularly for you and your child to enjoy at home. You are always welcome to visit us in Year 2 and I encourage you to come and see me so I can assist you with anything you or your child may need.

Why is Year 2 important? Mrs Issa’s Secret Agent Tasks (SAT’s)

Towards the end of the academic year, the children will be completing a number of tests in Reading, Writing, Spelling/Grammar and Maths (SAT’s). The administration times of these tasks and tests are flexible and done in small groups. There is no need for any practice tests to be carried out at home, however daily reading and homework activities are recommended.
The results of these tasks and tests are used alongside the ongoing teacher assessments, which help to provide a complete and rounded picture of a child’s attainment at the end of the key stage. Please ensure all homework activities are completed as this will contribute towards what your child has learnt in school and will help to prepare them for their SATs tests.

**Behaviour**
You will be aware that there is a whole school focus on appropriate behaviour for learning. In Dubai Class I have high expectations for behaviour and will insist that standards are high. The children are aware of this and we will continue to work on what good behaviour for learning looks like. There are many systems for rewards and appropriate consequences are in place to keep disruption to a minimum. I usually discuss serious behaviour issues with parents swiftly to ensure that matters can be dealt with urgently. Rewarding children for smart work, learning and behaviour is something I relish and take pride in. In Dubai Class we acknowledge every effort and like to empower children to achieve. Children strive to be crowned: Star of the Week, Smartie Pants of the Week, Role Model Reader of the Week, Star Worker of the Week or to simply get a Head Teachers award. This will provide the opportunity for your child to share with you what they are learning and to make them feel proud of their achievements.

**Reading**
Your child will have brought home their new reading book. It’s been lovely to see so many of them getting into the reading habit straight away! Please continue to read regularly with your child. This will help them develop their skills in decoding new words and this also provides them with an opportunity to discuss their reading. One of the best ways to help your child is to read aloud, even if your child is a good reader. Children can concentrate on understanding the text, learn the meaning of new words and develop a love of books if you are a good role model. In Year 2 children read in small guided groups on a weekly basis. Children, from time to time, will also be asked to follow up the reading of their individual book with a reading comprehension task. Please support your child in completing these when set. We recognise that children read at different speeds and because of this we have a system in place whereby the children can change their individual reading books as often as they like through placing their reading book and diary in the allocated ‘Reading’ tray, situated in the classroom. When children do this Mrs Norman will change their reading book on that day. I like to encourage daily reading through our new ‘Reading Olympic’ reward system. Please see separate letter for further information.

**Key word Lists**
Children will be given sets of key words to learn to read. Please support your child to learn these. When your child is ready to be tested, make a note in their key word diaries as the key words are checked on a weekly basis and a new set of key words are given if your child correctly read them. You can develop your child’s understanding further by checking if they can explain the meaning of the key words, construct a sentence using specific words or even by looking through a book to find any words from their key word list. It is important for children to fully understand and apply words that they can read. This will aid them with their writing and will allow them to put words into context.
Mental Maths
Number bonds and counting (forwards and back-wards) always benefit from extra practice! Children will be taught and encouraged to practise number bonds (addition and subtraction) and times tables. The 2, 3, 5 and 10 times table facts should be known by the end of Year 2 – this means being able to say the answer to a multiplication or division question within five seconds. Practice learning tables in preparation for a Friday tables test is important – don’t forget that division facts should also be known. Daily practice for a short while is more effective than last-minute ‘cramming’ the night before. Don’t forget discussions involving maths too, like looking at number plates on cars or house numbers (Are they odd or even? What is the value of 7 in 73?). Lemon Curd and Strawberry Jam will be carried out in class on a daily basis and will be set for homework regularly. Mathletics is a vital resource that will benefit your child immensely with their mathematical understanding. Your child's login details will be stuck into the inside page of their homework books. Please encourage your child to explore Mathletics as much as possible. Your child can earn Mathletics certificates which are presented to them on a Friday in our whole school Celebration assembly.

Homework
Alongside regular reading and learning of key words, pupils will be given homework on a Thursday to complete for the following Wednesday. Pupils are expected to complete homework and hand it in on time. If there are particular difficulties, parents should let the Year 2 team know as soon as possible. Most importantly, always remember to keep learning fun as much as possible. Some things - learning spellings and times tables, mainly - might require some effort and hard work, but the rest of your child’s learning at home can be fun, engaging and practical.

Examples of how you can support your child at home:

- In reading, find and understand clues and consider the writer’s choice of language in a wider range of texts (such as magazines and comics, non-fiction books, or try out a new genre of fiction which your child doesn't normally opt for);
- In writing, try to use new vocabulary as much as possible (eg have a word of the week) and develop more formal ways to talk during your child’s Talk Time homework;
- In maths, practise measuring in contexts such as cooking, shopping, DIY...

Handwriting
In Year 2 children are encouraged to join their handwriting into a more cursive style. Regular handwriting sessions will help to get children practising. Weekly handwriting homework (Practise makes Perfect) will be sent out to help children develop their cursive style. Children who demonstrate the ability to write neatly and joined up will be awarded with a special privilege pencil to use in class.

Spellings
Your child will bring home a super spelling book that will consist of a selection of words to learn, usually linked with their grammar work and I would appreciate your support in helping them learn them. A weekly spelling test will take place on a Friday and new spellings will be sent out on the same day ready for the following Friday. If you would like advice on how to help your child then please don’t hesitate to ask me.
**Uniform**

Please support the school in ensuring that the children take a pride in the way they dress for school. A smart presentation is an important element of appropriate behaviour for learning. If boots are worn into school during bad weather then children should have the correct school shoes to change into. Details of our school uniform policy can be found on the school website.

**P.E**

Our PE days are on a **Wednesday** and **Thursday**. Please follow the school uniform policy and ensure all kit is named clearly. I would urge you to ensure that all the children’s clothing and belongings are clearly named, not only does this reduce the amount of lost property, but it also helps the children to become more independent in dressing and organising their property. PE kit should be kept in a drawstring bag on cloakroom pegs. Please avoid large rucksacks as they do not fit on pegs. PE kit should be taken home each Thursday to be washed and returned before Wednesday.

**Staying Safe Online**

Please do speak to us if you have any concerns about anything your child is doing or experiencing on the internet. Safe and responsible use of the internet is something which is growing and growing in importance – we hear so many shocking stories in the media – so please do take an active approach at home to promote your child’s online safety.

As teachers and parents, we’re aware of the ways in which the use of social media, online gaming and the internet have become part of young people’s lives. We embrace the educational and social benefits of these new technologies and encourage responsible internet use. We’re also increasingly aware of the potential dangers and opportunities for misuse these technologies offer. Key to promoting online safety is open and honest discussions about the sites we’re using and the ways we’re using them – keep the dialogue open with your children about their internet use.

**Themed Topics for this year**

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<th>Autumn: September - December Themes 2017:</th>
<th>Spring: January - March Themes 2018:</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TRAVELLING</strong> - (Science/History/DT/Geography)</td>
<td><strong>WINTER WONDERLAND</strong> - (Geography/Art/Science)</td>
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<td><strong>OURSELVES</strong> - (Science/PHSE/Art/History)</td>
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<td><strong>AUTUMN</strong> - (Art/Geography/Science)</td>
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<td><strong>LIGHT &amp; DARK</strong> - (Art/Science/PHSE/Music)</td>
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<td><strong>POST OFFICE</strong> - (Geography/Art/Music/Science)</td>
<td><strong>Summer: April - July Themes 2018:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>CHRISTMAS</strong> - (RE/D&amp;T/Art/Music)</td>
<td><strong>KNIGHTS &amp; CASTLES</strong> - (Science/History/D&amp;T)</td>
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**Advanced dates for your diary**

- **Harvest performance** - 5th October 2017
- **Parent’s Evening** - 10th & 12th October 2017
- **School Photo’s (individual)** - 12th October 2017
- **Half Term** - 16th October 2017 - 20th October 2017
- **Children in Need** - 17th November 2017
- **Decorations Morning** - 1st December 2017
- **KS1 performance** - 13th & 14th December 2017
- **Christmas Carols around the estate** - 13th December 2017
- **KS1 Christmas Party** - 15th December 2017
- **Panto trip** - 18th December 2017
- **Christmas Jumper Day** - 20th December 2017
- **Toy Day** - 20th December 2017
- **Christmas Holiday** - 21st December 2017 - 8th January 2017
- **School opens to children** - 9th January 2017

It is very important to me that the children are happy in Dubai Class and I ask you to help me with this by communicating any issues to me as they arise. For day-to-day issues such as children going home with a friend, I would prefer either a written note or indeed that the children begin to tell me themselves in the classroom. If there is a pressing issue which you feel would be better for me to know before the day begins then please send a note in with your child or pass a message through the office. For any other issues I am happy to make an appointment for a meeting after school, so that we can discuss matters further.

Finally, I look forward to meeting you all personally at the parents’ meetings later in the term, but in the meantime, please do remember to share any worries or concerns with me as soon as they arrive. We all want the children to be happy and confident in school as this is when they learn best.

I look forward to working with you and your child over the forthcoming year and thank you in advance for all your help and support.

Mrs Issa & the Year 2 Team 😊