Friday 18th January 2019

Dear Parent or Carer,

We are very much looking forward to working with you to enable your child to achieve the best outcomes possible at school this term.

This is a letter to inform you of the topics that will be taught during this term. It provides information about the learning opportunities planned for your child and the skills, knowledge and concepts being developed.

**Singapore Maths**
As you are aware we are using the Singapore method of teaching mathematics.

This method helps to develop pupils’ mathematical skills and confidence without having to resort to memorising procedures to pass tests - making mathematics more engaging and interesting.

One of the key learning principles behind the Singapore Maths textbooks is the concrete, pictorial, followed by the abstract; often referred to as the CPA approach. This approach is based on research by psychologist Jerome Bruner, who suggests that there are three steps (or representations) necessary for pupils to develop understanding of a concept. Reinforcement is achieved by going back and forth between these representations. The children will be provided daily access to practical activities in order to support them with their maths learning journey.

In the Spring Term we will be learning about:
- Addition and Subtraction within 20
- Shapes and Patterns
- Length and Height
- Numbers to 40
- Addition and Subtraction
English
The specific areas of study this term are taken from the *New Framework for Literacy* and a range of published schemes for writing, comprehension and spelling.

Genres that we will be studying this Spring Term in Year 1 are:

- Stories about fantasy worlds (Narrative)
- Stories with familiar settings (Narrative)
- Recount fact and fiction (Non-fiction)
- Traditional tales (Narrative)
- Shakespeare (Henry V and The Tempest)

In writing lessons there will be a particular focus on peer and self-assessment. This means that the children will be developing skills that will enable them to become more independent, knowing where they are in their learning and what their next steps are. Handwriting is a major focus in writing this term. The children will be learning how to form their letters correctly and how to neatly present their work.

Phonics is a large focus in Year 1 to support the teaching of reading. We use the Ruth Miskin Literacy Scheme to teach phonics, the children will be continuing to learn how to blend sounds together to make words and read and write high frequency words.

**Reading Books / Library Books**
Book change will take place on Tuesdays. We now have lovely new books for the children to take home. These books are phonetically decodable, and will be distributed according to your child's reading level. They are part of the 'Rising Stars' and 'Big Cat' series. These books are a range of fiction and non-fiction texts, which are refreshing and relatable. We hope that you will enjoy reading them together with your child. Please also make use of the questions to discuss with your child on the inside of the back cover. After each book that your child reads, please allow time to ask these questions and discuss your child's answers.

The children have been given a yellow Reading Record. Please make comments on the children's reading in the spaces provided; this allows us to monitor their reading at home. I will be rewarding the children who have been reading at home with a sticker at the end of every term. The book is a very good way for you to inform me of any concerns you have about your child's reading or to share their enjoyment of the books they are reading.
Phonics Screening Check
In June, the children in Year 1 throughout the country will all be taking part in a phonic screening check. This happens every year to make sure children have learnt phonic decoding and blending skills to an appropriate standard for their age.

The test contains 40 words and each child will sit one to one and read aloud to a teacher that they know. The list of words the children read is a combination of 20 real word and 20 nonsense or ‘alien’ words which can be sounded out.

The results of these tests will be reported with your child’s end of year report.

When reading, the children will be encouraged to read with expression and fluency. They will also be encouraged to use other non-phonic strategies, such as looking at the pictures and looking at the whole sentence in order to make a good guess at unknown words.

*Please can you support your child with their reading at home to make sure your child achieves their best potential. Use the sound charts provided to support the understanding of phonics. Encouraging your child to take part in the reading challenge is a good way of developing your child’s enjoyment of reading.*

Science
We will be continuing to look at seasonal change with the children. We will also be looking at understanding materials.

- The children will be exploring seasonal change, observing the changes in their surroundings across the four seasons. This term we will be exploring Winter and Spring.

- **Sorting and Using Materials** - We will be using our senses to explore the similarities and differences of a variety of materials. The children will have the opportunity to sort materials into groups based on texture, ability to float, transparency and whether they are magnetic or non-magnetic. Children will learn names of different types of material i.e. metal, plastic, wood, paper, rock, and to recognise that some of these materials are found naturally.

Religious Education
Throughout the year we will be celebrating and learning about festivals and celebrations from all religions. RE lessons will cover the following objectives this term:

Special foods
- The children will learn about special food that people eat as part of their beliefs and celebrations. We always enjoy hearing about the children’s own experience of celebrations and sharing photographs.
Art/ Design and Technology
Where possible we try to link our art to our science lessons and projects. You are welcome to attend our art exhibition which takes place at the end of the year. You will have the opportunity to see the projects done from throughout the year. This term we will be making models of homes as part of our ‘Homes from around the World’ topic.

Music
Music will be linked through our topic and science lessons. This will be done by exploring musical techniques through a seaside theme.

Computing
The children will be learning about features of a keyboard through the computer program Word and through other programs specifically designed for primary school children. In particular we will be learning key computing skills including:
- Changing the font size, colour and style in Word;
- Labelling and classifying information;
- Using the digital camera to record our work;
- Giving and following commands to navigate other children and programmable toys around a course or a familiar journey, including straight and turning movements.
- Collecting information about themselves, such as eye and hair colour, and representing this information in the form of a graph;

Literacy, Numeracy and P.E. will provide learning opportunities that will be supported through the use of computing.

PE
The themes for gymnastics are moving in a wide variety of ways: moving along and across, high and low, in zigzags or straight lines. The dance lessons will aim to develop your child’s ability to express ideas through movements and linked actions. ‘Real PE’ is a PE scheme used in our school, which aims to develop the key skills of agility, balance and coordination. Games are taught each week by Mr Graham (Primary Sporting Development). During weekly games lessons we will focus on skills needed for team games. We will work on specific skills such as striking a ball, bouncing a ball, catching a ball and avoiding other players.

Homework
The homework set this year is to support your child’s learning in class and to practise and reinforce the work already taught in lesson time. The school’s homework policy states that your child should be receiving a regular amount of homework not exceeding 10 minutes per evening. In the front of the yellow reading record there are the children’s username and passwords for the Reading Cloud and Education City, please use these to support your child at home.

The regular homework will include one maths task a week and one literacy task a week, both of which will be given out on Thursday and will be expected back on the following Monday. We reward children who bring back their homework regularly, so please encourage your child to remember to complete it and hand it in.
In addition to this homework, please read with your child each night. It is important that children are reading at home on a regular basis (please remember to make a comment in their Reading Record book).

General
The support of the family is immensely important where pupil progress is concerned. Here are some of the ways you can help your child make good progress at school:

- Ensure your child gets enough sleep.
- Ensure reading happens for a short period every day. Be a reader yourself. Encourage your child to read quietly; read to your child; have your child read to you or a sibling; talk with enthusiasm to your children about what they are reading; visit and join the local library.
- Ensure homework is done and returned on time. Encourage your child to relish the challenge of work that is difficult.
- Talk to your child about their learning. Ask them about the learning dispositions they use at school and encourage them to use them. Our West Twyford learning dispositions are: curiosity, bravery, independence, cooperation, creativity, resilience, discipline and making links.
- Praise your child for the effort they put into their learning.
- Encouraging your child to read their school library books.
- Ensuring completion of the weekly homework.
- Ensuring their PE kit is always in school and named.
- Providing the correct uniform fully named.
- Follow school rules and procedures, such as arriving on time.

Conclusion
Please feel free to come to school to discuss any questions you may have; either make an appointment with me or Ms Collum, the Deputy Head, or with Miss Martin directly.

I hope I have given you an insight into life in our classroom and any other issues, which you may have had queries about. I look forward to teaching your children this term, and am confident that we will have an exciting and successful time together.

Yours faithfully,

Miss Bailey
Class Teacher

Miss Rachel Martin
Head teacher