

Year 2 Spring Term Newsletter

Dear Parents,

Happy New Year! We hope that you all had a lovely Christmas break. As always, we have another busy term ahead of us, which started last week with a few assessment tasks. These have enabled us to see exactly where the children are in terms of their academic attainment and, more importantly, plan what we need to do over the coming weeks.

Our topics for this term are 'India' and then 'Springwatch' after the half term break.



India

So far we have built on our Autumn Term Geography learning on the different continents, oceans and climates around the world and have located India, its largest cities and its main physical and human features. Vocabulary plays a big part in our teaching and we would expect all of the children to be confidently using words such as the following when they are talking to you about their learning at home:

globe	hemisphere	Equator	country	city	town	village
desert	mountain	hill	valley	river	ocean	forest
climate	weather	tropical	urban	rural	building materials	
population	inhabitant	indigenous people	community			
transport	trade	education	agriculture	currency		

On Tuesday 1st and Wednesday 2nd February we are delighted that a lady called Sunita will be joining us to lead workshops on several aspects of life in India. Sunita has been working with us for many years and the children get so much from the experience. Letters about it will be sent out next week.



Springwatch

This is a very Science-led topic in which we will be looking at the features of 'living' things, offspring and how they change into adult animals, food chains and habitats.

Reading

Children in Year 2 will continue to read to their class teacher or teaching assistant frequently and they will also take part in whole class 'Talk for Reading' sessions during which we teach specific reading skills and, very importantly, extend the children's comprehension skills. You can support us at home not only by listening to your child read, but by asking questions about the text they have read. Reading with an adult is vital at this stage, even if it is only a few pages every night. The books will be checked daily so please remember to write a comment in your child's diary. We are really pleased with our new reading scheme. The books are slightly different to our old scheme and should really be read twice before they are changed to enable the children to fully comprehend what they have read.

Our 'Talk About Books' have also proven to be a good introduction, so much so that some children are holding on to books longer than a week! We have deliberately selected books that are likely to be beyond their current reading level as we would like to expose them to more challenging texts in order to extend their vocabulary and variety of genres. Inside most of the books is a 'Talk About...' card with suggestions of questions for you to discuss. Please ensure that these are returned to school every Friday. We keep records in school regarding the books that the children have borrowed. Our 'Author of the Term' is Francesca Simon. Copies of many of her books for the children to borrow can be found in the basket in the corridor.

Maths

We are coming to the end of a unit on Picture graphs and will be moving on to reading scales on thermometers and other measuring equipment as part of our work on temperature and mass. Any additional practice at home of weighing things, particularly on scales with a dial, will really help the children to get an understanding of what a kilogram, 500g, 100g, etc. are and will aid them when estimating masses of other objects.

After that we will focus on money, fractions and word problems and will be using bar modelling to help us with this. We have started to use them in school, but will send home a 'help guide' nearer the time.

End of Year Assessments (SATs)

During the summer term, your child will be taking part in statutory assessment tests in grammar, punctuation and spelling, reading and mathematics. These will take place throughout May and will be administered in a very calm and relaxed environment. Often children do not realise they are actually doing a test! The writing will be based on the pieces of independent work that they do across the year.

Wednesday Mornings

The class teachers are in school on Wednesday mornings, but you may be greeted at the door by Mrs Fuller, Mrs Huesken or Miss Johnson as they teach the children French, Music and RE. Each week your child will be taught two of these subjects.

Homework

This is set every Friday and should be handed in by the following Wednesday, please. Our homework activities are linked to either the literacy or topic work covered during the week and also include a maths activity. Hopefully the guidance given with the tasks enables the children to complete them without too much input from you, but if you are unsure about any of them, please do not hesitate to contact their teacher.



Please keep encouraging your child to use the Numbots and Times Tables Rockstars apps weekly or even daily. We have noticed a marked improvement since the start of the year, particularly with children who do so. It might seem a long way off, but when they are in Year 4 they will have a statutory times tables test that is very similar to the TTRS app.

Log-ins

Your child should have their log-in details for Numbots, TTRS, Epic books and the Purple Mash website in the front of their reading diaries.

Uniform (including PE kits)

We appreciate how expensive uniform can be and how frustrating it is when items go missing. If each item is named we can return them quickly. Their PE kit is also part of their uniform and should be returned to school straight after each holiday. Unfortunately we cannot let the children participate without the appropriate footwear and clothing. All of Year 2 have an outdoor PE session on a Thursday and an indoor session on either Tuesday or Wednesday. As fresh air and exercise are so important, we will be outdoors for playtimes and PE, unless the weather is too extreme, so please ensure that they have a warm coat as well as an extra jumper and tracksuit bottoms for PE.

Water bottles

Drinking water has been proven to aid brain activity so we will always encourage this throughout the day. Please ensure your child has a NAMED water bottle in school every day. We will send these home to be washed every afternoon. Unfortunately there are few children who do not have one in school at the moment.

Contact

Home-time is a good opportunity for you to speak to your child's class teacher as the mornings can be quite hectic! However, we appreciate that this is not always possible and email is often a more effective way of getting a message to us or asking a question. We are not always able to read them and reply straight away, but will get back to you as soon as we can. This may be the next school day.

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