



All Souls' Catholic PRIMARY SCHOOL

Year 6 – Autumn Term Newsletter

Friday 18th September 2020

Dear Parent(s)/Carer(s),

Welcome back!



It truly is so wonderful to be back and have my classroom full with the buzz of children once again! Each and every child entered our classroom on the first day back with huge smiles and buckets of enthusiasm, which straight away put a smile on our faces and made us even more excited about the coming year.

Over the past two weeks, we have taken the time to settle into our new 'normal' and get to know one another. We already feel like one big team in Year 6 and Miss Quinn and I are looking forward to helping them all achieve their goals and enjoy their final year of primary school.

Year 6 Expectations

For many reasons, Year 6 will be the most important year of your child's educational life so far and the class have a lot ahead of them, in terms of their academic, personal and faith journeys. Year 6 is very much a transitional year as the children reach the end of Key Stage 2, end their time in Primary Education and take their first steps towards adulthood. I am confident that this class is capable of rising to the challenges presented by Year 6; they have begun to show this by establishing themselves as positive role models in what has been a rather unusual start to the year. All we ever ask in Year 6 is that everyone tries their best and in return they are sure to have their best year yet!

Autumn Term Curriculum

The curriculum has started slightly differently this year with more of a focus on the basic skills in spelling, grammar, reading, writing, arithmetic and times tables. We are having shorter bursts of these lessons more regularly to help remind children of their prior learning and fill any gaps they may have missed so that they can continue to make good progress. We are thrilled to have Mr Youson back supporting us with our PE curriculum and are spending more time outdoors every day (especially whilst the weather is being kind to us!). We are also lucky to have Miss Quinn's artistic flair helping us develop our own talents; you can already see some of our fantastic Notan artwork on our blog page. Our Science curriculum will continue as usual, starting this term off by exploring '*Living Things and Their Habitats*' and hoping to use the outdoor environment as much as possible to help us in this. RE in Year 6 looks slightly different as the children have an extra Confirmation lesson in addition to their usual RE lesson per week to ensure that they are prepared for their next step in their faith journey. Although indoor trips are limited at the moment, we are hoping to organise some outdoor trips soon to support us with different areas of our curriculum.

Homework

This year, children will continue to receive homework tasks but they will be set and completed via Google Classroom. We are currently training the children to use this and so it will be up and running the next few weeks. Tasks will continue to focus on their reading and regular practice of times tables and spellings. These basic skills are vital to their education. Keeping their knowledge sharp and learning to apply them in different ways will greatly benefit them this year. Homework will be set on a

Monday and be due in the following Monday. We already have a reward system in place in the classroom which aims to help children strive to be each term's Reading Rockstar, Spelling Superstar or Timestables Trooper!

Reading – Reading is the most valuable homework that your child could ever do and in Year 6 it is expected that they read for a minimum of 15 minutes every day outside of school. Whether loved or loathed, everybody has to read to get about their daily lives and so if your child has no interest in developing their reading as a passion, then they must develop it as a skill! As we are trying to limit the number of items coming in and out of school, children have, for the time being, not been provided with the usual reading record. Children will therefore need to be even more organised, mature and independent in ensuring that they are reading both regularly, and a wide variety of literature. I ask for your support in encouraging, monitoring and taking an interest in your child's reading.

If your child is still on the school reading scheme, as opposed to them taking one book home at a time, we will be issuing them with several books to take home in one go. These books should only be returned when they have all been read which is, again, to reduce the frequency of items travelling in and out of school. There will be a 'drop box' in the classroom for children to return books to so that they can be fully disinfected before being put back on the shelves. Children who are no longer on the school reading scheme and therefore classed as 'free readers' will choose a book from the class library to read in school and may also take home a selection to read there – should they not have their own books at home. Again, these should be returned when they are all finished and not one at a time. If they are struggling with what to read, please do encourage them to speak to me; I am more than happy to help and have a selection of personal books that I am willing to lend. We want to try and encourage children to read a variety of fiction and non-fiction books and genres. However, please remember that reading is reading, and that reading the sport section of the newspaper with a certain level of interest is far more beneficial than pretending to read a Harry Potter book! Please also remember that, whatever your child's reading ability, there is much to be gained from spending time reading with your child and discussing books. Don't battle with your child over reading: if you are really struggling to get them to do it, talk to me and I'll battle with them instead!

Spelling – Starting in the next week or so, every Friday, Year 6 will be tested on their spelling. This test will consist of 5 words from the Y5/6 statutory word list (sent home in the newsletter the week before) and 5 words that are chosen in relation to testing the spelling rule that we have been focusing on in lessons that week. Children who practise their spelling at home as well as at school will always have more success in their spellings tests.

Times tables – Whilst we will not be sending home the usual 'times tables challenge' sheets at the moment, children should still be practising their times tables on an almost daily basis. Please support and challenge them in it as it really is the most effective way to improve their overall maths ability.

Residential Trip to Plas Dol-y-Moch

As you will be aware, Year 6 are currently due to visit Plas Dol-y-Moch from the 18th-22nd November 2020. Although we do not yet know the likelihood of us attending this trip due to the current situation, we are keeping positive and preparing for the hopeful eventuality that we will be going! We will do our best to update you as and when we know more. In the meantime, should you have any questions regarding this residential trip, please let me know.

Sacrament of Confirmation

Confirmation is due to take place later during the academic year. I will 'confirm' the date with you shortly. The children are very keen to receive the Sacrament and take on the responsibility of becoming full adult members of the church; I am looking forward to guiding them on this journey of faith with the help of Mr Cooke, Mrs Quinn and Father Paul Burch. Whilst the children are very excited to choose both their sponsor and saint, we ask that they take the time to make such big decisions, waiting until they have gained a better understanding of both of these roles through our lessons and sacramental programme. Father Paul is encouraging children receiving this Sacrament to participate in the live streamings of Mass regularly and be seen to support the Parish in any way that we can. In past years, dedicated Confirmation preparation sessions have been held at church during the year. As it stands, it is not currently possible for these to take place, although with guidance changing regularly, there may be scope for increased parish involvement as the year progresses. I will, of course, keep you updated with this.

SATs

All Year 6 children working within National Curriculum requirements are legally obliged to participate in end of Key Stage 2 Statutory Assessment Tests (SATs) which identify the attainment of children in Reading, Writing and Mathematics for national comparison. As it stands, there is nothing to suggest that these tests won't take place as scheduled during the week beginning 10th May 2021; it is crucial that your child attends school during this week. During the coming months, further information and guidance regarding SATs will be issued to you. SATs are not something which either you or your child should be worried about –

