



Plum Class News



Spring Term 1 2019

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Happy New Year and welcome to the spring term! Firstly, I hope you have all had a wonderful Christmas and well deserved break. Next week in Plum class we will begin our new topic 'Winter.' We will be exploring everything cold and wintery. If the snow does fall, we will take this opportunity to have some fun outside, but we don't want too much as we have lots of learning to fit in over the term!

Read, Write, Inc

RWI sessions will continue for all children in Plum class, three times a week. The children have all made excellent progress and are continuing to focus on recognition and forming initial letter sounds. They will also begin to put these sounds together to read and write short words. Most children in Plum class have learnt all the set 1 sounds and have now started blending these sounds together to read words. It is truly wonderful to watch the children's faces as they realise they can read and write! It is so important that we get this right so please do continue to reinforce all of the sounds taught, at home.

Mathematics

This half term, we aim to ensure that everyone in Plum class has a solid understanding of numbers to 20. We're great at counting forwards to 20 and beyond but as counting backwards is trickier, we'll spend lots of time securing this skill. We're going to be focusing a lot of our time in our mathematical work thinking about addition and subtraction. This will be practically based for a lot of the time and we will be encouraging the children to explore the different ways to make a given total (we call this number bonds).

This term, we also want to see the children creating their own calculations and exploring different ways to record these. This creates a far deeper understanding of the concept than simply answering 'sums.' In addition to this, we will be learning to count in 2s, this will be made easier when we pair socks and winter mittens together, again this concept will be taught practically before we move on to anything else. We will also be exploring coins, we will learn to recognise coins up to £1 and use them as part of our general day to day counting and adding activities. The children will really enjoy exploring money and coins in our Chinese Restaurant, this links to one of our topics this half term which is to explore 'Chinese New Year.' Lastly, the children will also be completing tally charts, creating graphs and sequencing a typical day. Throughout everything we learn the children will be exposed to rich mathematical vocabulary.

The World

We have already begun one of our topics this week about common garden birds. We have covered how they survive during the season and the children gave them a little helping hand during this cold month too by making them some tasty food to eat. We made bird seed fat balls and went on a hunt around our garden and field to find the best spots to hang the food. We also spotted many birds flying, tweeting and sitting in the trees. We also discussed 'migration' and why some birds fly away to hotter countries. The children have also had a go at drawing a detailed observation of a particular bird they liked the look of – they are now up on display at the back of our classroom.

Next week we aim to explore signs of winter and will learn that the month 'January is in the season of winter.' From this we will investigate winter in our own country, the children will keep track of the weather and the temperature outside, as a class they will record the daily temperature on a chart. We will also be exploring the concepts of freezing and melting. The children will take part in experiments to help them understand temperatures and which materials are the best insulators (best at keeping things warm) and the best for keeping us dry (waterproof).

Lastly, we will be looking at the celebration of Chinese New Year. It's the year of the Pig and on the day of this celebration (Tuesday 5th February) we will be tasting some Chinese style food. A letter will be sent out about this nearer the time.

During this half term, in everything we do, we will be teaching the essential personal, social and emotional skills needed to keep our classroom a happy and thriving place to spend our days.

Creative Work

Singing is a daily occurrence in Plum class and we'll be learning lots of new topic themed songs as well as enjoying old favourites! There will be opportunities for painting and collaging as we keep to our focal theme during creative work. We will use cold colours, to create winter scene pictures and use selected wintery images and materials to make collages. I hope to see lots of drawings of birds this winter, with the help of some photographs as the stimulus. Of course, there will be plenty of creative materials out every day as part of our continuous provision and children will be free to follow their own interests and ideas.

The Physical Stuff

By exploring the school field and using our new apparatus, looking for birds on bird hunts, spotting signs of winter and our weekly P.E sessions, we will build upon our vital gross motor skills. Scissor work, collaging with sequins and small cut papers, threading activities, model making and a daily session of the children's favourite 'dough disco' will help to ensure that our fine motor skills get a bit of a work out too. Our inside P.E lessons will focus upon the children moving in different ways (flying like birds in the winter winds and dancing to Chinese style music to create a dragon dance.) We'll also use balls, beanbags and quoits as we learn control, throwing and catching skills.

We go outside in all weathers and a spare set of clothes is always appreciated (in case the children do get wet or muddy). Wellies are now essential for this time of year! Your child will only be allowed onto the field at breaks and lunchtimes if they have their wellies on.

Just a small reminder about named clothing! Please ensure all **clothing and shoes are clearly labelled with your child's name** this does include hats, scarves, mittens and coats. Please also ensure that long hair is tied back every day.

Reading

Everyone now has a reading book and the children are doing really well at generating ideas and discussing the stories in small groups. Some children have begun their reading journey and are now on stories with simple sentences. In addition to the reading book, we will start some children with a book of high frequency words. These words are key words which your child, simply, 'just needs to know!' Please practise these words at home with your child, by either doing them as flashcards, or placing them round the house and playing a game of 'find the word.' New words will be added to the book as the child learns the previous ones, so please practise them at home.

Please ensure your child's reading book, record book and word book are in their book bags every day. It is equally important to write a brief comment into your child's reading record book, so we can keep note of how your child is getting on at home.

Exciting News

Miss Whitlow is having a baby boy and will be going on maternity leave from half term! As detailed in the recent letter from Mrs Smith, Mrs Grimes will therefore be the full time Plum class teacher. As Mrs Grimes also carries out management duties within school, Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons will be led by Mrs Vicky and Friday afternoons by Mrs Hammond. **Miss Whitlow's final day of teaching will be Wednesday 13th of February.**

Remember the door is always open if you have any questions or worries!

