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Wednesday 5th September, 2018

Year 4 - Class Newsletter - Autumn Term 1 2018

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to Year 4. We are looking forward to a busy and exciting year. We will be spending some time over the first few days establishing our Class Charter and discussing the rights and the responsibilities we have in Year 4 in order to make our class and school a fun, fair and motivating place to learn. We will be finding out about what it is like to be the oldest children in the school and getting started with new responsibilities that this brings, like being a buddy, a playground warden and holding the doors in assembly! We will be putting our ideas together to make a class charter which will be displayed in our class to reinforce these rights and responsibilities throughout the year. These rules will be constantly and consistently reinforced so that we all have "a great year!" and the children will end the year feeling self confident and ready for the challenge of starting their new schools.

We also welcome to the class Mr Dickinson who will be with us for the Autumn and Summer term. He is undertaking training to become a teacher and has a wealth of experience from his previous role as a Teaching Assistant at Westfield Arts College.

Please do not hesitate to talk to the team if you have any questions or concerns.

The team are:



Miss Johnson



Mrs Brooker



Mrs Thomas

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Mrs Long



Mrs Howell



Mr Dickinson

The best time to catch us is just before or after school.

Topics –

We will be studying Shakespeare and World War 2 this term. This is a fun and motivating topic providing learning opportunities across the curriculum in subjects such as: History, Geography, Art, DT, Literacy, PE, Drama and Music. There will be two class trips for our World War 2 topic this term, one will be to the Nothe Fort and one to Bovington Tank Museum with dates to be confirmed. We will also be beginning a STEM glider building challenge to tie in with this topic, taking part in a national competition. There will also be two trips for our Shakespeare Adventure on the 10th of October and the 7th November - read on to find out more. There will also be some other events, themed weeks and activities this term which we will keep you informed of via the weekly newsletter and the class blog.

Our Shakespeare Adventure -

We are lucky enough to be involved with the Shakespeare Schools Foundation this term. The year 4 children will be involved with producing an abridged version of "The Tempest" at the Weymouth Pavilion on the evening of Wednesday 7th November. This promises to be a truly one off experience with the opportunity for children to be involved in a professionally supported production either through acting and performing or supporting its production. Please see the additional letters detailing what this involves for your child. If you are a dab hand with costumes we would also be interested to hear from you!

Snacks and Water –

To maximise our brain function and encourage a healthy lifestyle we would like children to bring a healthy snack to school each day to eat at break in addition to a bottle of water (some of the children who don't bring a snack often complain of being hungry long before lunch and this interferes with their ability to concentrate). We are encouraging the children to drink and eat smart by keeping hydrated through the day and be conscious of what they are eating. Snacks such as crisps and sweets will be positively discouraged. As last year and in line with our school's policy, please can you provide your child with water only to drink during lesson time. If your child requires a squash based drink they may bring an additional bottle which can be kept in their lunch boxes or bags to be drunk at lunch time only.

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Book Bags –

Please could you help your child to remember to bring their book bags to school every day. Year 4 children need to begin to be responsible for remembering this and organising themselves in readiness for middle school. Book bags are needed for library, quiet reading, class reading and spelling activities as well as Individual reading to teachers, classroom assistants and parent helpers. A computer system logs books in and out just like a real library, so please don't return Library books directly to the shelves!

Literacy Approach - Phonics, SPAG (Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar) and Reading -

This September, we have made some changes across the school to support greater progress for all children in Literacy. These changes come with a particular focus on children's development of Phonic, Spelling, Punctuation, Grammar and Reading skills.

Our changes build on the success of the 'Ruth Miskin: Read, Write Inc. Phonics Programme' which we started using in Reception and Year 1 last year and now include the introduction of 'Ruth Miskin: Read Write Inc. Spelling Programme' and the use of 'AR (Accelerated Reader)' for children in Year 1 to Year 4.

An overview of each programme is included below -

Read Write Inc. Phonics teaches children to read accurately and fluently with good comprehension. They learn to form each letter, spell correctly, and compose their ideas step-by-step.

Reading - Children learn the English alphabetic code: first they learn one way to read the 40+ sounds and blend these sounds into words, then learn to read the same sounds with alternative graphemes.

They experience success from the very beginning. Lively phonic books are closely matched to their increasing knowledge of phonics and 'tricky' words and, as children re-read the stories, their fluency increases.

Along with a thought-provoking introduction, prompts for thinking out loud and discussion, children are helped to read with a storyteller's voice.

Writing -

The children write every day, rehearsing out loud what they want to say, before spelling the words using the graphemes and 'tricky' words they know.

They practise handwriting every day: sitting at a table comfortably, they learn correct letter formation and how to join letters speedily and legibly.

Children's composition (ideas, vocabulary and grammar) is developed by drawing on their own experiences and talking about the stories they read.

All staff who teach **Read Write Inc. Phonics** have received two days of official Ruth Miskin Ltd Training and benefit from ongoing official training opportunities that take place at The Prince of Wales School. Ongoing support is provided by **Read Write Inc. Phonics** expert Kirsten McKenzie.

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Children accessing the **Read Write Inc. Phonics** programme will not bring home weekly spellings, instead they will be encouraged to practise the sounding-out and blending of sounds. Which sounds need to be practised (green cards) and which sounds need to be learnt (red cards) will be made clear by your child's teacher.

You can find out more about the programme here - <https://ruthmiskin.com/en/programmes/phonics/>

Read Write Inc. Spelling is for children who can read accurately, with increasing speed. With 15 minutes of daily teaching, children develop confident spelling.

Although the teaching of phoneme-grapheme correspondence underpins this programme, it also develops children's knowledge of word families, how suffixes impact upon root words, and provides mnemonics to remember the trickiest spellings.

The teaching revolves around instruction (with the help of online alien characters), partner and group practice, and competitive group challenges that help children commit new words to memory.

All staff who teach **Read Write Inc. Spelling** have received one full day of official Ruth Miskin Ltd Training and benefit from ongoing official training opportunities that take place at The Prince of Wales School. Ongoing support is provided by **Read Write Inc. Spelling** expert Kirsten McKenzie.

Children accessing the **Read Write Inc. Spelling** programme will not bring home weekly spellings, instead they will bring home a log book daily. The log book will include spellings the children need to practice at home on a daily basis. The approach required will be made clear by your child's teacher.

You can find out more about the programme here - <https://ruthmiskin.com/en/programmes/spelling/>

For both **Read Write Inc. Phonics** and **Read Write Inc. Spelling** all children are assessed regularly by our RWI Lead (Mrs. Smith) so they work with children at the same level. This allows complete participation in lessons.

AR (Accelerated Reader) is a reading programme that helps teachers support and monitor children's reading practice. Your child picks a book at their own level and reads it at their own pace. When finished, your child takes a short online quiz to measure how much of the book they understood.

You can find out more about the programme here - <https://www.renaissance.com/services/parent-resources/>

More information about AR (Accelerated Reader) will be sent home in due course. Teaching Staff will be receiving specialist AR (Accelerated Reader) training on Monday 24th September 2018.

Home Learning Activities –

In addition to spellings and reading as detailed above we are involved in the Mathletics program which is available online and we will also be allocating class time to using this to support our learning, the children will also be set times tables challenges to be practised and learned by the following Friday. In addition children will regularly bring

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home numeracy home learning and topic related projects. These projects will be set over a couple of weeks to give you plenty of time to be creative and to plan and produce a piece of work, allowing children to choose how to present it using and nurturing other valuable skills. Children who return their home learning will be rewarded for their efforts.

Assembly –

The date for our autumn assembly is **Friday 30th November** and will be at 9:20am in the school hall. You are more than welcome to come along and see for yourself what fun we have been having this term. There will be a harvest celebration assembly on **Friday 5th October**, which you are also warmly invited to.

Swimming and PE Kits –

Year 4 will be swimming every Wednesday afternoon throughout the term. We will be walking to the pool after lunchtime and return for the end of the day. We will be swimming in the big pool and all children need a hat and goggles as well as a one piece swimming costume for girls or swimming trunks/shorts for boys (the skin tight ones are better because they do not drag in the water).

Please could you also ensure that your child has a full PE kit in school. Children may also bring trainers and tracksuit bottoms for outside PE in the cooler weather, our PE sessions take place on Tuesday morning, in addition we will be taking part in The Daily Mile every day.

Parent Help –

Thank you to those of you who have offered help for reading, cooking and gardening in the past, we really do appreciate the time you spend with us. If anyone would like to come and help support the children in their learning please let a member of the team know.

Follow the Blog -

We are continually updating our blog, so for up to the minute news from the year 4 classroom please log on to the school website to view.

Yours faithfully,

Miss Ann Johnson
Deputy Headteacher
Year 4 Class Teacher