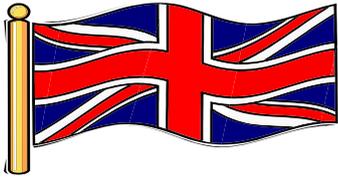


## U.K. & Austria Class Spring Term 2021



We hope that this newsletter finds you well at this very challenging time of Lockdown 3. As a school, this is not what we wanted for the children of St Mary's, but we know that we need to keep the children and the staff safe. This new National Lockdown will affect the children and ourselves in a variety of different ways. You may experience challenges in dealing with remote learning, your child's behaviour, your family stress levels or your own wellbeing. All of these are to be expected during such unusual times. We ask that you do what you can of the work posted on Google Classroom, perhaps create your own family timetables. Remember to balance everyone's needs and commitments - including your own - and allow for relaxation, brain breaks and quality time together as a family. If you are having difficulty accessing or printing the learning then please phone or email the school and we will try our best to help.

Below is a brief insight into the learning that will take place during the first few weeks of the Spring Term. As always, we are sure the children will lead the learning on in many different directions. We look forward to taking the learning forward on Google Classroom and your feedback will help us with future planning.

### Communication Language and Literacy

Last term we read 'Here We Are' by Oliver Jeffers, and the children enjoyed the learning that it inspired. This term we are reading more of this author's books such as 'The Way Back Home', 'The Great Paper Caper' and 'What We'll Build'. We hope to read the books and send the video to you on Google Classroom. We also have a range of texts linked to our topic of Flight that we hope to share with you.

### Personal Social and Emotional Development

As we settle into remote learning we will start to look at how we can continue to help the children to become more mindful of each other, explore the positive feelings of belonging and feeling cared for and increase their awareness of their own personal power to choose how to behave.

### RE

Our Christian Values this term are humility, service and forgiveness.

We will also be looking at Creation. We would like the children to discuss:

- What is the best thing about our world?
- What do they like about our world?
- Do you and they think God would like the world as it is today?
- How should we live our lives on this world?
- What do Christians believe?

### Understanding the World

Here are some of the things we will be exploring:

- What are the key features of a bird?
- How do humans fly?
- What birds eat and supporting the Big Schools Birdwatch.
- Finding out about the local area around our school.
- Make a 'touch it' treasure basket with objects collected on their expeditions.
- Look at different travel locations.
- Use a globe to find out where we live, look at where Amelia Earhart's journeys took her, and discuss how different parts of the world are super-hot or freezing cold.

### Physical Development

Here are some of the activities we hope to include:

- Practise using a pencil with the correct grasp.
- Practise using scissors for cutting along lines.
- Make dens and shelters.
- Set up obstacle trails with boxes, tunnels and planks.
- Practising putting their coat and shoes on independently.
- Play with mud in various forms, making prints, pies.
- Play outdoors in windy, rainy or icy weather, and the different types of clothing suitable for each.
- Explore moving like different polar animals.
- Winter playdough activities.

**Dough Disco** - The children in Reception have continued to take part in Dough Disco, an exercise for the fingers to improve fine motor control. These exercises to strengthen muscles in the hands will, in turn, support the children with their writing. We will be sending the playdough recipe home, so that you can continue to join in at home - we may even try to do this in one of our upcoming Google Meet sessions!

### Expressive Art and Design

Here are some of the activities we hope to do:

- Painting with winter colours.
- Move like a snowflake, bird or flying machine whilst listening to music.
  - Experiment with adding different coloured paints to ice cubes.
- Make a bird feeder, transport model or even some play binoculars.
- Sing songs about different places and different ways of travelling.
- Create a windy day weather dance using ribbons, scarves and balloons.
  - Make wind chimes with recycled material.
- Explore role-playing as different characters from our stories, or imagining they are playing in the winter snow and ice.

### Mathematics.

In our Mathematics sessions we shall continue to develop our number recognition and counting skills. We will be learning how to write and order numbers from 1 to 20, as well as finding one more or one less than a given number. We will also be solving some simple addition and subtraction calculations through practical activities. We will be using mathematical language to describe size and capacity and investigating how we can measure time and order the events of our school day.

We have a variety of resources such as beads, buttons, counters, fir cones, leaves, marbles, stones, interlocking cubes, coins, clothes pegs, small world toys ... the list is endless and of course children themselves will make their own collections. Some of these will be easy for you to find around the home so that you can use them too. Children will be drawn to these items for all sorts of different reasons; the adults in the class recognise the mathematical potential in play activities and draw this out through skilful questioning.

We do a lot of counting, sorting and organising groups of real objects in class, sometimes involving larger numbers.

Children will learn to **count in 2s, 5s and 10s**. This is taught in a physically active way at school, so when counting in 5s they are told to put five fingers in the air with each count, reinforcing how many they are actually counting on. Year 1s will start to look at how this builds into the times tables, and you can help by logging in on TT Rockstars at home.

At home you could help by saying number names in counting everyday objects (touching each object and saying one number name for each). **Point out numbers in real-life situations** so they can gain an awareness of how they are always present in our world: prices in a supermarket, numbers on packaging, road signs, number plates... digits are literally everywhere you look and helping your child recognise this can help them to understand their significance and meaning in different contexts.

Playing board games like **Snakes and Ladders** can help children learn to count accurately and steadily. It's also good for them to become accustomed to the dotted patterns on dice and dominoes, resources often used during Maths lessons in our class.

### Reading

Over the term we will be helping children to develop their reading and writing skills by continuing with our daily phonics activities. The children are beginning to learn how to identify sounds in words and how to segment or blend them. You can help at home by completing phonics tasks on Google Classroom and by listening to your child reading as often as possible and sharing stories with your child. We will email out reading books and you can also access a wide range of books on Myon and Oxford Owl.

### Reading Books

Once we start emailing out the reading books please remember to feed back to us how they get on:

- Sounding out and blending the words.
- Recognising any high frequency words.
- Making links to their prior experiences.
- Recalling events from the story and answering questions about them.
- Predicting what might happen next in a story.
- Describing characters actions and feelings.

We have always seen your child's continuing learning journey as a partnership between yourselves as parents/carers, and us in school. This is even more important during this period of Lockdown when we are reliant on you to engage your child with the remote learning, and feed back to us on the progress they are making. If you have any questions about Google Classroom, the curriculum, or any areas of concern with your child or their learning, please feel free to get in touch so we can discuss these. We are going to try and deliver as much of the curriculum as we can over Google Classroom, but please bear with us while we continue to expand and apply our new skills!

If you have any other questions or queries, please do not hesitate to email us.

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