Dear Parents and Carers,

Firstly, a very big thank you for all your best wishes, cards and very generous gifts over the festive period. They are very much appreciated although some were not very good for the waistline! We hope you’ve all had an excellent Christmas and are ready for all the challenges that 2018 may bring!

Curriculum

Our first full week will see the class starting their new topic - “Rumble in the Jungle”. Attached to this letter are the areas we will be covering, split into each individual subject. We have already covered two topics that have had very much a History bias, so this half term the focus will lean more towards Geography.

The children have been given a new timetable for their learning packs which shows the PE days. They have Games outside on a Tuesday and Gymnastics on Thursday morning. We are very lucky to have the expertise of Mr Denham this half term, who will take the class for Gym for the next 5 weeks. There are a few changes, as other areas of the Curriculum have had to be moved to accommodate this, but we try to stick to the timetable unless we have Sports Festivals or extra whole school activities.

Please could you make sure that your child has their correct PE Kit in school at all times. There have been a few occasions where children haven’t had shorts for Gym, outdoor clothing or have complained that their trainers don’t fit, so do check that they have everything. By using the planner diaries, we are encouraging the children to take ownership of their own learning/needs so we are relying on them to tell you what they need and when! Any extra information for the week is given to the children to write into their diaries and please use these to communicate with us too!

Reading books have been checked and handed out and the children will continue to read in a group or with an adult when possible. Please encourage your child to record any of their reading in their reading diaries. Our text this half term is ‘*Journey to the River Sea*’ by Eva Ibbotson and we will be spending the last 2 weeks looking at stories from another culture, including African folk tales.

Homework

The arrangements for Homework are staying the same. The children will have a spelling test on Monday and a Mental Maths test on Friday. We have also been focusing on the Year 3 /4 Spellings list and are now starting on the first columns of the Year 5/6 list.

Maths Homework will be given out on a Friday to be returned the following Friday. The Maths sheets have some challenging questions at the bottom, so don’t be overly concerned if your child can’t complete them at this stage but we would like them to have a go.

You may also have heard about ‘Times Tables Tuesdays’. This is supervised my Mrs Bowers and Mrs Hymers and is a challenge to encourage the children to learn their times tables. On a voluntary basis, the children spend 3 minutes at the beginning of lunch time, recalling a variety of multiplication and division facts. They are rewarded with a certificate and a badge if they manage them all within the time limit, with various levels of difficulty to complete. So far, the children have been very keen and have shown great pride when receiving their certificates in Assembly. I have had to encourage a few children to join in but am hoping that many of the Year 5s will soon speed through the levels. Any support with this would be greatly appreciated.

The children have been sent home with their new Learning Log tasks. There were 5 children who received 6 House points for completing 6 tasks, rather than the expected 5. Thank you for your help in this, as we have had some beautiful William Morris paintings and drawings, homemade Victorian Toys and some lovely creative writing. However, we have spoken to the children on several occasions about completing their homework to a Year 5 standard. Some Learning Logs have been completed in felt tip or biro and there is no comparison to the standard of handwriting, presentation or written work they normally produce. The children are well aware of our expectations and that any homework completed is supposed to complement the work done in school. We realise it is sometimes difficult to dedicate free time to homework but ask if you could remind your child about basic rules of presentation and encourage them to try something new and to do their very best.

Do not hesitate to contact us by email if you haven’t managed to catch up with us during school hours.

Regards,

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