September 2020

Dear Year 4/5 Parents,

Welcome to a new school year.

Introduction

The children in Year 4 and Year 5 will be taught in three classes by Mrs Bartlett/Mrs Nute, Miss Wright and Miss Parris. The Teaching Assistants working in the team will be: Mrs Pritchard, Mr Goodeve, Mrs Mills and Mrs Ivey.

Obviously, this is not the normal start to a school year because of all the considerations surrounding Covid 19, but we have been planning our lessons and events as we usually would and we have the bonus of a really strong and enthusiastic teaching team.

Curriculum

All three classes will carry out the same curriculum and the staff will work very closely together with planning and expectation. A lot of time is spent ensuring that objectives are covered in both year groups.

The school year will start with a historical focus on “The Pilgrim Fathers and the Mayflower.” On 6th September 1620, the voyagers set out on their epic journey to America. This event has a strong local significance and the city of Plymouth has been gearing up to mark the 400th anniversary. We want the children to learn about this period of time and to gain a greater insight into their sense of local history.

Our Learning Adventure this term is history based and we will be asking: “Who Made History in Faraway Places?”

Later in the term, we will be learning about the Ancient Egyptians and in Science, we will be studying “Electricity.”

The children will also be involved in Music, Art, Outdoor Education, IT, R.E and PSHE activities which will give them a broad range of educational experiences across the year.

In Maths lessons, we will be starting the year with a strong focus on Place Value and in English, we will be writing historical stories.

There will be opportunities to carry out map work in Geography and in DT lessons, we will be making a simple mechanical device, possibly a pulley.

Where we can, we work through a cross-curricular approach so map work, pulleys, story writing will come out of our Learning Adventure work on The Mayflower or on The Ancient Egyptians.

There will be chance to carry out P.E. activities and we will give you more detail about this when we know what the guidelines are in relation to the current situation.

In normal times, we would arrange a trip and activities that involve all three classes, but this may not be possible for a while.

Practicalities

Details about arrival at school and communication with teaching staff have been outlined in the newsletter from Mrs Spencer.

Each class will be taught in separate rooms and have their own cloakroom spaces.

The classes will exist as a bubble at break times, so there will be opportunity for the children to meet up at these times. The children who were in school last term showed that the social distancing measures could work and they were very good at sticking to the rules.

We will be giving each child a plastic pen case in which they will have the key items of school equipment they need (EG: scissors, pencils, rubbers, pens, sharpeners).

We will be carrying out regular handwashing, but you may wish to send your child to school with their own hand-sanitiser that they can keep nearby at all times.

The Year 4/5s will have breaks on the school field so it would be a very good idea for them to bring wellies to keep in school. The field will often be damp.

P.E lessons for Year 4/5 will be on Mondays, so from 14.9.20 the children need to wear their P.E kits to school. They may need track suits to wear over their kit to keep warm.

Please make sure all clothes are labelled with names. This really helps us and the children to find missing items of clothing.

Reading

Reading is considered to be as important in Key Stage 2 as it is in Key Stage 1. Sharing a book together at home 1:1 is not only a really important bonding time, it is invaluable in developing children`s skill in reading and their passion for it in later life. Reading skills cross all subjects and help the children tackle everything they do at school with greater confidence. So, we cannot emphasise enough the importance of encouraging your child to read at home, to have a book on the go and to find those books and authors that enable them to gain pleasure from reading.

We carry out regular guided reading at school and in an ideal world, we would hear every child read individually regularly, but that is not possible, so we would really appreciate your help. The children will have Reading Records to take to and from school: we want the children to fill these in and to have them at school EVERY day.

Communication

We will be giving information through our own class Blogs and often, this will be information that can be shared across the three classes.

The Blog may contain spelling lists and simple guidance, but it will mainly be there to give you information and to keep you in the loop. It is a very important line of communication, so if you can check it each week, that would be helpful.

Expectations

We will not be giving large amounts of homework. We expect the children to work hard at school and to take responsibility for their learning. Reading at home is the most important activity, followed by learning spellings and x tables.

In May, Year 4 will be carrying out x tables tests online. They are expected to know all x tables up to 12 x 12 randomly and quickly (within 5/6 seconds).

They can be practised on Times Tables Rock Stars, Mathletics and Maths Frame X Table Checker. This last one is particularly good because it is very similar to the type of test the children will carry out in May.

With this letter, we will also send home the Year 3/4 and Year 5/6 statutory spelling lists. This gives you a guide to the standard of spelling that the children are expected to achieve. These lists can be learnt gradually at home over the year alongside weekly or fortnightly lists that we will send home.

Bikeability

In February, all Year 4 pupils will take part in Bikeability workshops. They will be taught by a very skilled teacher, Mrs Nash, and they will take part at the level that suits their skills. We are letting you know in advance so that you have chance to make sure a bike and helmet will be ready for your child to bring in on the day of their workshop. We will also be sending out a letter soon to find out your child`s ability. If they cannot ride a bike yet, you may want to work on this, but Jenny teaches a group for children who are still learning.

Next Week

We will be spending time making sure that everyone settles back into school happily and that the children feel secure and safe. If your child would like to bring in any work they did during home education, we would love to see it.

Finally, our team vision is that your child feels safe, has fun at school, develops a passion for learning, takes responsibility for their own learning and that they receive an exciting, creative and academic curriculum that enables them to feel a strong sense of achievement. That team includes; us (the teaching staff) and you, the parents and children.

Miss Parris, Miss Wright, Mrs Nute, Mrs Bartlett