

Dear Parents and Carers,

I'm pleased to welcome all the children and yourselves to Year 4. The children have already made a great start this week and the year 4 team are very impressed with their efforts. We have an exciting year planned with some great learning ahead of us.

Staff working in year 4 this year are Sharon Hall and Leah Smith. In addition to the two of us, Lydia Virgin will be teaching **art** on a Wednesday, Avtar Manku will be teaching **Djembe** on a Wednesday and Kate Earl will be teaching **French** on a Friday.

Our topic this term is '**Snap, Crackle, Pop!**' (And no, this won't involve eating endless amounts of Rice Krispies ☺) The topic is **science** based and the children will be finding out all about **electricity** and **sound**. The children will be working towards undertaking 2 fun tasks which will test their knowledge and understanding of both aspects of their learning at the end of each focus. In order to do so, the children will be:

- Exploring electrical games and resources, to identify what they know and what they need to know about electricity.
- Identifying the dangers associated with electricity in the home.
- Identifying which materials are good conductors and those which aren't.
- Constructing a simple circuit.
- Finding out about how sounds are made and how sound travels.
- Investigating pitch and volume through musical instruments.
- Learning about the hearing of humans and other animals.

As always, the topic focus will provide varied writing opportunities, including: an explanation text about electricity and a biography about a scientist linked to sound for example, Alexander Graham Bell, Emile Berliner and Thomas Eddison.

Reading in year 4: Children in year 4 will be listened to by an adult in school on a regular basis.

- If your child is reading from the reading scheme then they will continue to take a reading book home (along with a reading record card) and we encourage them to read with an adult regularly throughout the week. Please do record reading progress on the record card and let us know as and when your child requires a new reading book. **These need to be brought to school every day so that they are always available for adults in school to listen to your child read.**
- If your child has completed the reading scheme and is now a 'free reader' then they will continue to receive an age-appropriate book to read in school, **but this will remain in school**. Please encourage your child to continue to read a wide range of texts regularly at home and talk to them about it.

All children in year 4 will be able to visit the school library once a week to choose a library book to take home. Our library day is Tuesday Please ensure your child brings their library book back to school on that day if they wish to borrow a different book. Of course, if they are still reading it then they may keep it at home until finished.

English: Our initial focus is poems which use imagery and we have already started to think about how similes and metaphors are used to create powerful images in the reader's mind as we have looked at 'The Reader of This Poem' by Roger Mc Gough and 'Rainbows' by Moira Andrews. This will continue to be our focus over the next week as we move towards writing our own descriptive poem inspired by 'Window' a wordless picture book, by Jeannie Baker, that provides children with an understanding of how growth affects the world we live in.

We will then be moving on to explore an exciting narrative 'The Fantastic Flying Books of Mr Morris Lessmore' by W.E. Joyce which the children will use as a guide for creating their own mini book 'The Fantastic Flying Book of (name).' The children will be exploring the language and structure of the story and comparing it to other similar stories they may have come across in their reading. They will be encouraged to think about noun phrases and superlatives in terms of character and setting contexts. They will have the opportunity to develop their understanding of the term 'show not tell' the reader.

Spelling: Our spelling work will include consolidating and building on the spelling rules we have already learnt in previous years and moving on to looking at the year 4 spelling rules. To reinforce this learning the children will have a weekly spelling test based upon the year 4 spelling rules which they will practise throughout the week. In addition to practising in school it would be helpful if the children can practise these at home too. And so, with that in mind, children will be sent home with a spelling list to practise (every Monday) in preparation for a **spelling test which will take place on the Friday of the same week**. In year 4 the children have a spelling test book which they will write their weekly spellings into, and they will also use this book for the test. It is therefore important that this book is in school on the days given. I am also sending home a list of common exception words associated with year 3/4 (see attached sheet). These are words that the children are expected to know so, whilst we will look at them in school on a regular basis, it would be great if you could practise these with your child at home too.

Maths: In Maths we will continue to work daily on our Passport targets to secure basic facts and skills. To achieve each target, the children have to say or write their answers in 30 seconds so it's helpful to practise each target regularly at home. All Maths Passport target information can be found on the school website but please ask if your child needs reminding of where they are up to. We will begin the term working on place value. The children will have the opportunity to explore and use a variety of representations (including measures) to become fluent in the order and place value of numbers beyond 1,000, including counting in 10s and 100s. We will then move on to addition and subtraction with numbers up to 4-digits using the formal methods of column addition and subtraction where possible. Following this we will look at measurement, focusing on length & perimeter, thinking about equivalent lengths (m/cm & mm/cm) as well as adding & subtracting these, perimeter of 2D shapes and of rectilinear shapes (shapes where all sides meet at right angles). We will then begin to focus on multiplication and division where the children will continue to practise recalling and using multiplication tables and related division facts to aid fluency, practise mental methods and become fluent in the formal written method of short multiplication and short division.

Problem solving and reasoning will continue to be an important part of all our maths when the children are encouraged to apply their knowledge and skills independently and to persevere when they are stuck.

We need to be secure in all our times tables by the end of year 4. This term will be spent revisiting those learnt in year 2 and 3 initially before moving on to the remaining ones. These will become part of our daily routine to practise so that the children are able to instantly recall facts.

Geography will take place in the first half of the term and will involve developing the children's geographical skills and fieldwork. They will take part in a series of activities to improve their knowledge and understanding of map symbols, keys, compass directions, and grid references through a series of challenges.

History will take place in the second half of the term and the children will be developing their knowledge and understanding of British history with a focus on The Roman Empire and its impact on Britain at the time and the legacy it left us. As the children begin to understand The Roman Empire and its impact on Britain, they will read 'Roman Diary, The Journal of Iliona a young slave' by Richard Platt and use this to create another **writing** opportunity as they imagine themselves to be a Roman slave for a week. They will be encouraged to think about time adverbials, comparative conjunctions and rhetorical questions. They will write effective sentences for a historical diary which will draw the reader in to their inner thoughts and feelings.

In **Computing**, we will be using the chrome books to undertake research for our topic-based writing.

In **R.E** we will be asking the question 'How are important events remembered?' Our Christian value is 'RESPECT' and we'll be learning what this is and what it looks like throughout the year.

In **PSHCE** our topics include 'new beginnings'. We will also be thinking about our school principles; 'Be kind, Be safe, Be your best'.

In **DT** we will be creating a buzz wire game as part of our focus on electricity and we will design, make and evaluate ear defenders as part of our focus on sound.

The focus for **P.E.** is invasion games including football, basketball & hockey and dance. **P.E. will take place on Tuesdays and Fridays.** Please make sure your child has a full PE kit in school. PE kit consists of a plain or Shire Oak white or purple t-shirt and black shorts. (We will aim to have PE outdoors as often as possible this term so joggers and a sweatshirt/hoodie would be useful. No football strips or similar please. As always, please make sure that everything

is labelled and placed in a named bag. We prefer kit to stay at school for the full half term. It can be washed in the half term holiday!

In addition to PE kit Ms Devane has mentioned the following in a recent newsletter:

'We continue to use our outdoor spaces as much as possible and it helps if children have the correct footwear and clothing for that. Using the field at lunchtime gives us more space to spread out, but as the weather gets damper, school gets muddier! To help, please make sure that KS2 children either bring pumps to wear indoors or spare outdoor boots/shoes to wear when they are on the field. It helps if these can stay in school.'

Trips and visitors – We are hoping to arrange a trip to support our topic focus, TBC

Water Bottles - Please remember to send your child in with a filled water bottle **every morning**. These are refilled during the day as and when needed.

Milk - If you want your child to have milk, please make sure you log onto "Cool Milk Limited", if you didn't register last year, the office can give you more details.

How you can help - Regular reading with your child is still an essential skill in Year 4. Listening to your child read at least three times a week for 10 minutes will be of real benefit to your child's learning.

You will receive a separate homework leaflet with details about our big homework project this half term and ideas for other activities you can do together at home. Please remember that the most important homework you can do is reading together regularly, handwriting practice, practising phonics and spellings and helping children to learn facts for their Maths Passport targets.

We are always interested in how children are getting on with their learning at home and want to work with you to keep your child safe, happy and learning well. Feel free to arrange to see us by catching us at the start or the end of the day or by asking at the office to make an appointment.

Thank you, we look forward to working with you and your child this year, do ask if you have any queries throughout the term.

The Year 4 team.