



11th September 2009

Dear Parents and Carers

Welcome to the start of a new academic year. I hope you and your family had a happy and relaxing holiday. I am pleased to report that the children have settled quickly into their new class, and I am looking forward to working with them over the course of the year. This letter is just to give you some information about what the children will be learning over the coming term.

In our daily Literacy lessons the children will cover a wide range of skills: reading, spelling strategies, grammar, punctuation, and they will also be producing a variety of written work. Already the children have been learning about biographical and autobiographical writing. The children will be given a spelling list on Mondays (to be learnt at home) and tested on Fridays. The children will be reading weekly (on a specific given day) in their guided reading groups. The children will bring their book home, following their guided reading session, and it will be accompanied by a reading journal. Each week there will be a set reading passage and a linked task to be completed as homework. It is important that your child has their reading book and journal with them on the appropriate day to enable this to work. I appreciate your help in this area.

In Mathematics we shall be following the renewed primary maths framework. The lessons will typically take the following format: a mental/oral starter, the main teaching lesson, independent or group work and finally, a plenary to finish the lesson. The plenary is a time for sharing what has been learnt and clarifying understanding. We will be covering a range of topics including the 4 operations (+ - x ÷), place value, money and shape. Children will also be encouraged to think and talk about how they have worked out their answers. In addition to this, multiplication tables will be a major focus. The class will have regular mental maths tests, so it is very important that the children make a real effort to learn their multiplication tables; this will be an ongoing piece of homework.

In our Science lessons the children will be learning about food chains and habitats, and following on from this, the children will be learning about forces. The children will be carrying out independent investigations and also working in groups, and this will play an important part in both topics.

On Wednesday afternoons, the children will have R.E. and Art lessons with Mrs Kaye. Throughout the year, children will also be receiving Italian lessons with our visiting language teacher. Year 6 will also be facing the fresh challenge of learning French.

Our History topic for the term is 'Children in the Second World War'. In addition to learning about the major events of WWII, the children will be exploring how the war impacted on children's lives.

In P.E the class will be covering a wide range of skills, but our main focus for the first half-term will be basketball. The children will require their PE kit (T-shirt, shorts/jogging trousers, sweatshirt and suitable footwear) on Tuesdays and Thursdays, although we request that children keep their P.E kit in school in case of timetable alterations. In accordance with the regulations stated in Cambridge County Council's Health and Safety Guidelines for Physical Education, all children with hair longer than shoulder length must have it tied back and all jewellery must be removed. In the event of children having new ear piercings they should have tape with them to cover the studs. The children must be able to do this for themselves.

Homework

In addition to the spelling and guided reading tasks, a weekly homework task will be set. This may be Art work, Science, Maths or related to our topic work. Homework will normally be set on Mondays and should be returned on the Friday of that week. Sometimes a mini project of 2-3 weeks duration may be given instead. We do appreciate that some children find it difficult to finish tasks at home, so there will be the opportunity for children to complete tasks at the lunchtime homework club. In addition to this, the DX club will also provide a quiet area for children to complete homework.

As you may be aware, my partner and I are expecting our first child, and very shortly I will be taking two weeks paternity leave. During my short absence, the class will be taught by Mr Rob Benson. Mr Benson is a very experienced teacher, having taught for a number of years at the Bellbird school in Sawston (formerly the John Paxton school). I have made arrangements for Mr Benson to visit the class prior to my leave.

This term promises to be a busy time with lots of fun activities planned. In the meantime, if there is anything that you need to discuss, please do not hesitate in contacting me. I look forward to working with you over the coming year.

Best wishes

Stuart Fisher
Year 6 Teacher