

Dear Parents/ Carers,

I hope you all had a lovely holiday. During the past few days the children have all settled into Year 5 really well and I am extremely pleased to be teaching them. At this time, I would like to provide you with some information regarding routines, which you may find helpful as the year progresses.

Staffing

This year in Year 5 we are very lucky to have two level 4 teaching assistants, to support the children's learning: Mrs Andrews (full time) and Mrs Breakwell (mornings). The children will also benefit from specialist provision for PE (Mrs Annis & Mrs Porter), music (Mr Lister), art (Mrs Breakwell) and French (Mrs Chatterton).

Homework:

Homework will be set as part of our whole school approach of setting 'un-homework' challenges, in that the children will be given some element of choice as to what they do, or how they do it. On a half termly basis, we will alternate whether the focus is on completing topic projects or revising concepts learnt in our core lessons in class. Children should complete one activity per week and present it to the class on a Friday. If possible, encourage your child/ren to record something in their homework book each week (even if their project is a practical one) so that we can see that they are engaging with the tasks. Also, if possible, please email photos, presentations or videos of projects, rather than send them into school, as we are still trying to minimise the number of items brought in and out of school. Please get involved and talk to your child/ren about their work, but let them complete it as independently as possible, as we are trying to develop these skills now that they are in Upper Key Stage 2.

Times Tables and related division facts (up to 12x12) will be tested regularly. The children need to know these for mental maths work. Please try and allocate a few minutes daily to practise them at home, as this will really help. In class we test them orally as well as in a weekly written quiz.

Spelling

The children will be assessed regularly against a list of statutory words from the National Curriculum. This list will be appropriate to their level of development. From this list, we will select a few words that the children find tricky and set these for them to learn at home. Alongside this, they will have a couple of spellings to learn, that practise the spelling rules taught in class. In the front of their homework books, there will be a few recommendations for ways in which your children can practise their spellings. These will then be tested on a Friday and new spellings will be sent home.

Reading:

Please encourage your child/ren to read every night. They may have chosen a book from our class library, or one of their own from home. They have been given a reading record to record their progress. Even if the children are fluent readers, it is still very important for you to listen to your child read and for you to read to them too. Don't be afraid to read a picture book sometimes, as there are some amazing ones out there! I am extremely passionate about encouraging children to develop a love of reading. There is a lot of evidence to support the notion that great readers make great writers. The recently published new Government reading framework shares evidence that shows that being a reader and having a love of reading can have a huge impact on a child's success at higher education.

PE:

PE will be on a Tuesday and will be taught by Mrs Annis. Please ensure that kit is left in school all week as there may be changes or additions to the timetable. Pupils must wear the school PE kit and it would be helpful if it was labelled. Children can wear a tracksuit for the winter months. Jewellery should not be worn at school, apart from one pair of stud earrings. If a child is wearing earrings, then these must be covered up (if newly pierced) or not worn for PE.

Topics:

Our first topic will be Earth and Space and our driver text is *The Wisp* by Zana Frallion and Graham Baker-Smith. This is a really exciting and engaging topic with lots of science, geography, history and DT links. After the half term we will be beginning our topic of Pole to Pole. Throughout this topic we will be reading *Shackleton's Journey* by William Grill.

In the Spring Term our topics will be Ancient Egypt and Ancient Greece, with our driver texts being *The Happy Prince* adapted by Masie Paradise Shearring, *Aesop's Funky Fables* adapted by Vivian French and *The Princess and the Pirate King* by Debi Gliori.

In the Summer Term our topic will be Rainforests and we will be reading *The Explorer* by Katherine Rundell.

Trips:

A residential trip to the Pioneer Centre at Cleobury Mortimer has been booked for October as the class missed out on this opportunity last year. In the Spring term I am hoping to take Year 5 to the Ashmolean Museum for the ancient civilizations exhibits, but this is still to be confirmed.

Other:

As the weather gets cooler, please make sure your child has a suitable coat in school and that it is labelled. Also it is important to make us aware if someone other than yourself is picking your child up from school, or if there are any special arrangements regarding this. Finally, please do not hesitate to ask any questions following this letter, or indeed throughout the year.

If you need to speak to me, please leave a message at the office or by phone; or email school at office@holyredeemer.worcs.sch.uk.

I am looking forward to a very positive year and getting to know our new Year 5s.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Hall