

Autumn Term in Sycamore



Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you have had a lovely summer and enjoy what sun we have managed to get! It has been a joy getting to know your children better over the past few days, and we are looking forward to the year ahead of us!

- **Value for Life** - The new value for life this term is trust. We have spoken about the story of 'The Boy Who Cried Wolf' in class and hope this relates to trust, who we trust and why. We will continue to visit this theme throughout our collective worships.
- **Topic** - Our new topic this term will be the Saxons and the Vikings. We will look at who they are, where they came from and why they wanted to invade Britain. We will attempt to make Viking shields and a Viking longboat in art and study Iceland in geography. To help, we will use the books 'Arthur and the Golden Rope' and 'How to Train Your Dragon' in our Guided Reading sessions, and base our English on this.
- **Science** - Fire and light are strong themes within 'Arthur and the Golden Rope', so we will be looking at Light and Dark within science. We will be thinking about how we can see, where light comes from and how we can use light to keep us safe.
- **Reading** - Reading is something that should be treasured and loved by everyone. Encouraging children to read is very important, as much as the sharing of ideas and thoughts after reading. There are many books out there, but if you wish for a recommendation please do come and ask. There are plenty which stretch the mind and imagination just that little bit further. Each child will have a reading record, and we would expect the children to be reading for at least 15 minutes every night. At this stage the children will not need to be supervised for the whole of this time, but if you could ask some basic questions after they have read this will help with understanding. We will read with the children in school, but this should not be their only exposure. Please ensure that the child's reading record is filled in each night and returned to school the next day. The final part of each half term's homework is reading based.
- **Homework** - Homework books will be given out next week. These contain logins for Times Table Rockstars and My Maths, a place to record spelling scores, and fact quiz scores. It also contains the knowledge organiser for the fact quiz. Every two weeks, the children are expected to hand in a writing

task completed inside the homework books. These will then be marked and the next writing task stuck in.

- **Fact quiz** - Each Friday, the children will be given a short fact quiz based on what we have learned so far. These questions are given with answers on the knowledge organiser in the homework books. Five questions will be asked each week, with the aim of the children knowing all fifteen facts by the end of term. If the children are successful, they could have the chance to compete as the class champion in a mastermind quiz on the same fifteen facts.
- **Times Table Rockstars** - All children have access to Times Table Rockstars. It is very important that the children are practising these as much as possible. A secure knowledge of times tables will give them a much stronger grounding going into Year 5 and 6. Each child will take a times table test at the end of Year 4, and the national curriculum states that each child should know their tables up to 12 x 12 by this time. These tests will be online and are simulated by the sound check option on TT Rockstars.
- **Spellings** - Spellings will begin to be tested from next week. Tests are on a Friday morning followed by work on the following week's spellings. We will practise these in our spelling journals through the week as part of our morning work. It is very helpful to the children when these are also practised at home as not having to remember how to spell words means that the children can focus on becoming better writers. A termly overview has been stuck in their homework books, along with some activity sheets for the next two weeks.
- **Colder weather** - As the weather gets colder please do provide your child with suitable named clothing. It can be very cold at playtimes and lunchtimes and the expectation is for them to be outside as part of their learning. We would suggest a hat and gloves as they do feel the cold. The children should be encouraged to take care of their belongings and to make sure they are in a safe place over break and lunch.
- **PE** - All children need to have their PE kits with them every day please. We have P.E. on a Monday afternoon, which will be taken by Miss Snowling. We will also have P.E. on every other Tuesday afternoon, starting next week. It would be appreciated if children did not wear earrings on these days, but if this is not possible please ensure your children either has tape to cover them or can take them out themselves.
- **Outdoor Education** - On Fridays Sycamore class will be doing Outdoor Education this term. This will begin next week, so please ensure your children has wellies and warm clothing, especially as we progress towards winter.

'LEARN TOGETHER, WORK TOGETHER, GROW TOGETHER'

Our priority is your child. We find that those parents who become partners in learning truly improve the outcomes for their children. When parents are involved, children achieve more, they are happier, they develop greater self esteem and demonstrate good behaviour so please do get involved as it is the most wonderful time in their lives and it whizzes by in a flash!

If you have any questions or queries, then please do come and see me.

After school when I am seeing the children out onto the playground is the best time to catch me as mornings are usually very busy!

Many thanks,

Greg East