

Spring Term in Sycamore



Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you all had a great Christmas and you enjoyed the new year celebrations. I think I have already seen that all of the children are refreshed and ready to go in the new year, and I am really looking forward to getting stuck in with our new topics! If you have any questions please email me at my class email address: sycamore@morley.norfolk.sch.uk.

- **Value for Life** – The new value for life this term is forgiveness. We will look at the story of ‘The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant’ in class and how this relates to friendships on the playground and how we can look after each other. We will continue to visit this theme throughout our collective worships.
- **Topic and Science** – Our new topic this term is Rocks and Soils, which will be closely linked with work on States of Matter and the Water Cycle. This is a really exciting topic which has actively engaged children in the past. We will be linking our English with the help of books ‘The Secret of Black Rock’ and ‘The Mousehole Cat’, and comparing different areas of Britain, looking at rivers, seas and mountains.
- **RSPB’s Big Garden Birdwatch** – The RSPB’s annual Big Garden Birdwatch is taking place over the weekend of the 28th and 30th of January, and is the largest wildlife survey in the world. We will be taking part in the classroom over the next couple of weeks, and linking this with our Maths with data handling. I will be encouraging the children to take part in this at home too, so be warned!
- **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. 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 contain logins for MyON, Times Table Rockstars, My Maths and Spelling Frame. It is a good idea to write these down at home so you have these while Homework books are in school. They will also contain a place to record spelling scores, and fact quiz scores. 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 Thursday, the children will be given a short fact quiz based 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** – Tests are on a Friday, and spellings are introduced to the children on Monday morning. 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 children find writing easier when they can remember how to spell common words.
- **The cold and named clothing** – Due to the ongoing pandemic, classroom windows will need to remain open. This will mean the temperature of the room will be lower than normal. If your child is feeling the cold, please provide them with extra layers, such as thermals, that can be worn in class with minimum disruption. Please ensure clothing is named!! We have regularly been unable to identify the owner of clothing which so easily could have been solved if a name was inside.
- **PE** – All children need to arrive in school wearing their PE kits on days when they have PE. We have PE on Monday mornings, which will be taken by Mr. Smith, and we will also have P.E. on Tuesday afternoons, taken by myself. 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.
- **Forest School** – On Fridays Sycamore class will be continuing Forest School sessions. It is expected that the children will have their own waterproofs, as Forest School will only be cancelled in the event of high winds or electrical activity. Please keep an eye on the Google Classroom to make yourself aware of which group is in the woods each week.

‘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!

Again, if you have any questions or queries, then please message me via the class email address, sycamore@morley.norfolk.sch.uk.

Many thanks,

Greg East