January 2017

Dear Parents/Carers

**Elm Class Newsletter Spring Term 2017**

Welcome to a new year I hope you all had a lovely break. This letter provides an overview of the work that Elm Class will be focusing on this term, introduces the new class timetable and provides the homework choices for this half term.

**Class Topic – Superheroes!**

Our topic this term has a fantasy theme of Superheroes but we shall also learn about real life heroes under the theme of People Who Help Us. I am hoping to organise visits to school from the Police and Brecon Mountain Rescue. If anyone has any sporting achievements, links with charities or an occupation where you are involved with helping others improving their life experiences and would be willing to talk to the children, please contact me.

**Communication, Languages and Literacy**

**English**

This term we will be continuing with Read, Write, Inc and spelling tests will be every fortnight following the lists in their individual spelling record cards. The children will also look at different genre in their writing learning about explanation texts, persuasive articles and posters, poetry and stories about fantasy worlds.

**Welsh and Curriculum Cymreig**

In Welsh, we are learning about Y Tywydd - The Weather. We will be naming types of weather, learning weather songs and games, making simple forecasts and keeping weather diaries.

We continue to learn about the cultural, economic, environmental and historical characteristics of Wales through our Curriculum Cymreig work, which this term will be linked with history of transport, changes in farm machinery locally and the Cradoc Railway Station. The work of the Brecon Mountain Rescue Team and local celebrities will also be studied. We are also working towards gaining a Bronze award throughout the school for a new exciting project called The Welsh Charter. Some activities will be geared towards this.

**Mathematical Development** - As part of the maths learning, one of our main focus areas this term is basic maths calculation based on the wide range of maths/numeracy to be covered, including place value, addition / subtraction, money, 2D shape and measuring length. It would be helpful if you could practice the maths of the month sent out on the weekly newsletters and also some basic mental arithmetic with your child at home as this will really help consolidate their classroom learning. Some examples of mental arithmetic you can practice are as follows:

* Practice counting to 100 and beyond / writing numbers to at least 100. Counting in 2's, 5’s and 10's
* Addition and subtraction
* Names of 2D and 3D shapes

**Creative Development** – The children will make superhero portraits and comic strip characters in art and will create superhero theme music using their voice and percussion.

**Personal and Social Development, Wellbeing and Cultural Diversity** - This term we will be looking at how we stay healthy by considering our hygiene needs, healthy eating and exercise. We will also learn about the purpose and safe use of medicines and when to say ’No’ when challenged by peer pressure.

**Knowledge and Understanding of the World –** In science we will look at materials and their properties, learning the correct terminology to describe materials and their uses eg transparent, opaque, rigid, flexible, magnetic etc. In history we will learn about the history of transport and we will make simple maps in geography. In technology the children will design and make a moving vehicle and will learn about keeping safe when using the internet on-line. RE this term will be focusing on Judaism and Christianity, learning about leaders and teachers within a religious community and will include the importance of laws, Moses and then Ten Commandments.

**Physical Development**

This term is gymnastics and hockey, the children will need shorts and a T-shirt and daps or trainers for indoor activities and a warm top and trouser/joggers for hockey. PE kit needs to be left in school please in a bag separate from their school/book bag. Please could you ensure that all long hair is tied back and earrings removed on PE days. All children will be expected to participate in PE sessions unless we have a note or phone call stating otherwise.

**Homework**

Homework is an important part of your child’s education as it allows them to practice techniques and apply learning that are introduced in class. Please encourage /make time for your child to complete their homework which will now be set at the beginning of each half term in the form of a Pick’n’Mix task sheet. Please find this half term’s attached.

The tasks include a range of basic skills practice, eg counting sequences, spellings, reading, along with tasks which link into their topic in class, and those that promote independence and life skills. Pupils can choose which homework they complete when, as long as they complete enough to earn the required amount of points per week.

They will also have a set amount of points to achieve by the end of the half term. All work needs to be completed in Homework books or if on a worksheet then please stick into the books to prevent it being lost.

Every Thursday they will be expected to bring their Homework book in to have their completed tasks signed off, being returned on a Friday.

This type of homework will enable you the flexibility to plan when to complete certain tasks as some weekends are naturally busier than others! It also aims to promote pupils’ independence and organisational skills.

**Spellings**

Your child will receive a Spelling Record Card or Booklet which sets out the spellings for the half term. Tests are normally on a Friday every other week. Correct spellings will be highlighted on their record cards. They need to bring in the spelling card on test days so that it can be filled in showing you their test results.

**Reading Homework**

Please send reading books in each day in their school/book bags. There is no set day for your child to read, we will endeavour to change every child's book each week. The children will be engaged in reading activities every day as part of their Read, Write Inc or Literacy lesson and so their take home reading book is for extra practise and consolidation. Reading at home can also extend to other reading material/genre widening the child's knowledge of books and fluency of reading skills. For example, stories they have at home for shared reading with you, children's comics, recipes/instructions for games and interactive stories for the computer, iPad or kindles.

If possible, please bring either a red school book bag or a ruck sack school bag not both as there is limited space in the cloakroom to store more than one bag!

**Classroom Help**

If anyone could spare an hour or so in the week to help with classroom jobs, listen to readers etc please let me know. Any help is greatly appreciated!

**Expectations**

In lessons, clear expectations are given to all children as to what we expect them to personally achieve during a session and standards of behaviour.

I hope you find this information useful. I operate an ‘open door’ policy so if you have any queries, please don’t hesitate to contact me

Regards

Carol Hughes