January 2017

Dear Parents/Carers

**Hazel Class Newsletter Spring Term 2017**

Welcome back after the Christmas holidays, into another action-packed term … and, of course, our topic is ‘Heroes and Superheroes’.

The children all seem to have settled into Hazel class exceptionally well, adjusting to the new teaching and learning styles superbly. We have high expectations of all children and wish to provide them with all of the necessary skills and techniques to reach their full potential by the end of the year. This will require them to work hard and put in 100% at all times. We are going to be focusing on encouraging the children to further develop their independence and growth mindset this year adding in some work on mindfulness as we have trialled it in a class and it has proven to give the children the clarity of mind to get stuck into their work.

**Class Timetable**

The class timetable is attached. We aim to stick to this as closely as possible but there will be times during the term when there will be the need to make changes for special lessons, trips, visitors or sporting events. There may also be occasions when one of us has to attend meetings or courses and, on these occasions, we will always attempt to cover the class by one of the three of us to maintain as much consistency as possible.

**Subject Responsibility**

Numeracy Mrs Harley

Literacy Miss Roberts

Science Mrs Harley

Welsh Miss Roberts

Geography Mrs Harley

History Mrs Harley

Art Mrs Morris

Technology Mrs Morris

Music Miss Roberts

Physical Education Miss Roberts

ICT Mrs Harley

RE Mrs Morris

**Teaching Days: (please see the class timetable for more clarity)**

**Monday** – Miss Roberts

**Tuesday** and **Friday**– Mrs Harley

**Wednesday and Thursday** – shared teaching between Miss Roberts and Mrs Morris

All aspects will be planned jointly at weekly planning meetings as well as regular/daily discussions on lessons and pupil progress. A daily class journal and many daily conversations are kept recording appropriate information on class matters.

**Class Topic – Heroes and Superheroes**

We are joining the whole school on our hero topic this term. Our main emphasis will be on the History element, looking into Welsh heroes and villains. A few introductory characters will be Owain Glyndwr, Twm Sion Catti, Princess Gwenllian, then possibly looking at some sporting heroes, Colin Jackson and Gareth Bale. If anyone has any artefacts, books or photos linked to this topic which can be brought in to aid research it would be very much appreciated.



**English/Literacy** –

As a school, we are having a big drive on improving handwriting, this will be practiced regularly and any practice your child can do at home will help.

**Reading -** Reading comprehensions will form a weekly activity, focusing on different aspects of reading and how to analyse accurately.

**Oracy** – We will be working towards an individual presentation to be given to the whole class during this term (information can be found on the homework sheet), in the build-up to this we will be practising various skills to develop confidence with public speaking.

**Writing** – For our fiction topics our genres include writing an article to explain; creating and advertisement to persuade and looking at the features of adventure/ mystery stories. In poetry, we will focus on reading, understanding and writing Humorous Hero/Superhero poems. Of course, comic strips will have a place too!

**Welsh -** This term we are developing our speaking and listening skills in relation to our topic of ‘Myself and My Friends’; asking and answering questions and sharing information on where we live, family members, pets, their age and birthday, which school we attend, what subjects we like/don’t like, describing appearance and what sports they like / don’t like and what hobbies they have. 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.

**Maths/Numeracy** - One of our main focus areas this term is continuing to develop our number work, including a continued push on place value (understanding the value of each of the digits up to 1000), beginnings of fractions, short multiplication, multiplying numbers by 10, understanding and really knowing times tables, measuring length and weight, reading and understanding time (any support you can give at home to read times and ask questions involving time would be a fantastic support), using money and reading temperatures.

We will again be looking at our reasoning skills and problem solving based on the wide range of maths/numeracy that we cover this term

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:

* Telling the time using analogue and digital
* Calculating differences in time
* Times tables
* Understanding coins and using money to buy things, thinking about change
* Finding the differences between numbers up to 3 digit numbers.
* Calculating ½ and ¼ of numbers

**Science** – We will be developing our investigation skills and explore the topics of grouping and changing materials. Looking at natural and man-made materials, reversible and irreversible changes, heating and cooling materials. This will have a focus on planning, developing, and reflecting on our science investigations, the investigation area in the classroom with give the children opportunities to develop aspects of science they are interested in.

**DT –** Technology will be to design and make a superhero puppet, starting with a finger puppet to develop some basic sewing skills before drawing, designing, creating and evaluating their own glove puppet.

**ICT** – We will focus our work this term on learning to develop our understanding and use of j2e (which the children are all doing brilliantly with) moving onto looking at coding. Here the children will learn some of the basics of programming by giving instructions to move an object around the screen (similar, yet more advanced than the old logo) They will have to give a set of instructions to move a rocket around the screen, so knowing left and right will become exceptionally handy.

We will also have our push on internet safety alongside how to use computers safely, encouraging children to become independent users and computer literate in the safest possible way, exploring how we leave digital footprints and how careful we need to be.

We will also be extending our use of ICT and digital competence across other curriculum areas.

**PE** - This term we will be focusing on Gymnastics and some Dance which will be taught on a Monday and the competitive activities (hockey, football) will be taught on a Wednesday. Please could you ensure that all long hair is tied back and earrings are to be removed. All children will be expected to participate in P.E. sessions unless we have a note or phone call stating otherwise.

**PHSE** – This term we will be focusing on the themes;

* Who likes Chocolate? To include lessons on fair trade, globalisation Inequalities, hunger and poverty, media and stereotyping
* Living long, living strong. To include lessons on: growing & caring for ourselves; valuing difference & keeping safe; healthy eating and exercise, goal-setting and motivation

We are also going to try to dedicate a few minutes each day to practices some mindfulness exercises.



**Music -** Our Music this term will be linked closely to our theme and topic, where the children will develop their skills of appraising music, make distinctions within musical elements and use this knowledge to choose sounds to create suspenseful music and perform in groups.

**Art –** We will be making superhero sculptures where the children will plan and develop own models.

**RE –** We will be focusing on learning about Leaders and their teachings within their communities, the importance of laws and rules with the emphasis on Christianity and Judaism.

**History** – This term we will be focusing on what heroes are and how we are all heroes in one way or another. We will progress onto looking at famous Welsh heroes, such as Owain Glyndwr, Princess Gwenllian and Twm Sion Catti, exploring who they were, when they were around and what they did. We will then spend some time making comparisons between two of the chosen famous Welsh people, looking at their clothing, food, transport, weapons etc. If time allows we will explore Welsh sporting heroes.

**Geography** – We will be looking at maps and directions this term, beginning to use the compass points, ½ and ¼ turns, vocabulary of direction. All of this will form quite a lot of outdoor practical work. We will then progress onto looking at maps and how to simply read them and make simple maps of our classroom and then maps for our own heroes.

**Curriculum Cymreig –** We continue to learn about the cultural, economic, environmental and historical characteristics of Wales through our Curriculum Cymreig work, which this term will include researching famous Welsh heroes and villains, and (hopefully) Welsh Sporting Heroes, through our topic work.

**Homework**

Homework is an important part of your child’s education as it allows them to practice techniques and apply learning that is introduced in class. This work should not take longer than 30 minutes per session. If anyone is unable to complete their homework due to running out of time, taking too long or they are unable to overcome a problem in the work, if they or you could just write a rough, short note in their book to explain what happened. Please do not struggle on just to complete it; it’s not worth it if it turns into a battle.

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 terms attached. All work to be completed in homework books or if on a worksheet then please stick into the books to prevent it being lost. The tasks include a range of basic skills practice, e.g. learning times tables, spellings, reading, to tasks which link into their topic in class, to tasks 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. Tasks can be repeated weekly.

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/Times tables:

We will have a weekly times tables lesson with a test on the last Wednesday of the Month, please ensure times tables books are in school on a Wednesday. We will regularly chant through the tables to aid recall we do all of these to improve accuracy, speed and knowledge of tables as well as confidence in their usage.

Spellings: Each week we will be focusing on a different aspect of spellings, children are expected to learn their weekly spellings which will be given out every Wednesday, also being tested on a Wednesday. These will become part of our Pick ‘n’ mix homework schedule.

Reading Homework

Pupils are expected to practice their reading regularly at home and bring their book with them to school each day. Books can be from school, home or town library. Pupils will be listened to during their weekly group reading slot and at least one other occasion during the week by the teacher or a parent helper. They will have the opportunity to change a school book daily.

HWB+

All children are set up on Hwb and have been doing some excellent work both at home and in school; thank you for all of the support and encouragement.

Our focus this term will be using the tools within J2E, particularly the coding APP (ask your child to show you how to access it).

Access to Hwb+ comes with many benefits, such as the Microsoft Office tools, Word, PowerPoint and Excel, which we will develop the use of as the children become more familiar with the technology. We will be modelling how to use each aspect of Hwb over this term and would like to encourage children to explore and teach you these skills at home as and when they learn them. It would be great if you can log into their accounts with them to check on their progress?!

As time progresses the children will be given their own Hwb emails which will enable them to converse freely with email to myself and Miss Roberts (which we really do encourage and we do reply pretty promptly), peers and maybe other family members. We will encourage this but at the same time reiterate all safety implications. To access Hwb+: <https://hwb.wales.gov.uk/>

**Classroom Help**

If there is anyone who would like to 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. If the expected quantity/quality of work is not completed, then children will be made aware of this when we mark their work. The following day, at lunchtime, there will be a ‘finishing off’ zone (when weather permits this will be in the playground) where children will go to complete the work. If they do not use this time efficiently then the work will be photocopied (with a comment attached) and sent home to complete. This procedure will also be used in all junior classes and we hope that as parents you will support this system in order for us to get the full potential out of the children.

Could we also ask that all children have indoor and outdoor shoes (in a good bag/carrier to go on bottom pegs) so we can help minimise the mess within the classroom and school.

We hope you find this information useful. We operate an, ‘open door,’ policy so if you have any queries, please don’t hesitate to come and find one of us.

Kind regards

**Sam Harley and Beth Roberts**