

West Pennard Church of England Primary School

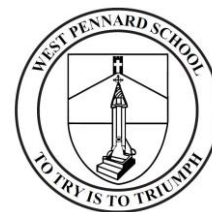


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Headteacher Miss J. Hale



13th September 2018,

Dear Parents / Carers,

Welcome back! I hope you had an enjoyable summer, are feeling suitably refreshed and are ready for an action-packed term in Class 2. Enclosed with this letter is an overview of the curriculum that your child will be following this term, and below are a few notes that may help with the smooth running of school life. I hope you find it informative and of interest.

Exciting Engineering, Daring Design and Super Science

We are using our class book - Rosie Revere, Engineer as a lead in to some really exciting areas of the curriculum this term. In History we are going to learn about one of the most famous engineers of all time, Isambard Kingdom Brunel. We will explore some of his biggest achievements, but also focus on some things that didn't quite go to plan but that didn't stop him achieving great things...the message of the book. In Geography we will learn about the continents and the hot and cold parts of the globe in charting the journeys that the SS Great Britain took when used as an ocean faring liner to New York and Australia, and in later life as a transporter of coal to San Francisco and around Cape Horn. In Art and Design we will be proposing our own designs for a redesigned school playground and using a variety of mixed media to produce art work to support our topic. I will share some of our creations with you using the 'Class Story' function of the Class Dojo APP.

Homework

In Year 2, I will be expecting the children to become progressively more responsible for and independent in their learning. It is therefore their responsibility to ensure reading books, planners, notes and homework sheets are ferried to and from school.

Homework will be given to the children in person every Friday during term time and will often consist of a game or activity as well as optional links to online activities to support the learning in Maths that week. In addition to this there will be games and activities to support the learning of phonics and spelling, punctuation and grammar.

The purpose of the homework is not to introduce something new or unfamiliar to the children, but to consolidate what they have learned during the previous week and allow you to keep abreast of what they are doing in school. There will be three different versions of the homework, an optional 'challenge' homework sheet and differentiated spelling / phonics lists, as well as an optional challenge spelling list. A 'support' list will also be provided for children that are in receipt of support outside of the classroom setting or for whom I deem List 1 to be too much of a challenge. Your child will be given the correct homework sheet and the list of sounds / spellings that they are to learn.

The children should, in the main, be able to do much of the work on their own and extend themselves with the online activities, challenge homework and challenge spellings, should they wish to. Spare copies of homework can be requested through Class Dojo. I will endeavour to check the inbox regularly through the week; however, a question earlier in the week is preferable, as it will ensure a prompt enough explanation prior to the hand-in date. No last minute Thursday night panics please.

Reading



In addition to the homework, it is expected that the children read four times a week, and, where possible, to one of you. I realise that people lead busy lives, but it is imperative that they are heard as much as possible, in school and at home, to improve the fluency in which they read but also to ensure that they understand what they have read. Miss Harding and I will hear your child read as often as we can and will sign their planner when we do so. It is certainly equally valuable for you to read to them as well, as it will improve their knowledge of stories and help instil a love of reading. Some of the children have been started on our new school-wide (Year 2* - Year 6) reading scheme – Accelerated Reader. It is an online tool that bands books in terms of difficulty (not always in terms of actual decoding, but in story / text difficulty). Some of the books that the children in Year 2 currently read are part of Accelerated Reader. The only difference you will see / they will experience is that, following their reading of the book, they will take an online quiz (in school) to check their understanding. They accrue points for this, depending on how they do, and the system counts the amount of words they have read through the year. To that end, so that the children are best prepared for the quiz, they may well re-read the text, or even have a text that you may consider, initially, easier than they have read before. The system is a smart one, in that, as they read a few books, it adapts to their abilities and sets them harder books, if necessary, or gives them more of the same if they need to consolidate. It will ensure a much greater understanding of what is read, not just reading fluency, and will mean that ultimately they are much better readers. As the class' reading ability improves as a whole, all children will be enrolled onto the scheme.

Routines

Although it is fairly commonplace to accompany children in Year R and Year 1 and assist them in dropping off their belongings in the morning, I would encourage you to phase this out at the earliest opportunity in Year 2. They need to be allowed to gain greater independence and responsibility for themselves and their belongings in readiness for Key Stage 2. Farewells can be given in the playground or at the gate when dropping off. If you need to see me at 'drop off' for something urgent, then please do so, but if the message could be conveyed through a written note, verbally from your child or as a text message in Class Dojo I would greatly appreciate it. I'm sure you'll understand that the time before the bell goes can be extremely busy. Key Stage 1 children stay in the playground until the whistle at 8:50am, having dropped off bags in the cloakroom on arrival. They do not need to come in to the actual classroom before the whistle goes. If it is raining before school starts at 8:50 they are to get their book bags out of their school bags or from their pegs and read quietly in their place.

Keeping in Touch

In Class 2 we will use a reward system called Class Dojo, as I'm sure you are aware from the log-ons issued on Tuesday. They can customise their avatar and can see how many dojo points they have accrued for their behaviour / attitude to work for that week. Although there are negative dojo points that you can give, I tend to try to keep it positive. I have customised the dojos, such that the children can gain points for being helpful to others around the school, working hard or even for reading at home each week. The number of dojo points they get each week equates to the amount of golden time they receive on a Friday. It is a proven system that rewards good behaviour / hard work on an individual basis and keeps you abreast of their progress in school – in signing up, you will receive an email each week as to what they have done well. You can also contact me through the app if you have a question or concern. I also occasionally attach files of their work (PDF or JPEG) so you can celebrate their successes at home.

Trips

We are exploring some interesting and exciting areas of the curriculum this term. As part of our focus on Rosie Revere, we will be visiting the SS Great Britain and Clifton Suspension Bridge. Booked for 7th November 2018. Offers of help from those with DBS Clearance will be gratefully received. Also, in learning about Judaism in RE, I intend for us to visit the Bristol and West Progressive Synagogue in Bristol. Date and times to be confirmed.

Finally, some key days to remember –

Thursdays – PE Kit required

Fridays – swimming kit required

Fridays – homework is given out (and handed in).

I hope this has given you some useful information. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me or put a note in your child's learning journal or through dojo.

Thank you for your support,

Mr Tony Wheat