

West Pennard Church of England Primary School

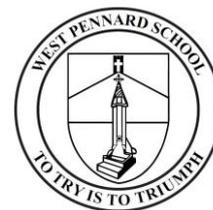


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Headteacher Miss J. Hale



6th September 2017,

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 4. 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.

Homework

In Year 4, as through Key Stage 2, we expect the children to become more responsible for, and independent in, their learning. It is therefore their responsibility to ensure reading books, notes and homework sheets are ferried to and from school.

Homework is 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 of the previous week. 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 are three different versions of the homework, an optional 'challenge' homework sheet and three different spelling lists, as well as an optional challenge spelling list. A 'support' list is also provided for children that are in receipt of support outside of the classroom setting or for whom we deem List 1 to be too much of a challenge. Your child will be given the correct homework sheet and will know the list of spellings that they are to learn. Spellings are tested on a Friday morning.

The children should therefore, 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. Homework will also be sent to you directly through Class Dojo (*see 'Keeping in Touch' later in this letter) and spare copies can be found on the door to the cupboard in the classroom. Homework is to be handed in by the following Friday. I will give out homework every week during term time, but never in the holidays. Could you please support us with this proven homework routine by not providing the children with an excuse as to not having completed it? We are trying to encourage greater responsibility in the children. If they haven't done the homework or haven't completed it to a sufficient standard (or if it is proving somewhat of a battle for you), they can do it with us during golden time on a Friday afternoon. They should understand the concepts being explored, as they will have covered it all week in class, but if any clarification is needed as to what to do, please contact me 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 every night, and, where possible, to one of you. I realise that people lead busy lives, but many children can 'drop off' with their reading, particularly in Year 3 and 4 as it is sometimes assumed that as they can read books with a reasonable degree of fluency on their own they are understanding what they have read. Mrs Buckley and I will endeavour to hear your child read as often as we can and will sign reading diaries 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. Several children made more than 2 years' progress last year! The more times they read at home, the more dojo points (see below) they get and therefore the more golden time they enjoy. When you read with your child, could you please sign the reading diary also?

Routines

Key Stage 2 children stay in the playground until the whistle at 8:50am. They must not, unless it is raining, come in to class or cloakroom before the whistle goes. If it is raining before school starts at 8:50 they quietly drop their bags off in the cloakroom and read quietly in their place.

Key Stage 2 children are expected to be dropped off at the gate and not escorted to the classroom by yourselves carrying bags or otherwise. 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.

Specialist Teaching

As part of our music provision, your child will be taught to play the ukulele for an hour per week by a peripatetic music teacher.

We will also be making better use of our particular skills / interests in school this year with a 'class swap' once a week between Mrs Bridson and myself. For an hour session every Tuesday I will be teaching Computing to Year 5 and Mrs Bridson will teach Year 4 elements of spelling, punctuation and grammar, as well as reading comprehension.

Keeping in Touch

In Class 4 we use a reward system called Class Dojo. The children all have a log-on to the site, or app if you prefer, as do you (see attached sheets). 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 - by 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.

Trips / appeals

We are exploring some interesting areas of the curriculum this term, as outlined on the attached sheet. Our main focus is on the Stuarts and will be visiting the Museum of Somerset to learn about the Monmouth Rebellion. Offers of help from those with DBS Clearance will be gratefully received.

Birthdays

Could I please ask that all birthday invitations are handed to me to give out discreetly on a Friday afternoon (preferably in sealed envelopes)? We often find that we have to deal with 'the fall out' of children not having been invited, which affects the classroom learning environment.

Finally, some key days to remember -

Thursdays - PE Kit required

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

Wednesdays - PE kit required
Fridays - swimming kit required

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 reading diary.

Thank you for your support,

Mr Tony Wheat