

Year 5 Newsletter April 2016

Dear Parent/Carer/Children,

Welcome back after the Easter break and I hope that the improved weather and longer days are a welcomed relief.

We are already into our final term in Year 5 and it will be a very busy one indeed. In literacy this term, we are putting a greater focus on reading. The children will be having a 'comprehension' lesson each week, in which they learn how to tackle different question types. This is to increase their comprehension skills ahead of next year's national tests. Our class novel this term is Pig-Heart boy and we will be carrying out lots of writing to link in with this powerful novel.

In maths, we are tackling 'statistics.' This involves looking at lots of different types of graph and chart, including line graphs, bar charts and pie charts. There are many resources on the BBC ReviseWise website to support with this. We are not taking our eyes off the excellent progress that the children made in learning all of their times tables last term. Many of the children can now recite their times tables up to 12 x 12 and we still need to get quicker at the corresponding division facts. If your child is someone who is absolutely fluent in the times and division tables, then they are encouraged to practice harder facts using what they already know e.g. doubling the 7 x tables to work out the 14s.

Our topic this term is about South America. The children will learn geographical vocabulary to describe where South America is and complete mapwork using scales to work out distances. They will also use geographical terms such as 'human' and 'physical' geography to describe how countries are similar and different.

In science, we are studying forces. This will include gravity, air resistance, water resistance, friction and levers and pulleys. We are planning a trip to the Life Centre in Newcastle in the last week of term to take part in a workshop linked to forces.

The children in Year 5 have been given a very exciting opportunity to take part in the Darlington Carnival, which takes place on Saturday 25th June. Year 6 took part last year and it was great fun. I will send out further details nearer the time but in the meantime, we are having a series of workshops led by Dean Heslop of Kings Performing Arts in order to create our costumes. Please bring as much 'junk' to school as possible before Thursday 28th April. This could be anything from cardboard boxes, to milk bottles. We may or may not use it but the instructions are to bring 'junk' so feel free to interpret that as you wish!

In RE, we are exploring 'Loss, Death and Christian Hope.' I understand that this might be a sensitive subject if children have recently experienced the loss of a family member or friend so please come and see me if you have any questions and I will be happy to talk you through what the content of the lessons will be.

The children are swimming this half term so please ensure they bring a swimming kit on a Friday. If a child is unable to go swimming for a medical reason, this must be received in writing. Please note that swimming is a compulsory part of the curriculum and unless a valid reason is given, children are required to attend.

As stated in the previous newsletter, we are having a huge push on times tables in Year 5. All children are required to know all of their times tables off by heart by the end of Y4. If they do not, they are considered to be working below age related expectations. The maths homework for the next half term is going to focus purely on times tables. There will be a different grid to fill out each week so that the children become more fluent. If your child is already secure in their times tables, it is important that they continue to practise so that they are as fast as possible. The latest set of assessment data also showed that there is room for improvement in spellings. Therefore, the literacy homework for the time being is going to focus largely on spellings. Spellings just need to be practised and practised. Please ensure that your child is spending time completing the spelling and times tables activities so that these areas are not impacting on other areas of literacy and maths. The children are still required to read a minimum of three times per week as part of their homework.

Important Reminders

Monday – PE

Thursday – Spellings and times table tests; hand homework in.

Friday – Swimming

Children **MUST** bring their reading book and reading record to school every day, even if it is a book from home.

If you have any questions, then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Ramsay