

## St. Anne's C.E. (VC) Primary School

### "Together with God, Making Learning a Life Long Friend"

*We aspire to be guided in all that we do by our inclusive Christian ethos. We are enthusiastic about life-long learning and share wisdom in serving each other and our world. We encourage all to live lives of hope and aspiration, inspired through acquiring new skills and attributes. Dignity and respect are at the heart of our school.*

5<sup>th</sup> January, 2022

**FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE PERSON WITH PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY**

**RE: YEAR 4 SPRING TERM NEWSLETTER**

I hope you've all had a wonderful Christmas and a very happy New Year.

Our topic for this half term is "A Whole New World", where we will focus on the Americas for our Geography, History, Art and DT lessons. This topic will feature much less history and much more Art, DT and Geography compared to our previous topic, which was History-focused. For more detail on what we will be covering in lessons, please see the attached Topic Web.

A love of books and reading is one of the most precious, important gifts anyone can give a child, the benefits of which they will reap for the rest of their lives. Reading encourages imagination, builds understanding, opens up new worlds and helps children reach their full potential. Studies have shown that 18% of 15-year-olds do not have the minimum expected level of literacy proficiency for their age. Difficulty reading translates to difficulty in learning in all other subjects as well: children who read books often at the age of 10 and at least more than once a week at the age of 16 consistently gain higher results in maths, vocabulary and spelling tests at the age of 16 than those who read less regularly. (Source: readingagency.org.uk and "Research Evidence on Reading for Pleasure", DfE, assets.publishing.service.gov.uk). Reading is linked to greater life satisfaction, could help reduce mental decline in old age (by up to 32%) and reduce stress (by up to 68%). It can help us to sleep better, make better decisions, have a greater vocabulary, increase our emotional intelligence and career outlooks... (Source: various, aggregated on comfyliving.net/reading-statistics). If there is one thing that is essential for the children to get into the habit of doing, it's reading!

Please make sure that your child's reading book and diary are in school every day. Myself and Mrs. Baker will aim to hear the children read individually every week, and change reading books for those following the scheme as and when required. It is the school's policy for all children to read at least 5 times a week, so please ensure that your child has a note in their diary to say what they read each day. The children are more than welcome to take a book home from the shelves in class - that book will be their choice, and will usually be a book that can be shared with you at home. If you lose your reading diary, just write it on a post-it note or scrap of paper (with their name on please) and hand that in instead until you find it. The diary isn't important to me - the reading is! Similarly, if your child wants to read something other than the specific book they have at the moment, that is fine with us: a magazine, **St Anne's C.E (V.C.) Primary School, Brown Edge, Stoke on Trent, Staffordshire ST6 8TA**

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website, news story, some poetry, etc are all great options to mix things up with. Again, it's the habit of regularly reading (and choosing appropriately challenging, engaging material) that matters, not what is being read as such.

Homework will be sent home every Friday: typically a maths piece and either an English, science or topic-based piece such as a creative project. These two main tasks are designed to take up to about a couple of hours a week and will usually either reinforce what we've done in class recently, address a specific need in the class to revise something, or prepare the children for something we're going to look at the next week in a "flipped learning" kind of style. Homework books need to be returned to school by Wednesday morning please. (You can, of course, hand it in earlier in the week if you want to!) Again, if there are ever any questions or issues please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Spelling is a major part of year 4, and so it will be taught throughout the week through Read, Write Inc sessions. We also send home spellings practice sheets every Friday as part of the weekly homework, which are then tested on the following Friday. Please ensure that your child brings in their completed spellings sheets with their other homework tasks by Wednesday morning as well.

In Maths the children have been working on place value as well addition and subtraction. It's taken us a long time to become fully fluent in these methods, as we uncovered some gaps along the way, but now we're ready to move on to multiplication and division both mentally and through written methods, as well as more work on fractions, decimals and geometry. Times tables are a major focus for year 4, and we do a short times tables test every Friday to check progress, which becomes very satisfying for the children to see their scores going up and their times going down over time. If you would like ideas of how to practise times tables effectively with your child, online games to play, etc then please don't hesitate to get in touch. One common area of difficulty in maths is telling the time, particularly on analogue clocks, so if you're looking for a skill worth working on, that and times tables would be particularly useful as well as the aforementioned four operations. In times tables, we've gone from a class average attainment of 23% to 64% just before Christmas, so who knows where we'll end up? Maybe we'll have some more 100%-ers joining the three children in that club soon!

P.E. day is Friday. Please come into school wearing your PE kit on Fridays, with your normal school jumper on top which we can then just remove for the PE lesson. Any earrings should be removed on these days and long hair tied securely back.

Team points will be awarded for hard work and good behaviour, together with ClassDojo points and other rewards as appropriate. ClassDojo points are earned for meeting our regular expectations each week as well: bringing in evidence of reading daily all week, handing in completed homework on time, coming in full school uniform every day (Monday-Thursday), and coming in PE kit on Fridays all earn you extra points. At the end of each term the top 10 (or 10+ if there are any who end up with the same amount of Dojos, which often happens!) go into our treasure chest and choose themselves a prize. We will also continue with the usual Star of the Week, Vocabulary and School Values awards each week.

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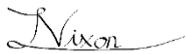


Toast is now bought online on a week-by-week basis through ParentPay, as we cannot accept cash payments.

I'm really looking forward to seeing the continued progress that we're all going to make through spring term. We have Laches Wood to look forward to, and academically speaking spring term is always an exciting time, as it's often here that we see the children begin to gain real momentum and make progress. As I've said before, these children really are exceptionally kind, polite and pleasant and we've had so much fun and laughter already in what can at times be very difficult current circumstances for everyone. That is absolutely a testament to the wonderful families we're lucky to be working with, and I just wanted to make sure you knew that your children's awesomeness has not gone unnoticed!

Onwards and upwards...

Yours sincerely,



Mr J Nixon  
Year 4 Teacher

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