



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.

5th September 2023

FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE PERSON WITH PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

RE: YEAR 4 AUTUMN TERM NEWSLETTER

Welcome to Year 4 and to what I am sure will be a very productive, enjoyable and rewarding year for all of us. I am really looking forward to working with you to get the best possible outcomes for the children and ensure they enjoy the process along the way.

Our **topic** for this half term is "Battles Before Britain", where we will focus on the British Anglo-Saxon and Viking period for our *Geography, History, Art and DT* lessons. We'll be looking at events from 420-1066, but focusing mostly on the events of 793AD onwards as that's when all of the *really* interesting bits happened. 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, but the impact of reading goes much, much deeper than that. 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). It may even help to alleviate symptoms of depression and help us to live longer: studies have found that those who read regularly may live for around 2 years longer than those who don't (interestingly, the benefit was not seen in those who just read magazines or other forms of media), and that those who read more than 3.5 hours a week were 23% more likely to live longer than those who didn't read at all (Source: various, aggregated on healthline.com/health/benefits-of-reading-books). If there is one thing that is essential for the children to get into the habit of doing, it's reading!

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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 what you read 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 us - 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, 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, though it is important that those on the reading scheme persist with it until they demonstrate that they are ready to come off it with both their fluency and comprehension.

Homework will be sent home every Friday: typically the two main tasks are one maths piece and one other, which may be English, science or topic-based 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 needs 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. In the case of calculations to practise written methods in maths, please always show your working-out clearly. You have all been sent your Purple Mash logins as well on ClassDojo at the beginning of the year, so please check your messages if you are struggling to login to Purple Mash.

Spelling is a major part of Year 4, and so it will be taught every 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 alongside their other tasks.

In **Maths** the children will be working on place value as well as the four operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division both mentally and through written methods. 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.

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P.E. day is Friday. Please come into school wearing your PE kit on Fridays, with your normal school jumper, cardigan or school hoodie 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, showing a consistently good attitude to learning and each other through the week, etc 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 and School Values awards each week.

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

Finally, I would just like to say that I am really looking forward to working with everyone this year and to watching the children grow and develop further as learners. I am excited to see what we can achieve together throughout what I am sure will be a wonderful year. Should you have any queries or concerns about anything, please do not hesitate to message me on ClassDojo at any time. I do not receive notifications from ClassDojo, so there is never a bad time to message - I will just pick it up next time I check the inbox.

Yours sincerely,



Mr J Nixon
Year 4 Teacher

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