



China Class Newsletter

Autumn Term 2017

Welcome Back!

I hope you have had a fabulous summer holiday and are looking forward to the new school year? I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself. My name is Mrs Benson, I have joined St Mary's this year. I am very excited to be working with your children.

Here is a brief outline of the topics and themes we will be covering this term, along with some useful points to note. If you need any further information then please don't hesitate to get in touch with me.



This term's topic is 'Earth and Space' so as you can imagine it will be very much science-based and I hope it will engage and excite your children. You can find out more about this topic in our class assembly on Friday 24th November 2017.



Literacy

We will begin our term by looking at Poetry. In this unit we will look at rap poetry, which will be a fun way to start our literacy learning together. After that we will be studying the lives of Tim Peake, Helen

Sharman and other space explorers and scientists, which will inspire us to write our own autobiographies and biographies. This will be followed by a unit of story-telling.

The children will be taught about the importance of written work making sense, having a purpose and being grammatically correct, through both explicit grammar lessons and as part of our Guided Reading sessions.

Guided Reading sessions this term will include time to enjoy reading different types of text. In addition we will enjoy focussed learning sessions that will help to build up the skills necessary to become a lifelong reader. Our key text this term will be 'George's Secret Key to the Universe'.

Spellings will be given out on a Monday and the children will be **tested** on the following **Monday**. Attached is a list of different, fun activities you and your child can use to help them practise their spellings at home.



Maths

We will begin the term by securing the children's knowledge of place value across many digits; this will include work on comparing, ordering and rounding numbers as well as using our knowledge of place value to calculate. Our addition and subtraction knowledge will be reinforced and embedded in the context of perimeter and money. The second half term will see us revisiting and progressing our knowledge of multiplication, division and fractions. The children will be taught shape and measure by Mrs Robinson on a Wednesday morning. Throughout the term we will focus on using and applying our maths knowledge as well as developing our skills of reasoning and deduction. We will be focussing very much on mental maths this term. Embedding our knowledge of times tables and their respective division facts. Once these are known, we will focus on applying this mental maths knowledge to solving problems in real-life contexts. **Times tables tests** will take place on a **Thursday**.

Science

The first half-term we will be studying 'Earth and Space' and we are very fortunate to have a visit from Herstmonceux Planetarium to help bring this topic to life. After half term we will be learning about the topic of 'Forces and Materials', which again will be linked to our 'Space' theme. The children will continue to develop their investigative skills through both these units. The main focus for development this term will be considering questions that can be answered through scientific investigation.

Computing

The children will be learning to organise, reorganise and develop their ideas using technology this term. They will start by focussing on e-safety and will continue to develop their ability to keep themselves safe when using technology. They will then be using their knowledge acquired in science to produce their own 'Stargazing' episodes, using video software.

R.E.

R.E. will be taught by Mrs Robinson. We will be looking at 'Understanding Christianity' and our first topic will be 'What does it mean if God is Holy and Loving?'. We will be working as a whole year group, building on the experiences and knowledge of others to create a portfolio of the children's collaborative learning.

Art

Art will be linked to our science and topic work. We will learn about: sketching, painting and pastel techniques. These will link to the unique characteristics of the individual planets.



Design Technology

In keeping with our science this term, we will be looking at designing re-entry vehicles and parachutes which we can relate to forces. This will also link with maths and science as we look at Earth and space.



Music

This term, we will be studying one of Britain's most celebrated composers – Gustav Holst. We will be inspired by his masterwork, 'The Planet Suite', to look at contrast and dynamics. The children will have the opportunity to perform their own compositions.

P.E.

The children will have two P.E. sessions a week. Our indoor P.E. lessons will be gymnastics. Our outdoor P.E. lessons will focus on invasion games. The lessons will be on **Wednesday** (Mrs Robinson) and **Friday**. Please remember that the correct P.E kit should be in school on these days and that children need to have plimsolls and outdoor kit.

Please note we are no longer able to obtain spare PE kit from the school office, so it is important the children have their own to keep in school. If you have any 'spare' PE kit you may like to donate to China class please feel free to hand it to me and I may begin to collate our own class 'spare' PE kit. As usual, no jewellery is to be worn, please ensure that all earrings are removed on P.E days if the children are not able to remove them themselves.

Spanish



Despite Miss Bell's absence we will be continuing to teach Spanish across Key Stage 2. We are in the process of looking at new resources and a new scheme of work which we hope will develop their understanding and knowledge of Spanish further.

PSHCE

In PSHCE we will be using the SEAL materials. After thinking about "New Beginnings" we will understand how it's 'Good to be me!'. PSCE objectives will also be integrated into our other curriculum subjects and our class worship.

In the summer term of last year we trialled a new homework system in Year 5, a 'Homework Grid'. The response was mostly positive and therefore having made a few improvements based on parent/children feedback, we will be following a similar pattern this year. The focus allows the children more choice in the tasks they complete. However, the expectation is still that one piece of homework will need to be completed every week. This will need to be handed in on a Monday. More details will be included on a letter when the first homework is handed out.

How can you help?

- 1) Please ensure that your child learns their weekly spellings and times tables.
- 2) As part of their weekly homework the children must read for at least 10 minutes, 3 times a week at home. The logs will be marked each week on a

Friday. However, please ensure your child brings in their reading book and log every day. It would be lovely if you could listen to your child read and discuss what they have read. However, I appreciate this is not always possible. Your child might prefer to sometimes read independently. If this is the case, encourage them to record what they have read in their reading log, along with their thoughts on what they have read.

- 3) **Support your child** with their weekly maths, literacy or topic homework. Make a game of it. Children can be very competitive.
- 4) **Encourage your child** with any work they want to do at home and always try and make it fun!
- 5) **Walking home** – we will require a **written request** from the parent/carer submitted to the school office should you wish a child to walk home after school on their own. Without this we are not able to let your child leave school grounds unaccompanied.
- 6) **Mobile phones** – Should you require your children to carry a mobile phone when in school they will be asked to submit it to the teacher whereby it will be stored carefully and returned to the child at the end of the day. Please note that St Mary's will not be responsible for any loss or damage to the mobile phones.

How can I help?

I am very happy to hear from any parent who may have a concern or who needs any further information. I will be setting up **communication via Class Dojo**, which will allow you to message me privately (further details on this will follow). I am also around most afternoons, after school to see parents. If you wish to speak to me in greater depth you may also make an appointment to see me, via the school office.

Thank you in advance for your support, and I look forward to getting to know you and your children as the year progresses.

Kind Regards,

Mrs Benson