



## Mexico Class Newsletter

### Autumn Term 2018

Welcome Back!

I hope you have had a fabulous summer holiday and are looking forward to the new school year? I am very excited to be working with your children in Mexico class.

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. To kick start our new topic we have a wonderful surprise in store for the children which will be revealed in the week commencing the 10<sup>th</sup> September. Please come

and hear what the children have been learning in our class assembly on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2018.

### Literacy

We will begin our term by looking at Poetry. In this unit we will look at slam poetry, which is a form of 'rap' poetry, and it will be a fun way to start our literacy learning together. After that we will be working on descriptive writing and celebrating Roald Dahl day concentrating on one of his more well known stories of Charlie and the Chocolate Factory. In line with our topic this term we will also 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. Towards the end of the term we will follow autobiographies with a unit of story-telling and in contrast review the style of writing found in journalism such as newspaper articles. So hopefully there is a lot to keep the children engaged.



In addition to this we will be continuing with our 'Talk for Writing' initiative. 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. 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' which is written by the famous theoretical physicist, cosmologist, and author Stephen Hawking and his daughter Lucy Hawking.

**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. 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 which helps secure their knowledge of times tables and respective division facts. Once these are learned, we will focus on applying this mental maths knowledge to solving problems in real-life contexts. **Times tables tests** will take place once a week.

### 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 Magnets' and 'Changes of 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 and asking lots of 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.

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. This unit of work is thought provoking and the children will be encouraged to link Christian values to real life examples.

### 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. We will hopefully be looking at the Artist Peter Thorpe. An example of his work.



### 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 **Monday** and **Friday** (Taken by Brighton & Hove Albion Specialist Sports Coaches). Please remember that correct P.E kit should be in school at ALL times. Children need to have plimsolls and outdoor kit. As usual, no jewellery is to be worn during P.E. lessons, please ensure that all earrings are removed on P.E days if the children are not able to remove them themselves.

## Spanish



I am delighted to announce that Senorita Bell has returned from maternity leave and will continue to teach the children Spanish once a week.

## PSHCE

In PSHCE we will be following the Islington program which does address more poignant topics of which are becoming prevalent in the children's lives such as 'e-safety, cyber-bullying, sexting and abuse'. We touched on a few of these subject last year. They are delivered with children in mind and overall proved to be very successful in educating our children appropriately. PSCE objectives will also be integrated into our other curriculum subjects and our class worship.

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A 'Homework Grid' will be provided to the children each term. This form of homework allows the children more choice in the tasks they complete. We find that it also encourages the children to be independent in their work. The expectation is still that one piece of homework will need to be completed every week. Ideally 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 encourage them to learn times tables...it really does help!
- 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 and any new words they have learned.

- 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 office upon arrival. 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. Please do sign up to use this facility, I often post notices and pictures of the children's learning. It is a secure site only seen by the parents and carers of our class (further details on this will follow). I am also around most afternoons, after school if you wish to see me. 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,

Miss Sleaf