

Class R Term 3 Newsletter – January 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Happy New Year! We hope you had a wonderful Christmas break. Thank you for your kind cards, gifts and messages for Christmas. We hope the children are all refreshed and ready for lots of excitement this term!

Topic

Our new topic is China, and we have already enjoyed a role-play flight to China – we had to look at some clues to find out where we were going! We will be comparing some different landmarks from China and England, as well as finding out about celebrating Chinese New Year with the story of the Great Race. As it will be the year of the Rat, we will look for morals and rhyme in Julia Donaldson's story, the Highway Rat.

We will have lots of opportunities to develop our wider skills, such as fine motor skills using chopsticks and clay (inspired by the terracotta army), technology skills using iPads to play games with ordering numbers, and understanding the world: investigating materials to float the animals across the river.

Later this half term we will learn to retell the story of the Three Billy Goats Gruff, using lots of narrative language. We are going to be learning our Set 2 sounds in phonics (ay, ee, igh, ow, oo, oo, ar, air, ir, ou, oy), which should give us the phonics toolkit we need to have a go at writing parts of the story by half term. We will build bridges and make model trolls, and record each other acting out the story, using iPads.

Reading

As well as decoding words (including Wonder Word cards) with our Set 2 sounds, in reading we will really focus on developing our understanding of what we have read. Our decoding skills are progressing well, but by reading and re-reading simpler stories, we can take the time to focus on thinking about the events in a text. Using Read, Write, Inc. ditty/story books, we will read regularly and talk about what we have read in teacher-led groups; answering questions that really get us thinking about the story. Look out for these books coming home in book bags: the books include questions at the end for parents and carers to use at home too. We will know the children are ready for more challenge when they are able to recall the story and answer these questions easily.

Maths

In maths, we will work on addition and subtraction skills, and learning the number bonds that make ten, e.g. $3+7$, $4+6$. Also in our number work, we will continue to practise putting numbers in order, and will start to look in more detail at the numbers 11 -15, seeing how they are formed and how they relate to numbers 1-5. In our 'shape, space and measure' work, we will continue to work on using pennies to make an amount when playing shops, and pounds when confident. We will be working on finding half, using vocabulary relating to everyday time ('first thing in the morning', or 'after that'), and vocabulary for position, ('next to' or 'behind'). We will investigate which 3D shapes roll, and will begin to learn their names (sphere, cylinder, pyramid, cube and cone).

Our PE is now on Mondays and Fridays, and in PE we will be getting used to rotating around a carousel of different activities within each session, to develop our skills. Indoors we will work on wake and shake dances, more gymnastic balances and jumps, and copying children's yoga stories with control and coordination. Outside we will work on games where we need to negotiate space, and we will use a variety of equipment to practise our throwing and catching.

In RE we will be looking at different New Year celebrations, including the Hindu celebration Holi. In PSHE our topic is Dreams and Goals, and we will look at recognising feeling proud when we meet our own targets.

Star Challenges

Each week, we will have three star challenges to complete, which we can work on independently or with adult support where required. The tasks are differentiated so that each of us are working on our own targets. For example, we are learning to use our own 'Ingredients Jars' writing targets, where each jar reminds us of an important step we need to remember, such as using Fred Talk to sound out each word, or remembering to put finger spaces in between our words. Most days we practise our handwriting for a few minutes straight after lunch, when we focus on a specific letter or a family of letters, to help us with these targets. Look out for our super star challenge work on our Wow Work display, Evidence Me, or in our blue Learning Journal folders.

Volunteering

A huge thank you to all of our volunteers who helped with trips and readers last term. It has had a big impact already on helping the children build up their fluency when reading. If any more DBS-checked helpers are willing to come in to hear readers, there is a sign-up sheet on the noticeboard please – all help is much appreciated!

Please do continue to bring in any boxes, tubes, sweet wrappers etc. for our creative area and any natural materials for our concoctions kitchen, such as old flowers, plants or herbs. The children get so much fantastic learning from these donations! Anything to help us create boats would be especially helpful, e.g. foil trays, plastic tubs, corks.

Looking ahead to next term, we will be learning about caring for animals, and we have our class assembly on Thursday 26th March. We will be looking after chicks in our classroom after they have hatched, from 16th March for two weeks. We have had one kind offer to take some of the chicks at the end of our fortnight: if anyone else can help out by rehoming some chicks, please let us know.

As always, if you have any questions or queries, you are welcome to talk to us at the start of the school day, or at the end of the day when all the children have been collected. Alternatively, Mrs Bennett is always happy to make appointments, or you are welcome to email via the office.

Mrs Bennett, Mrs Wing and Mrs Keen