



Dear Parents,

It has been great to see the children settle back into school so enthusiastically after Christmas (and thank you for all the wonderful cards and presents).

Prior to the children creating their own imaginary characters, settings and events and writing make believe stories, we will be reading stories to fire our own imaginations. As the children will no doubt confirm, I cannot stress enough the importance of reading. Fundamentally this is for enjoyment; but also to experience good vocabulary and composition. Great writing gives us models to inspire writing and use of vocabulary that might otherwise be unfamiliar. That is why the children are all expected to read every night. Please support them by recording their reading in the diaries or initialling their records.

We will continue to include powerful verbs, adverbs, adjectives, similes and metaphor to enliven our writing; paragraphs to help us to organise our ideas and a variety of accurate punctuation to ensure our work makes sense. Regular attention to grammar and punctuation will ensure the children continue to grow in confidence in this area. The children will also be keeping a careful eye on the presentation of their work and practising handwriting, as well as checking their own work. Spelling investigations and guided reading sessions continue throughout the week. Understanding spelling patterns is essential and the children are encouraged to use the weekly words in their own independent writing - how often can the children use the words in their homework? Again, regular reading is important here as it helps to consolidate and extend their understanding of the varied spelling rules.

Our maths work will continue to focus on increasing the speed and accuracy of mental skills. A general sense of number and fluency is vital, with a sound recall of number bonds and multiplication facts from times tables, and the associated division facts. I have been very impressed with the children's progress so far: their ability to cope with word problems probing their knowledge of the times tables has improved greatly this year. Five minutes on the journey to school reciting a table or answering mixed questions helps keep this learning alive and genuine rather than just for a test.

Topic work focuses on Britain and the Roman Empire, Sikhism, light and electricity, embracing history, geography, science, computing, art, D&T, music, PSHE and PE. And then there is the play!! We are aiming to transport everyone to a rat-infested town - watch this space! PE with Mr Atkins and French with Mme Read continue on Wednesdays and swimming/PE on alternate Fridays, but PE kit (named!) should be in school at all times.

The children will continue to be encouraged to use their initiative to solve everyday problems, to grow in independence when organising themselves and their belongings, to always be mindful of others and, of course, to love learning new things.

Thank you for your continued support (particularly with the homework - I hope it's interesting) and please do not hesitate to contact me through the home-school diary or by telephone or in person at the end of the day.

Kate Parkin

