

Dear Families,

It's been a great couple of weeks in Class 3. The children are settling into routines really well and have been producing some lovely work!

Homework - spelling:

As it's the start of the year, we are introducing homework gradually to allow the pupils (and parents!) time to get back into the swing of things and feel confident with routines. We will introduce times tables/maths homework later this term but so far we have given the pupils one spelling/handwriting sheet to complete in their orange book ahead of their weekly test. For Year 4s this work is given out on Wednesdays and tested the following week. Year 3s are given their work on Fridays and tested the following Thursday.

Most pupils have completed this work to a good standard but please do check in - all pupils should be using pencil, attempting cursive handwriting and using the guidelines on the sheet to help. They should copy each word two or three times (depending on space on the line). Please check they have copied the spellings correctly and please discuss the word meanings with the children too - this is a great way to reinforce understanding and develop vocabulary as the Year 3 and 4 spellings are typically quite challenging. Children love learning new words and practising them - often these are the sorts of words that would really elevate their written work if used appropriately so it's hugely helpful to support them with this.

Homework - reading:

We have reminded pupils that they should be reading regularly at home (ideally every day). This is perhaps the single most useful thing you can do to support your child's learning (top tip: if they are watching TV put the subtitles on - it's been proven to improve reading fluency!). Please use the parent information packs for reading prompts and be sure to encourage your child to ask for clarification on anything they don't understand - at this age fluency in reading is one of the main aims but discussion is vital too to aid comprehension skills.

Your child should have a yellow reading record where you can record their reading. Starting from next week we will be checking these records each week and the expectation is that **parents/carers will add at least three entries into the diary per week**. We will award team points for this and pupils will earn extra team points for additional entries - we appreciate pupils often have busy lives outside of school but if you can get more entries that's great!

These diaries will be checked on spelling test days (Year 3 Thursday/Year 4 Wednesday) although pupils should bring their diary in every day.

Please note: we have devised a rota for one-to-one reading to ensure that pupils who may need additional support (based on prior attainment) will receive this regularly in class. We will also listen to other readers but please be aware that this won't be every week. If you would like to volunteer to hear readers in school please do get in touch as this would help us to expand our capacity for this.

Learning highlights!

I know that was quite a lot of information but hopefully it is helpful. I'll keep this section brief - but that's not because there has been a lack of highlights. We have now completed two weeks of swimming and the second session was great fun - I was particularly impressed with how sensibly and quickly the children were able to get changed after leaving the pool. We have a very tight turnaround of just ten minutes from pool to coach and amazingly we managed it without any items lost! Well done Class 3.

Other highlights have included our wonderful, illustrated 'How to wash a Woolly Mammoth' instructional texts in English which we intend to share with you when they are finished. As part of this work we've had role play sessions, designed hair products and we've even made little mammoth models using milk bottles and various other things - they are really cute and are now dotted around the classroom. In History this week we have been exploring the school grounds, imagining what it might be like to be a stone-age hunter-gatherer and identifying threats and assets! And no, you can't use the outside tap for water as they hadn't been invented yet! While in science we have been looking at different types of rocks and finding about how fossils are formed. We spent some time outside "digging" for clues about Mary Anning. I'm sure the children will be able to tell you all about this famous palaeontologist.

It's been a wonderful few weeks in Class 3 - they are a delightful group of children and a real pleasure to teach.

Have a lovely weekend!

Mr Sturgess and Mrs Miller