

Dear Families,

Over the past two weeks in phonics we learned the new GPC 'ow', 'oi', 'ear' and 'air' and learned new tricky words 'here', 'all' and 'are' for reading and 'no', 'go', 'to', 'the' and 'l' for writing. The children have generally found the 'air' and 'ear' trigraphs difficult to remember this week (they are a bit confusing as they are so similar). Also throwing the tricky word 'are' into the mix isn't ideal! However, we only have two new GPC to learn and will be revisiting all the GPC and tricky words over the rest of the year. One method I shared with them for remembering the 'ear' trigraph is that it begins with the letter 'e' (saying the name not the sound and an 'e' might look a bit like an ear) and the 'air' has a dot above the 'i', which is floating in the air. Some might use these ideas to help them remember, but if you have a better way by all means share it.

We started doing gymnastics in PE with a session last week on balancing on different parts of our bodies and being able to stay still in a balance with control. This week we were practising how to pencil roll safely and with control. The children were excellent at both skills so I was impressed. I will however still be practising throwing and catching skills, which some of them are still struggling a bit with. Throwing and catching is definitely something you can also practise at home please.

In our White Rose maths we have started a new phase called, 'Building Nine and Ten'. This is a three week block and over the last two weeks we have thought about recognising, representing and finding number bonds to nine and ten and also finding one more and one less than numbers to ten. We used the ten frames and counters as a group and I was impressed at how well the children listened and demonstrated really careful mathematical thinking to represent ten in different ways though some games and challenges.

Thank you for your support for our Book Day celebrations, the children looked fabulous. We shared some of our favourite stories from books and told stories of our own, had a special book themed lunch and had three mystery readers visit the class in the afternoon. I have to say a huge thank you to Orla's mum and Mason's Dad, as well as our final mystery reader, who was Belle, from Beauty and The Beast. We all know how much she loves reading books. The children who brought books to swap also had the opportunity to choose a book to take home as part of our book swap. Next week (or the week after) I will be introducing the Class One Lending Library to the children, but I will send you information about how that works when we begin.

We have already been very busy in our RE so far this half-term. The focus for this time leading up to Easter is on some of the things Jesus did as a man and a teacher. We have also begun sharing some of the parables He told to teach people about God. I think it is really important for the children to learn about Jesus' life and the significance of it for Christians, before we learn about his death at Easter, in a few weeks' time. In addition to this there are lots of important Christian events to learn about. Last week the children learned about Shrove Tuesday, which many of them knew as pancake day' and was in half-term. We also talked about Ash Wednesday and Lent. This week the children learned how Jesus chose twelve special friends to help him teach people about God (His disciples). They enjoyed playing with our small world Jesus, disciples and a little fishing boat, like the one in the story (playing with it has also helped them with their careful counting up to 13).

Mrs Jarvis has given me the following information about her music lessons over the past two weeks: *This half term we have started a new topic and we will be learning about Vivaldi and his composition 'Spring' from 'The Four Seasons'. We learnt about Vivaldi's life, in particular, that he was special because he wrote music about real things, like the weather. We listened to the music whilst we completed a story map about Vivaldi's life, which the children have brought home to show you.*

*This week we thought about spring related words and clapped the words and phrases. The children took it in turns to think of a word or phrase and clap it for the rest of the class to copy. Then we developed these phrases and used body percussion to tap out the rhythms. The children learnt a new musical word, 'tempo', the speed of the music. We decided the speed of Vivaldi's Spring was fast as it is a happy and joyful piece of music. We listened to lots of different pieces of music from different genres and decided whether they were fast or slow. We talked about how Vivaldi went for a walk and listened to all the different Spring sounds to inspire his music so*

*I've asked the children if they can be like Vivaldi this week. It would be great if they have heard some Spring sounds ready for next week's lesson.*

The theme of Spring, which links in really nicely with Mrs Jarvis' music lessons, will be ongoing over this half-term and we have already started to think together about the changes we can see in the world around us. To support this I am planning to take the children on a walk around the village next Thursday morning to look for some signs of Spring. We will hopefully see lots of flowers, hear the birds singing and have a fine day, but we will be going whatever the weather, so just a heads up that the children will need suitable waterproof clothing and sensible footwear (which they should have in school every day anyway). You may, as always also send a change of clothes if it's very wet. We will need to leave school at about five past nine and should only be out about an hour. We will take photographs of what we see and use those as inspiration for art work, with a focus on observational art and colour mixing. The art we produce may be used for a very special occasion coming up next Sunday but that's a secret!

Thank you to everyone who sent money in for the children to buy a butterfly badge from Maryam this week to support her collection for the charity DEBRA. Next week, a group of group of Year Six pupils will be holding a Mother's Day Gift Sale after school on Thursday 12th and Friday 13th. The children will have the opportunity to purchase a small Mother's Day gift for a special person in their life. The gift (we are keeping quiet on what they are!) will be priced at £1 each. Importantly, all proceeds from the sale will go to charity, helping us to support those in need while also giving the children an opportunity to show appreciation to important people in their lives. If you would like your child to take part, please send them into school with some cash.

Have a lovely weekend everyone. Kind regards from Mrs Watts.