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Headteacher: Mrs Victoria Woods

3rd November 2026

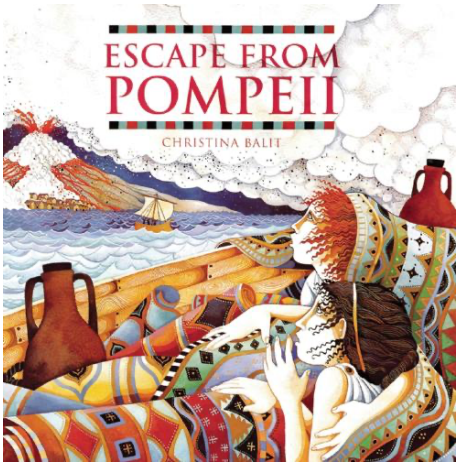
Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back! We hope you all had a wonderful half-term break. It has been brilliant seeing how quickly our Skylarks have settled into the routine of Year 3 and grown in confidence over the first half-term. They have made a fantastic start to the year, and it has been lovely watching their friendships, independence, and enthusiasm for learning continue to flourish.

We are so excited to dive into another busy half-term packed with curiosity, learning, and fresh adventures together!

Curriculum – Why were the Roman army so effective?

This term, our project asks the big history question, 'Why were the Roman army so effective?' The children will step into the shoes of historians as they explore how the Roman Empire grew, when and why they invaded Britain, and how native Britons reacted to their arrival.



Alongside our topic learning, we have lots of exciting opportunities planned across the curriculum. From analyzing artefacts, engaging in drama, and writing newspaper reports inspired by our English focus text, *Escape from Pompeii*, to dodgeball and gymnastics in PE and playing complex and exciting rythems in music. This term is packed with fun and excitement!

We are looking forward to a busy, creative, and enjoyable term filled with curiosity, learning, and plenty of fun!

Class rewards

We recognise whole class expected behaviours by using 'Marbles in the jar'. Every few weeks, we will be working towards a specific target and when we fill our jar with marbles, we will get a whole class reward.

Reading

We want to create a culture that values and supports reading for pleasure and we will commit to the following;

- adults reading aloud regularly
- informal book talk, including recommendations from peers and adults
- encouraging library use, including the local public library
- providing time to read

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ODST Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust
SCIB Safeguarding Children In Banbury
Ofsted Good Provider

- sociable reading environments – I have developed a book nook in the classroom and this will continue to develop over the course of the year.



Children will have a reading book which they have selected themselves. We recommend that the children regularly read at home as it is a great way to cover a wide range of authors and genres. It will also allow them to understand and use a wide range of vocabulary.

They should aim to read on at least four occasions in any one week for a minimum of 10-15 minutes at a time. We ask for you to listen to your child read as much as possible during the week to support their reading progression. Please encourage your child to record their reading activity in their reading record. I guarantee it will make a difference to their progress across the curriculum.

Homework

Our homework enables all pupils to make sure they have chance to practise and recall things like spellings and their times tables, to read regularly and also complete a weekly piece linked to our project. Over the half term the work the children complete can then be combined into a final project piece. I can't wait to see what the children create and bring in to share with the class.

*Our homework books will be sent home every **Thursday** and should be returned to school on the following **Tuesday**. Good pieces of homework and great effort will be rewarded through the school reward systems.*

PE Kit

All children should have indoor and outdoor kit e.g. shorts, house coloured t-shirt and plimsolls for indoors and trainers for outdoor sessions. **PE kits should be brought into school every Monday and taken home on a Friday to be washed for the following week.**

Please note pupils are not permitted to take part in PE lessons whilst wearing earrings (unless they have been pierced within the last six weeks in which case they are permitted to tape them up until six weeks has passed**.) Staff are not permitted to assist pupils with the removal or insertion of earrings**. If pupils are not able to manage earrings independently, they should not wear them to school on days when PE is timetabled to take place but remove them, with assistance, at home.

Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL)

As you are aware, the staff and children have been developing their play through OPAL. As part of this, the children will be encouraged to have fun in our outside areas throughout the year and in all types of weather therefore it is important that the children have outdoor learning clothing in school every day. They will need a pair of welly boots to use so that their school shoes remain dry and clean.
Please name your child's boots - as it can be hard to reunite lost clothing and equipment to the right child if it is not named. If you have any old welly boots that your child has grown out of, we would really appreciate you sending them in so we can pass them on to someone who needs them.

When the weather is particularly wet, children will need a waterproof coat and waterproof trousers. Again, please ensure these are named to avoid them going missing.

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Birthday books

To support your child's dental hygiene we ask that you do **not** bring in sweet treats on your child's birthday. Instead, if you would like to, you are welcome to donate a book to the class. This could be a picture book, information book, a collection of poems or a loved story.

Reminders

- **Water Bottles** – please make sure children have a water bottle with them every day (separate from any drink in their lunch box) as this allows them to access water as and when they require it. To improve the oral health of children, only water is permitted in class. If your child brings in a bottle filled with something other than water, we will provide them with a cup so that they can access water during the day.
- **Snacks** – Children may bring in a **healthy snack** for mid-morning break. Suitable choices include fruit, cheese, yogurt and vegetable sticks. Do let us know if your child has any food allergies or intolerances.
- **Absence and sickness** – please let the office know if your child is not attending because they are ill. Also please note that Health Protection Agency guidance states that children should not return to school for 48 hours after the last episode of either sickness or diarrhea.

My Child at School (MCAS)

We are now using the My Child at School App to send information to you and to allow you to easily make online payments. If you have not done so already, please sign up by visiting the following website: https://www.mychildatschool.com/MCAS/MCSParentLogin

School code: 15144

Contact

Should you need to contact us about any matters arising, you may email direct using the following address:

l.jayasiriwardena@banburystmarysschool.co.uk

Please be aware that any messages sent may not be seen until later in the school day or after school as I may be busy with classroom duties and teaching earlier in the day. In all cases I will endeavour to reply to you within 2 working days. Obviously if the matter is more urgent, for example about attendance or changes to the routine of collecting your child then you should contact the school office.

I look forward to working with you and helping your children achieve our vision; Learning, Transforming and Growing.

Kind Regards,

Lakshani Jayasiriwardena