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**Swallows Class Newsletter – Autumn Term 1 2019**

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back to our first term of the year. Thank you so much for all the kind gifts and cards - the petals from all the children were exceptionally thoughtful. I feel very lucky to be working with your children again. We can build on the successes from last term and work hard to ensure progress for every member of Swallow class.

**Curriculum – Darkness and Light**

Our project for this term incorporates RE, science, DT and PSHE.

The children will be linking their learning together using the story of Diwali - Rama and Sita. The children will learn how to make shadow puppets to retell the story and explore how religious stories can guide people’s actions. The children will build upon their knowledge of light from Year 3 and investigate the effect of different materials when casting a shadow and also the effect of changing the position of a light source.

**English**

We will be using the text Cinnamon by Neil Gaiman;

In a hot, hot country, ringed with mountains on one side and jungle on the other, lives a princess called Cinnamon. Her eyes are made of pearls, which means that she is blind. And, for reasons her parents the Rajah and Rani cannot fathom, she will not talk. So they offer a reward to anyone who can teach Cinnamon to speak. People travel from far and wide to attempt it, but nothing works. Until a mighty tiger, huge and fierce, prowls into their palace and announces that he is here to teach the girl-cub to talk.

The children will be exploring this fable and will begin by making inferences about the characters and situations in the story. They go on to consider the emotions of characters including Cinnamon herself (in the form of diaries) and also of her parents when creating adverts. There is explicit teaching of the conventions of dialogue through drama and children go on to write a story in the style of Cinnamon using speech.

**Maths**

We will start this term reviewing our knowledge of Place Value. We will revisit the value of digits within a number, ordering and comparing numbers, representing numbers in different ways and understanding how different mathematical equipment, models and images can help us in maths. Following this, we will spend some time focusing on the four operations. As well as being able to use mental and written methods, the children need to be able to solve problems linked to each of the operations.

As you already know, one of the Year 4 objectives is to be fluent in all the times tables (up to and including 12 x 12) and the related division facts by the end of the year. To achieve this, the children need to regularly practise at home and at school. We have added some games to our learning zone but rapid recall by learning facts together and then asking quick fire questions will really help. We ask the following types of question in school;

* How many 6s in 18?
* What is 7 x 6?
* What is the product of 6 and 10?
* 72 divided by 6?

**PSHE - Road Safety**

We start the year with a safety week to explore an aspect of keeping children safe in Banbury. This year we will be focussing on road safety as well as a reminder of using the internet and technology safely.

**PE**

We will continue to log our journeys to school and aim to walk at least three times a week to earn our WOW badges. On Thursday and Fridays, the children will be having PE lessons - they will be on the field or the playground so need appropriate footwear.

**Class rewards**

The children have already been working hard to earn house points and Swallow class have voted to choose their marble rewards;

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| 150 marbles | 300 marbles | 450 marbles | 600 marbles |
| Heads down thumbs up and apple pie game for 10 minutes | 20 minutes field time to play together. | Dress up day - theme to be agreed. | Class Party with games and treats. |

**Daily arrangements**

Swallow class line up with the rest of the school on the playground; the children are expected to be independent and carry their belongings into class themselves. The bell always rings at 8.50 and registration is completed straight away before Reading which starts promptly at 8.55.

At the end of the day Swallow will be dismissed from the Year 3/4 entrance of the main building once an adult has been seen to receive them. If children walk home alone, they need to let me know that they are leaving at the end of the day. If there are any changes to your usual routine please let us know in the morning. If things change unexpectedly during the day, please feel free to ring the office. Children who are not collected by 3:25 will be taken to the school office and will have to be signed out with a reason for late collection.

**Reading books**

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.

**Homework**

Our Teaching and Learning policy states;

At St Mary’s we recognise that children learn best when school and family work in partnership to promote a child’s learning and progress. This partnership includes encouraging children to practise, develop and enrich the learning that takes place in school, outside of school. Homework should not be something which leads to arguments, tears or tantrums for either children or parents.

Our homework enables all pupils to make sure they have chance to practice and recall things like spellings and tables, to read regularly and also complete a weekly piece of work for Maths, English and their project.

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

**PE Kit**

All pupils 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 have 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 Learning Sessions**

Each class will be having an outdoor learning session every week. It is vital that children have appropriate clothing available in school which may include trousers/tracksuit bottoms, waterproof coat and wellingtons. Please send appropriate clothing in a named plastic bag. Once again it is advisable that the children keep these clothes in school for the duration of the week so should we wish to spend further time outside we can do so.

**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. In recent years, we have noticed that some children bring in squash and this attracts ants in the summer term. To avoid this, please help by only sending in water. If you child has a medical need that requires them to have a different drink, please include the details on your parental contact form and we follow this up with a Health Care Plan.**
* 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.

Parentmail is also a convenient way to be kept up to date with school developments.  You can download the app on most android and iPhones.  Please speak to the office if you have any difficulty accessing Parentmail.

**New for 2019 - Birthday books**

As you have read in Mrs Wood’s newsletter, to support our tooth brushing work we have decided to move away from sweets to celebrate birthdays and instead, if you would like to, ask if you could donate a book that can be read by members of the class. This could be a picture book, information book, a collection of poems or a much loved story. If you need an idea for a book, please don’t hesitate to ask.

**Contact**

Should you need to contact me about any matters arising, you may email direct using the following address: s.digiorno@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 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 or speak to me at the start of the day.

Please remember that I am available after school (or before for more urgent problems) if there’s anything you would like to discuss.

Kind Regards,

Sarah Di Giorno