

Friday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2017

Dear families,

Happy New Year! We hope you all had a lovely Christmas break and enjoyed a rest. We have yet another busy term ahead of us in class 6 and we are really looking forward to seeing the children pushing themselves as they did last term. Here's what we have in store:

Topic: Our over-arching topic this term is Science and Geography based. We will be studying evolution and inheritance in Science, focusing on Darwin's theories. Children will be investigating fossils and finding out about the work of Mary Anning, understanding how variation of species occurs and studying the adaptation of plants and animals to environmental changes. We will be having a visit from Mrs Orton's spiders in order to observe them closely and discuss how they have evolved over time. In Art, children will be studying fossils and animal specimens, developing their observational drawing skills using a range of media, looking at natural drawings by Henry Moore and Georgia O'Keefe for inspiration. In Geography, we will be tracing the journey of Darwin's H.M.S. Beagle using atlases to locate places. Children will then be researching one of the places he visited, asking and answering their own geographical questions to create a report.

Our topic will also link with Literacy where our first unit is biographies. We will start by studying a range of biographies, picking out their key features; children will then choose their own significant individual to research and write about. Our final piece will be a biography of Darwin himself, drawing on all the knowledge we have built up about him during topic lessons. We will then have our literacy led by the book 'Skellig', exploring our ideas about the text and responding through drama and different genres of writing.

Children will continue to receive a sentence of the week which will be tested on a Monday. I cannot stress enough the importance of learning this - each week, it will contain key spellings and punctuation marks which they must know in order to achieve the required standard in the SPaG test at the end of the year. Progress with spelling has been good this year and I really want them to keep up their focus on accuracy and applying the rules they have learnt! Encouraging your child to read as much and as widely as possible is also important; children should be reading for at least 20 minutes every day and should be aiming for at least 20 pages within this time. Reading at home progress will continue to be rewarded on our game board and with reading challenge certificates.

In Numeracy, we will be continuing to revisit all the key areas of the maths curriculum and children's arithmetic skills will be assessed on Fridays where we will alternate a mental maths test with a written arithmetic test. Children are involved in the marking of these, identifying their own areas for development. Please continue to check children's quick-fire times-tables and division facts as these are key to so many areas of mathematics.

In R.E. we will be looking at the theme of religion and charity, focusing on the work of Christian Aid and Islamic Relief. They will be exploring the beliefs and values of these charities as well as their own ideas about making a difference in the world. Children will continue to have music with Mrs Bristow and P.E. lessons will be led by our sports leaders. Please ensure children always have the correct kit in school - we will be outside as much as possible!

Homework will continue to be set on a weekly basis, usually alternating learning logs with SPaG and maths. There may be an increase in SPaG work to ensure consolidation of the terminology and principles which will be used in the SATs. If you have any questions or queries, please do not hesitate to ask. We are all very much looking forward to working with your children again,

Miss Thompson, Mrs Simpson & Mrs Morrall