



6th September 2021

Dear parents and carers of Orchid class,

Welcome back! I hope you have had a lovely summer and are ready and raring for the new school year – let's hope this year is going to be a little more settled. I am very excited to be your child's new class teacher and am looking forward to meeting you all very soon.

Orchid class are also very lucky to have Mrs Walker (Monday – Thursday) and Mrs Lockett (Friday) working with us. We are looking forward to getting stuck in to life in Orchid class, and I would like to share with you some information that you may find useful, about the school year.



English and maths

Our first week back will be centred around the book 'Fox' by Margret Wild and Ron Brooks. We will do lots of English and PSHE work based around this book. For the rest of the term/school year, a lot of our English lessons will be topic themed, particularly our non-fiction units. We will begin our maths lessons in the first week of term, following the White Rose scheme. This week, I will be ensuring that all children have logins and are familiar with accessing Timestable Rockstars – as I'm sure they already are. It is very important that children access this at home as well as in school in order to improve their mental recall of timestable facts – this knowledge will help them in lots of other areas of maths too!

Topic

We will begin our first topic 'Ancient Civilisations' in the second week back, beginning with a wow day on Monday 13th September. Accompanying this newsletter is a knowledge organiser about the topic, which you can read with your child, to find out what we are going to be learning about over the course of the term. Also accompanying the newsletter is a home learning guide, which contains some suggested activities that your child can do at home. Any work done can be returned to school on the last Monday of term so that we can look at it over the course of the week. On our wow day we will be looking at three civilisations that we will cover over the course of the topic: ancient Sumer, ancient Egypt and Indus Valley. To prepare the children for this, it would be great if children could dress up as an ancient Egyptian (there are some simple suggestions online for this or I know some children have decided to come dressed as a mummy!). Throughout the day, we will be designing and making an artefact from each of the three civilisations. For one of the artefacts, we need either butter tubs or ice cream tubs so if you have any empty ones at home, we would really appreciate them being saved and brought in.

Other subjects

This year Orchid class are lucky enough to be taught by Mr Doyle on Friday afternoons. He will be teaching them PE, RE and PSHE. I am sure the children will love their time with him! The language we are learning this year is German.

PE

As mentioned above, your child will need to come in to school in their PE kit on Monday and Friday each week. Please could their kit be in line with our uniform policy, which is a plain white t-shirt or polo shirt, plain black shorts, plain black jogging bottoms and trainers. It may be a good idea for anyone with pierced ears to leave their earrings out on PE days to save them having to take them out, or if your child struggles to remove their earrings, they can tape them over (tape will not be provided by school).

Homework

Homework will be given out on a Friday and will be due in on the following Thursday, when children will bring their homework books in to school for their work to be marked. Children will be provided with maths homework, spelling homework and they will also be expected to read at least five times a week, and for their reading to be recorded in their reading record. For Y6 children, homework will sometimes be set on SATs Companion, which is an online programme which offers maths and English support (your child will be provided with login details). We will increase our usage of this over the year as we head closer to the SATs window (May), to provide the children with support with their learning.

Reading

Your child will be provided with a reading book in line with their reading age, which will be given to them as early as possible in the first week of term. In class, children will have access to books off our reading shelves as well as library books (library won't be running as normal at first, but we will make sure library books are brought in to the classroom for the children to access) and we will also have our 50 Reads Challenge books in our reading treasure chest. These books are specific to Y5/6, and the children are encouraged to read as many, ideally all, of the books during the year. It is essential that those children who are free readers are reading books that are challenging enough for their age, and that they are accessing a wide range of genres and authors, and the 50 Reads Challenge is perfect for this! Further information about this challenge, as well as a book list, will be provided in the first few days of term.



It is very important that children continue their reading at home too. We would your child to aim to read 5 times a week at home. This doesn't always have to be aloud to a grown up, it can be independent reading too. Any reads that your child does at home, please fill in their reading diary (reading books and diaries will be given out by the end of week 1). Try to question your child on what they have read in order to ensure they are comprehending the text they are reading.

I hope that you have found this information useful, and I look forward to getting to know you and to meeting you all over the coming weeks and months. If you ever need to contact me, please don't hesitate, you can phone school or can email me directly on orchid@st-james.derbyshire.sch.uk

Thank you for your support.

Best wishes,

Miss Kuczaj