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AND RESOURCED PROVISION FOR
HEARING IMPAIRED CHILDREN
Headteacher: Mrs C Findlay

17th January 2025

Dear Parents and Carers

If I haven't seen you since the start of term – Happy New Year! I hope you all had a lovely break over the Christmas holidays. It is hard to believe we have been back two weeks already. This term the staff have lots of exciting activities planned including trips out to Butser for Year 3, Harry Potter in Year 4, the Natural History museum in Year 5 and Year 6 had a visit from Zoolab on the first day back after Christmas!

One thing I did over the Christmas break was watch the programme Swiped – the School that Banned Smartphones which can still be viewed on Channel 4

(<https://www.channel4.com/programmes/swiped-the-school-that-banned-smartphones>).

Before you all groan and think I am having another nag about children on devices, please could I urge you to take a look at it if you haven't already seen it. As a parent of teenagers, the programme really moved me emotionally and made me think deeply about who and what I might be unintentionally letting into my children's lives. I should pass on a word of caution however that some of you may find some of the content upsetting (I know I did).

Bringing items from home

Please could children refrain from bringing items from home into school other than a pencil case or something to show that they feel is very relevant to the topic being studied in class. Smartwatches should not be brought to school if they provide children with access to carry out internet searches or that are able to take photographs or make recordings. This is for the same reason that we do not allow children in school to have mobile phones and it safeguards all of our pupils. (Other watches are permitted but will need to be removed for PE lessons).

Small toys can be a distraction in lessons and can also get lost or broken which causes distress to children. If you think that your child needs a fidget to support their concentration, please discuss this in the first instance with your child's classteacher or Miss Dakin our SENCo.

Please see attached news from the year teams.

Have a lovely weekend.

Yours sincerely

Mrs C Findlay
Headteacher

News from the Year Teams

Year 3

Year 3 have had a fantastic start to 2025. We have been learning about all about prehistory and what life was like at the beginning of the Stone Age in Britain. We have been lucky enough to bring our learning to life as we have hired some topic boxes so we have been able to handle many different objects including tools from the Stone Age. We are all looking forward to our trip to Butser Ancient Farm next Thursday. Fingers crossed the weather stays dry and is not too cold!

We have read the Stone Age Boy by Satoshi Kitamura and travelled back 20,000 years into the past to discover what life as living in a Stone Age tribe. We then used the book as inspiration to write our own portal story. We tried to use inverted commas to show when the characters are speaking.

In maths we have been busy recapping our learning from Year 2 looking at how to tell the time to the nearest 5 minutes using an analogue clock. Please practise this important skill at home so your child becomes fluent in telling the time. There is fun game online that has different levels here: <https://mathsframe.co.uk/en/resources/resource/116/telling-the-time>

This half term in computing, we will be learning how to search for information safely and accurately on the internet. These are important skills as we will be researching to learn more about life in the Stone Age, Bronze Age and Iron Age.

We are continuing to send home weekly spelling sheets which complement the learning we do in class. Please do continue to hear your child read regularly and record any reading including on Oxford Reading Buddy in your child's reading record. Thank you for your support.

Year 4

It has been a really lovely first week back in Year 4 – we are so proud of the fantastic learning behaviour that we have seen from the children following the Christmas break.

Our Harry Potter Day last week was thoroughly enjoyed by all (including the staff, who had to be persuaded to take their hats off when the children went home!). We began the day by listening to the first chapter of Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone. The children were instantly captivated by the story and listened intently through all 18 pages – you could have heard a pin drop! They then found out which Hogwarts House they would be in and made potions that they devised themselves using all sorts of magical ingredients. Later on, they designed their own wands and went on a Fantastic Beasts scavenger hunt around the school. It was a delight to see the children's enthusiasm and creativity throughout the day.

Maths continued to be all about time last week. We practised reading analogue clocks which is something that a lot of children found difficult, partly as they are so used to reading digital times. The best way to help your child with this is to have an analogue clock or watch somewhere at home that you can refer to throughout the day. This week, we have moved on to fractions and decimals and are doing lots of work to support our understanding of tenths and hundredths.

The children had great fun in RE last week: as part of their 'Stewardship' topic, they spent a day looking after a toy animal and learning about what it means to take care of something. They have now moved on to their new science unit about solids, liquids and gases and have started to learn about France in geography.

Just a reminder that we encourage children to read for around 10 minutes a day at home: please record this in their reading records. There is also a spelling sheet to complete at home each week and the half term topic project to support their learning at school.

Year 5

Year 5 have come back after Christmas showing a fantastic attitude towards learning and our new topic 'Oversea Neighbours'. On the first day back we had a day where we looked at different structures and had tasks such as making the strongest bridge, structures out of old pencils and famous landmarks from Lego. The children showed great team work and logical thinking to complete the tasks.

We have been enjoying learning about all the countries in North America and how it is different/similar to the UK. In art, we have been starting to design our Totem poles and learn how to mould clay. In DT, we have been looking at different structures around the world. Make sure to ask your child some of the facts they have found out. In the next few weeks we will be making waterproof structures outside. We are looking forward to sharing all of this with you at our celebration of work on Wednesday 5th February in our classes straight after school.

In maths, we have been learning all about percentages, fractions and decimals and how to convert between them. At the start of each lesson we have been practicing our calculations, at the moment we are focusing on using the column method for addition. Any extra practice of this at home would be really helpful.

In English, we have been looking at two different poems about refugees and a story called 'The Journey'. We have been rewriting sections of the story and we are looking forward to sharing these with you soon. We have focussed on making sure we have correct speech punctuation, fronted adverbials and effective word choices.

Keep your eyes out for a letter which will give you some key dates about our upcoming trips and events. You should have also received an email with the Year 5 home learning, please let your child's teacher know if you have any problems at all.

Year 6

Happy New Year! And what a fun start to 2025 Year 6 have had! We launched our brand-new topic 'Hola! South America' on the first day back with a visit from the interactive Zoolab. The children were given a chance to get close-up with a variety of creatures from the rainforest and to learn many fascinating facts about them. Who knew the word for 'cold blooded' was actually exothermic! Many children challenged themselves to either hold or touch unfamiliar creatures such as a giant millipede or a corn snake. The tarantula was impressive and very well behaved, but we didn't touch that one! Our launch day was supported with lots of music and colour as we began our learning about Brazil.

In geography we have been using maps, atlases and the internet to really get to know the physical landscape of Brazil. In music we have begun to compose samba rhythms for our 'Manor Mile Carnival' later this term. In art we have been appreciating learning about artists from South America and using colour to brighten up our January!

In English we have started a new text 'The Explorer' by Katherine Rundell, which is set in the Amazon. We have been getting to know the characters in the story and using inference to identify the characters personalities and traits. We have also used the text to explore what the Rainforest is like and are beginning to write vivid descriptions of the environment. We will be using this story as the basis for lots of different writing tasks in this term.

In maths we have been getting to grips with ratios - Brazil is 35 times larger than the UK so a ratio of 35:1!

Thank you for your continued support with the SAT revision books and watch out for some exciting spelling news which will further support our revision efforts!