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Headteacher: Mr Iain Horner

## Ash Class Newsletter – Spring Term 1, 2017

Dear Parents and Carers,

Happy New Year! We hope that you had a lovely Christmas break and we welcome you back for what we hope will be a really productive and exciting Spring term. The children have settled back into the classroom routines really well, they have worked hard on consolidating some of their key skills during the first two weeks and they have been massively enthusiastic about our new topic.

### Curriculum

We are beginning the term with a new topic all about one of everyone's favourite thing ... food! Throughout our work on **Food Glorious Food**, the children will be thinking about different types of food, healthy eating and where our food comes from. In Geography, the children will be exploring the countries of origin for some of our food and locating these on maps, as well as thinking about the issue of 'food miles'. In Design and Technology, we will be devising and cooking our own healthy snacks including designing and making the packaging for their snacks. Our RE work will continue thinking about our big question, 'Should you wear religious symbols?'



After the half term break, our focus will be on Science and the children will be looking at plants and finding out about pollination and germination. Our Art work will be linked to our Science and we will be looking at the work of William Morris and making collages inspired by nature. In PSED, we will be looking at Fairtrade; thinking about how we, as consumers, can make a difference by making ethical choices. Linking into this work, our next RE big question will be 'Should People Care for the World?'. We will also be starting to learn some French.

For more information, you can view our Topic Wheel, which will be displayed in class windows and available on the school website.

### Staffing and Timetable Arrangements

Our usual weekly routine continues with Mr Craven teaching on Tuesday morning, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, and Mrs Whybrow teaching all day on Monday and

on Tuesday afternoon. Mrs Thorne, Miss Mansfield and Mrs Meaney will also be supporting the learning in Ash Class throughout the week.

On **Wednesday** afternoons, the children will have a PE session taught by Mr Craven and second PE session will be taught on **Thursday** afternoons by a member of the coaching staff from Club Energy.

On Friday mornings, the children will be taught by Mrs Broadhead (our specialist Music teacher).

We are all committed to the care and education of your children and meet regularly as a team to plan; discuss children's progress and share information.

### **Reading Books**

Last week, we gave the children new reading books and diaries. Reading at home is an important and valuable opportunity for children to practise their skills and should be encouraged every day, for about 10 – 15 minutes. Please record comments in your child's diary, or ask them to write a comment! Reading diaries should be in school every day, so that we can record reading activities that they do in school time.



We encourage the children to change their book once it is finished and we ask that you do the same. The children are aware of where to find new books in the classroom, and changing books should be part of their morning routine. If your child is a 'free reader', there is a large selection of longer books for them to choose from. Please bear in mind that some of these books are more challenging than others and although we have shown the children where to find the ones most suitable for their stage of reading, if they pick one that is too hard please encourage them to choose another one.

If at any stage you are worried about your child's reading, please come and speak to us. Also, if you feel that your child is doing really well at home and the books are becoming too easy, please let us know and we will assess whether they are ready for the next stage. This week we will begin to set up our new guided reading groups, in which we read together as a group, all looking at the same book. This is our main approach to teaching and practising reading skills and will be recorded in their reading diaries. Guided reading will usually take place once a week.

### **Homework**

Homework has been available on the school website from 6th January and again at the beginning of each term. We ask that completed homework be handed in each **Wednesday** so that it can be marked and time can be found towards the end of the week for any sharing of tasks when appropriate. Homework books will be returned home on a **Friday**.

### **Phonics and Spellings**

The children have been grouped according to their stage of learning in phonics, which is based on the assessments we have completing during the first few days at school this term. They will be having a 20 minute session each morning, Monday to Thursday, focusing on the reading and spelling of phonics.

### **PE Kits**

The children have two PE sessions a week; however, it is helpful if the children have their kit in school every day. It would be useful if children could have both trainers and plimsolls in school and appropriate outdoor kit as the weather is particularly cold this term. Please can you ensure that your child's PE kit is named clearly!

## Outdoor Learning

This year, Ash Class will be having an outdoor learning session on a **Thursday**. The children will be able to develop their problem solving and team skills; physically challenge themselves; explore the natural world and develop their imaginations and creativity. Outdoor learning will take place whatever the weather, so it is vital that children have appropriate clothing available in school. They will need: trousers/tracksuit bottoms, warm jumper, waterproof coat and wellingtons (plus hats and gloves as the weather gets colder). These clothes need to be in separate from PE clothes as they are likely to get wet and muddy. Please send appropriate clothing in a named bag.

## Important Spring Term Dates

Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> March – World Book day  
Friday 10<sup>th</sup> March – Ash Class Celebration Worship  
Friday 24<sup>th</sup> March – Comic Relief

Please see the school website for more dates.



24 March 2017

## Contact

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

[icra8965@chesterton.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:icra8965@chesterton.oxon.sch.uk)

[nicolaw@chesterton.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:nicolaw@chesterton.oxon.sch.uk)

Please be aware that any messages sent may not be seen until later in the school day or after school as we are often busy with classroom duties and teaching earlier in the day. In all cases we will endeavour to reply to you within 3 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 one of us at the start of the day.

## Reminders



- **Packed Lunches** – please can we remind you that the school requests that packed lunches **do not contain nuts** – as we do have children in school who have life-threatening allergic reactions to them. We also ask that grapes or cherry tomatoes included in lunch boxes are cut in half to help prevent choking.
- **Water Bottles** – please make sure that 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. Water only in these bottles please (not squash, juice or flavoured water).
- **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 diarrhoea.
- **Hair** – please can you ensure that long hair is tied back. This helps ensure children's safety when using climbing equipment etc. and also curbs the spread of head lice.
- **Wellingtons/Outdoor Shoes** – make sure that your child is prepared for outdoor play by providing wellies or outdoor shoes/trainers and a warm, waterproof coat when necessary. Wellies can be left at school so that they are available every day for your child to use. These should be clearly named.

Kind regards,

Mr Craven and Mrs Whybrow