

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to year 5! I hope you have all had a lovely holiday given the strange circumstances we've experienced. I am hopeful that the children are ready to get stuck into some exciting and challenging new learning! There are bound to be a few worries about returning to school given the extended period that they have been away but please be reassured that, as a school, we are ready and prepared to help them slip back into their routine. That said, should there be any concerns regarding this, then please do come and see me. We have a duty to ensure that any gaps in their learning caused by the enforced school closure are addressed and we will do so through a variety of different strategies depending on each child.

The school day and routines may appear slightly different at first but the experience of having certain year groups in prior to the holidays has shown us that children adapt remarkably well and with very little fuss. I'm sure the same will be true for the start of this new academic year. The main point is to recognise that Year 5 is a single bubble that is existing within a school of other year group bubbles. To this extent, year groups will not mix and a staggered timetable will be in place to help facilitate this.

Due to early ending of the previous academic year many of the topics in Y5 have changed. Our first topic in year 5 is 'What happened after the Romans left?'. I'm sure the children will enjoy getting to grips with this topic and that they will gain much from the different activities that we do. Over the next half term the children's main creative homework is an 'Anglo Saxon' project and not the creative grid they have had previously. The children can create a model, PowerPoint presentation, an information booklet etc. In fact their only limit is their imagination! They have the full half term to complete the project and they will form part of our class displays. If you have any questions regarding this piece of work please don't hesitate to contact me but I will also explain in detail to the children.

I will also send weekly Maths and English work for your child to complete. The Maths will consist of arithmetic activities and will complement the daily arithmetic practice they do in school. The English tasks will focus on spelling, punctuation and grammar. I expect the children to complete their homework tasks in the same manner in which they approach their school work. It should be completed in black pen and I ask for a high a high standard of presentation. I will send their homework home on a Friday and ask that it is back in school by the following Wednesday so that we can go through it as 'learning activity'. Please annotate in your child's homework book/sheet detailing how much support has been required to complete each task. I thank you in advance for your support – I really do appreciate it.

Your child will also have a weekly times table and spelling test. I encourage you continue to revise times tables with your child (using Times Tables Rockstars, Hit the Button etc.) – as if they are not constantly reinforced they are easily forgotten. The tests will take place every Friday and, in the case of the times tables, if they complete a level they will progress onto the next.

Given the time away from school the children had, a key focus is reading and it is something that I'd really like your support with. Initially at least, there will be slight differences with how this will operate given the current restrictions and guidance. The basic idea is that the children will have two books each – one for reading in school and one for reading at home. The children will have access to a variety of books in class that they can choose from to read during the school reading sessions. They will be able to complete tests on these books, as normal, using the laptops that have been shared between the classes.

As well as reading in school however, I also want the children to read another book at home. They can read whatever they like and the emphasis should be put on reading for pleasure. We have a selection of books in the class that they can use if required but this book should remain at home until it is finished. I would really appreciate your support with this and kindly ask that you keep a record of what has been read in the reading diary (I'll ask for them to be returned periodically to look at). Our main focus to begin with is getting the children reading with regularity again and fostering a love of it. Like last year, little rewards will be given out to those making a real effort with their reading. It is hoped that we will be able to revert back to our previous system sooner rather than later but please bear with us in the meanwhile.

P.E. will take place on Mondays and Wednesdays with myself and Mr Bland. As you will know by now, children are to come to school in their PE kits on these days and the lessons will take place outside so please ensure your child is dressed appropriately.

I'm sure you appreciate that our primary aim in this first part of the year is to facilitate a catch up of areas that were left untaught from the previous year, as well as to introduce them to some of the Y5 units. This may mean that children appear slightly off course initially in terms of their progress but this shouldn't be of concern long term given the steps we have put in place. Every child across the country is in a similar position.

Before I end, let me take the opportunity to assure you that I am always available to chat about any issues or concerns that may occur over the year. If you feel there is something that I should be made aware of then please do get in touch. I really value the links between home and school and want to foster positive relationships.

Many thanks in advance for your support,

Mr Browell