

Spring 2023 - Sapphires

I'm so pleased to report that all the children in Sapphires have settled back into school so well after the Christmas break, and have been working so hard. We (and they) are really proud of the progress they are making. In this letter you will find important and useful information about the topics and skills we will be learning this term. We hope to continue to form strong links between home and school and are always happy to discuss any concerns with you - please feel free to email us or make an appointment in school.

DAILY ROUTINE

There are a few notable changes to our previous daily routine. The children may come into school from 8.35am, and our school day starts **promptly** at 8.45am. Reading books that need changing should be placed in the Red Box on Mondays and Thursdays. The children will start the day with their spellings work in their year groups on Monday-Thursday and their spellings test every Friday morning. This is followed by Whole Class guided group reading and then Literacy until playtime, and then by Maths after break. Please note that the Year 3 children have a Mental Maths test every Monday and Number Bonds on Tuesday, whilst Year 2 will have Mental Maths test on Wednesday and Number Bonds on Thursday. All children have a Times Tables test every Monday and Friday. In the afternoon we teach the foundation subjects which include Science, Geography, History, RE, PSHE, PE and DT/art. School finishes at 3.15pm when we will lead the children into the playground. Please try to make sure that your child knows how they are going home and if you are going to be late collecting your child please contact the school as soon as possible. Due to the age of the children in our class, we would prefer them to be collected from the playground if possible, rather than on the path by the road.

THE CURRICULUM

TOPICS

Our topic this term is 'Changes in Britain from the Neolithic to the Iron Age'. This topic is predominantly literacy, and history but other curriculum areas will be linked to this particular theme. We are hoping for an educational trip to Butser Ancient Farm next half term, but a letter outlining the details will be sent out nearer the time - we will have a guided tour and participate in several hands-on activities linked to the different eras we are studying. This half term we will start by learning about the different eras of the Stone Age - the Palaeolithic, the Mesolithic and the Neolithic, to provide context for the Neolithic, and then complete introductory research into the Bronze Age and Iron Age. After half term we will move on to learning about the changes that took place in Britain during these periods, focussing on food; homes, settlements and everyday life; technology, tools and inventions; art and culture; religion, ritual and monuments. We will be focussing on questioning and research and exploring archaeological sources.

LITERACY

Literacy will be linked to our topic. We will start by learning about fact-files and non-fiction in our research on the Stone Age, and then we will be focussing on the book *Stone Age Boy*, examining the plot, language and grammar, and adapting and improving it to write our own *Neolithic Boy* imaginative stories. After half term the children will be focussing on *How to Wash a Woolly Mammoth* and instruction writing, as well as writing non-chronological reports. We will also have a book week after half term when we will be looking at a particular British children's author.

Reading

We teach the skills of reading during literacy, in group guided reading, whilst reading with individuals and in other curriculum areas. Daily practice is needed to improve these skills and we cannot over-emphasise the importance of reading with your child at home. As part of their homework, this should take place at least four times a week for about 10-20 minutes and independent readers also benefit from shared reading at home as they can discuss characters, themes and language in depth. Reading records are checked daily. Year 3 children are encouraged to be independent readers, but they still need to read regularly to an adult at home. We endeavour to listen to Year 2 children read their reading book once a fortnight but please don't panic if this doesn't always happen: your child is heard at least twice a week during guided group reading, which takes place every day between 9.20 and 9.45am.

Writing

The children will spend time developing their handwriting whilst learning their weekly spellings. We will be aiming to develop the children's formation of letters, pace of writing and overall presentation. Literacy lessons will encourage the children to write creatively and practise skills taught in previous lessons.

Spelling/Phonics

Spelling will take place daily between 9.00 and 9.20am. During Monday and Thursday's sessions we will be practising our weekly spellings, and on Tuesday and Wednesday we will be working in groups, focusing on different spelling rules. Every week your child will bring home spellings to learn, and must also be aware of the meaning of the words as well as putting them in an oral sentence. Daily practise of these spellings is part of the children's homework, and they will be tested every Friday by writing the spelling word in a sentence. We will also be focusing on Grammar and Punctuation during these sessions.

NUMERACY

In numeracy this term we will be revisiting, consolidating and extending concepts previously learnt and specifically covering: multiplication and division, money, shape, measurement and statistics. We will also have problem solving/investigation sessions.

Mental Maths, Times Tables and Number Bonds

Every week your child will be tested on times tables and number bonds. Your child will be given 3 minutes to complete as many questions as possible correctly, striving to increase their knowledge of times tables facts and to improve their speed. We are also practising 'chanting' times tables and number bonds facts every day, and would encourage this rote learning at home too.

Times Tables Rockstars

Every child in the school has been issued with their TT Rockstars password, and it is part of their homework to practise their tables at least four times a week. The tables are in the following order: 10, 5, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 7, 9, 11, 12, and include both multiplication and division facts. The program is set up to automatically move children to the next level once they have achieved sufficient fluency and speed at the level they are on. Another way to practise is a free program called 'Hit the Button' (find it easily through google search - it is part of the TopMarks website).

Number Bonds

We also encourage practise of addition and subtraction number facts (number bonds) in the following order: 10, 20, 30, 50, 100, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 25. Again, 'Hit the Button' is a good place to practise number bonds. The children will be given a number bonds test once a week (see above - daily routines).

SCIENCE

Science will link to our topic wherever possible, however where some units are more difficult to relate; these will be taught discretely. The first topic this term will be 'Rocks', where the children will be exploring the formation of igneous, metamorphic and sedimentary rocks, and learning about the rock cycle. We will be observing and grouping rocks, learning about the fossilisation process and investigating how soil is formed by setting up scientific enquiries.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

P.E. is taught for an hour every Tuesday afternoon, and alternate Friday afternoons with J.C. Sports coaches. Please ensure that your child comes into school on those days wearing their P.E. kits. P.E. lessons are usually taught in the village hall or outside so please make sure that your child has appropriate clothing for cold days. On the days when P.E. is taught, please tie long hair back and remove earrings. If your child is unable to participate in a P.E. lesson, please let us know in writing.

COMPUTING

The children will be taught computing by Mr Brown on Tuesday mornings. This term, for 'Data and information' they will be learning about Branching Databases, and for 'Creating media' they will be studying Animation.

HOMEWORK

The general purpose of homework is to develop effective partnerships between home and school, consolidate skills - particularly in literacy and numeracy, extend school

learning, and to encourage children as they get older to develop the confidence, self-discipline and independence needed to study on their own, which will prepare them for the requirements of secondary school. In Sapphires the children are expected to complete 1½ hours of homework each week, comprising of reading, times-tables practise on TT Rockstars (we monitor their weekly progress through the website) and Spellings.

If you wish to speak to us about any concerns or queries that you may have, please make an appointment to see us. We look forward to a new term with your child and making their time at Buriton Primary School as enjoyable as possible.

Thank you,

Miss Burrough and Mrs Rose