

HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

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Year 2 – Van Gogh - Autumn Newsletter

8th September 2017

Dear Parents and Carers

Welcome to Van Gogh Class and the start of the new school year. It has been lovely to have this class again and also exciting to welcome some new faces!

The opening days of the new term have allowed us time as a class to get to know each other, establish routines and share expectations in Year 2. The children have settled quickly and have shown that they are eager and ready to learn. The children in Van Gogh will be supported this year by Mrs Hodge, who most of the children are already familiar.

The core subjects of English and Maths will be taught in the mornings. The afternoons will allow for the children to explore the Foundation Subjects. Many of these subjects will be taught through a range of Topics which will change each term. This term our Topics will be *Castles and Dragons* and *Fire and Ice*. We will be using a range of new vocabulary as we read and write poems and stories about dragons and design and create our own! We will also be looking at castles, focusing on their history and how their structure and purpose changes over the years. Our class trip to Mountfitchet Castle will support this learning. After half term we will be learning about The Great Fire of London and comparing life in 1666 to the present day. Towards the end of the term we will be learning about life and habitats in the polar regions and looking at our own seasons, focusing on winter.

How can you support your child in Year 2?

Clothing

Please ensure that your child's belongings are clearly labelled with their name.

1. All items of clothing (shirts, shorts, dresses, skirts, shoes, plimsolls, cardigans, PE shirts, PE shorts, hats, coats, gloves)
2. Lunchbox (where appropriate)
3. Water bottle
4. Book bag
5. PE bag

Helping your child to understand they are responsible for their own belongings is really useful. We always do our best to track down missing items and help the children to organise themselves, but inevitably things will go missing from time to time - clear labelling helps to avoid this.

PE lessons

Please ensure your child has their PE kit in school all week. PE is timetabled for Monday (outside) and Tuesday (inside). It is helpful for children to leave their kit in school to allow us to take advantage of any unexpected PE opportunities.

Reading

Your child has been given a reading book and reading record. Reading books will be at the appropriate level based on the most recent assessment information and these books need to be brought to school **every day**. Please try to hear your child read on a daily basis and date and record this in their reading record. We value your feedback and the children are awarded certificates after an adult has listened to them read at home 50, 100, 150 and 200 times. Please note if a record is not made in the reading record book we are not able to count it.

Just ten minutes quality time each day can make a huge difference to a child's progress. Encourage your child to talk about the story, the characters and to make predictions about what might happen next and why they think this. It is very important at this stage for children to be developing a good comprehension of the text. This skill takes time to develop and is assessed weekly during Guided Reading sessions. Once we feel your child has mastered these skills at the level they are reading they will then move up a reading band.

Homework

Spellings will be sent home every Friday. Please support your child to practise learning these using the "Look, Cover, Write, Check" method. We also strongly encourage children to apply their spellings by writing them in a sentence to demonstrate their understanding. House points are awarded for the effort a child puts into their spelling practise. A spelling check will take place on a Friday.

Children will also be given 'Talk' homework every two weeks before they do their Big Write in class. This will be a short discussion question based on our topic and is a way to help children generate ideas and vocabulary ready for the Big Write session. It only needs to be a five minute talk over dinner or in the car and has proven really beneficial, having a real impact on writing.

Also on a Friday your child will receive an English, Topic **or** Maths activity. This will serve to reinforce the learning that has taken place in the classroom. The weekly homework should take no longer than 20-30 minutes. Please sit and support your child while they are doing their homework and encourage them to complete the task to the best of their ability. Homework is to be returned the following **WEDNESDAY**. Please sign the work and include any comments about the amount of support given.

In Maths we will be regularly practising our times tables. We advise the children practise these daily at home. A quick count up, count down activity in 2's, 5's and 10's will support the children with their recall and support them in their knowledge of multiplication. Once they are comfortable counting up and down in 2's, 5's and 10's they can begin to answer questions out of sequence, e.g. 3 x 5. When the children are secure with these we will move on to 4's and 3's.

If you would like to speak to me about your child, please complete a pink slip at the office requesting a meeting, or approach me at the classroom door at the end of the school day. The mornings are very busy and not the best time to pass on important messages so we appreciate your understanding and support with this.

We are looking forward to the year ahead!

Kind regards

The Year 2 Team

Mrs Cheshire and Mrs Hodge