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Headteacher Mrs Andrea Farrant



Dear Parents,

Happy New Year to you all! I just wanted to take this opportunity to thank you all on behalf of Mrs Sims and myself for your generosity, kindness and support last half term. It is great to see all the children back in school after what they told me was a lovely Christmas break.

This half term, we will be going on an adventure with the colours white, blue and yellow! Throughout these colour themes, we will be learning about seasonal change and exploring winter and spring time. We will learn about where in the world the polar regions are and learn all about the animals that live in the North and South pole. We will enjoy learning about a variety of animals including polar bears, seals and whales and talk about how they survive in their cold and wet habitats! We will learn about the lifecycle of an emperor penguin and find out about how they keep their chick's safe and warm. We will also enjoy experimenting with ice and making simple predictions, as we learn about melting and freezing. We will learn about the oceans and seas and explore the life of a Pirate, whilst enjoying some sea shanties! We will be learning about different celebrations celebrated by different cultures this half term including Chinese New Year.

In our Maths learning, we will continue to develop our strong number sense by exploring in depth numbers to 10. Children will learn to represent numbers in different ways to help them to understand the relationship between numbers and quantity. They will learn how quantities are composed through smaller parts by using a 'part part whole' model and continue representing quantities using a ten frame. We will also explore adding and taking away a quantity and learn to represent our maths using a number sentence.

We have completed the first phase of our phonics learning! This term we will be moving the children onto learning more digraphs and trigraphs. The children will continue to learn how to form letters as well as compose simple words and captions. We will be learning to read and write a selection of harder to read words (HRW) and later begin to write sentences (using a capital letter, finger spaces, full stop, question mark or exclamation mark.) All children progress very differently in phonics – we will ensure that the phonics teaching is meeting the needs of all learners.

This half term we will be embarking on our new literacy approach: Drawing Club. This approach aims to enrich children's language skills through the magic of tales and stories. Drawing Club is based upon the 3M principle. These are making conversation, mark making and mathematics. We use a book, traditional tale or an animation as a portal for the week and the children will be learning new, exciting vocabulary that we will continue to revisit throughout the week. It is a fantastic way to begin a child's experience school literacy. Drawing Club encompasses maths, writing and mark making through adding symbols and passwords to drawings which enhances their excitement and enjoyment for writing.

Reminders:

PE - PE The children will continue enjoy two sessions of PE each week on Mondays and Thursdays. Throughout the spring term they will take part in dance, gymnastics and yoga activities and continue swimming lessons later in the spring term. Please ensure that earrings are removed before school on these days and that long hair is tied back. We will not be removing earrings in school or asking siblings if they can remove earrings so children wearing earrings on PE days will not be able to participate – this is for health and safety reasons.

Uniform - Please ensure that every item of your child's school and PE clothing is clearly named, including footwear and accessories, such as hats and gloves. Please also ensure that your child brings a water bottle to school daily. Children in Class R are fortunate enough to enjoy a rolling snack station throughout the day and therefore do not need to bring in any additional snacks. As the weather is very cold, all children must come to school with a coat. We spend a lot of time outside in Class R so a winter hat is advised too. Please can we encourage children to practice zipping up their own coats. This helps develop their independence and helps myself and Mrs Sims ensure that they are not waiting around getting cold whilst we go around zipping up over 20 coats.

Tapestry – Please check your child's Tapestry Learning Journey for updates we share regarding your children's learning. This is a great way to open a conversation at home about what we have been doing in school. We welcome any home learning, experiences or special achievements to be shared on Tapestry - Thank you for the contributions so far, it was lovely to see so many Christmas challenges! The children thoroughly enjoy sharing them with their class mates in school.

Bookbags - We would be grateful if your child could have their reading books, reading record, phoneme books and word books in their school book bag every day please. We will check your child's progress throughout the week and update their phoneme books and word books accordingly. Reading books will continue to be changed at the end of the week on a Friday.

Homework: At this stage in your child's learning, hearing your child read and rehearsing their phonics skills at home is essential. Please support your child with their learning at home at least three times a week to enable them the opportunity to build their confidence and consolidate their skills.

School website: Our class R page contains all essential information, class updates and useful resources.
<https://www.blackmore.essex.sch.uk/reception/>

We hope that all of the children in Class R have a thoroughly enjoyable learning experience this term. We cannot wait to share all of the wonderful learning experiences we have planned for the children. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to speak to us after school in the playground or contact us through the school office.

Thank you in anticipation of your support this term.

Yours Sincerely,

Miss Read & Mrs Sims.