

The Whartons' Newsletter

19th January 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome Back everyone. I hope the majority of families managed to have a break over the Christmas holidays and some family time. I am so sorry to those families who had some of the time blighted by COVID, which was the case for a few families I know. My family did not escape unscathed and New Year Celebrations were thwarted.

I hope now most people are feeling better. Since returning to school we have been treated to such a lovely week or so of cold and crisp winter weather, which is always welcome. Just a reminder though that as we are still ensuring plenty of ventilation around school, please ensure children have layers for inside and out so they do not get cold.



Assembly Themes

The Assembly theme for this half term is Goals and Dreams. I will be revisiting our Learning to Learn skills with the children over the next few weeks and we will be discussing how the 5Rs (resilience, resourcefulness, risk taking, relationships and reflective learning) can help with learning and retaining important information. We will also remind ourselves about approaching challenges with a 'Growth Mindset'.

Well done to Rec: Freddie D & Charlie W, Yr 1: Isobelle H & Charlie B, Yr 2: Edward C & Rowan P, Yr3 were swimming. Yr4: Harkiran S & Charlie W-G, Yr 5 Harry B & Riley W & Yr 6 Brodie T & Charlotte M who all received certificates.

Curriculum Development

As part of our training day last week the teachers worked together to share good practice around developing our whole school curriculum.

Subject leaders have been updating and improving their subject pages on the school website so that parents have a clear picture of the what the children will be learning and how. These are a work in progress, and leaders will be adding more content to the pages as we move forwards.

We will, as staff, also be focusing on building resilience through our curriculum via a fun set of resilience challenges which include playing with fire, holding a spider, acting out a Shakespeare speech, performing a poem and winning a debate, to name but a few. We will also be identifying opportunities to add cultural capital through different themed units with visits to theatres or museums, studying world events/issues and building an appreciation of music, customs and famous scientific inventions.



Poppy Contributions

A huge thank you to all the parents and children who bought 'Poppy' merchandise from the Royal British Legion this year. Year 6 children helped to organise and sell the Poppy themed objects which included rulers, wrist bands and zip pulls alongside the more traditional poppies. We raised over £200 and received our Thank You certificate this week.



- Online safety
- Phonics
- Science Investigation

Phonics Teaching and Learning

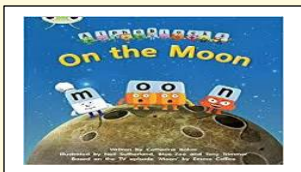
This year all schools were asked by the government to align their teaching in phonics to a government accredited scheme.

At The Whartons we have the Bug Club reading scheme and decided to move from Letters and Sounds to the Bug Club Phonics scheme so as to tie in with our reading books.

All the staff have been trained in the new scheme with Mrs Matthews leading on the implementation. Mr Fisk our English leader has spent a lovely few days, over the last week, visiting classes to observe fantastic phonics teaching in action using the new materials.

In line with guidance all children will bring home reading books

that align with the phonics focus in class. Lots of over learning and practice of each book is recommended to consolidate phonics knowledge.



Keeping Safe Online

Our Learning Mentor Miss Carly Milner has once again started working with our Y6 children to build their understanding of the dangers of online content and the upset/hurt mobile phone misuse can create.

Miss Milner has planned a series of sessions where our oldest pupils consider the dangers of mobile phones and certain online content, alongside developing a positive code of conduct for responsible and respectful use.

The children consider why there are age restrictions on games and sites as well as how they would want to be treated by peers online and via their mobile phones.

The groups are going to create presentations with key messages and advice for Year 4 & 5 children in school.

They will then lead discussions in the Y4 & 5 classes aided by Miss Milner and class teachers.

I am so impressed and proud of our eldest children for their mature and responsible attitudes towards this project



Investigating Materials

Year 5 are studying materials in science this term. They will be investigating the properties of a wide range of materials and how these properties make the materials particularly good for a range of different purposes. The children will also investigate, through testing, how and why materials change and the possible opportunities these changes present.

This week the children carried out surveys of the school grounds to 'hunt out' a variety of different materials both natural and man-made.

They will consider what uses and changes each of the materials have or have been through. Scientific investigation is not only fascinating and sometimes surprising, but they also involve complex organisational skills. This will often involve children in making connections between different curriculum areas in order to draw conclusions or make informed observations based on accurate data. Here the children gathered, sorted and recorded. Then using their mathematical skills of data handling, they were able to hypothesize and describe their findings. Great work Y5.



- Homework
- Where The Wild Things Are

Diary Dates

Friday 18th February-
PTA Break The Rules
Day.

Friday 18th Feb-School
Closes for Half Term.

Monday 28th Feb-
School Reopens

Tuesday 8th March –
Parents Evening

Thursday 10th March –
Parents Evening

Homework

We will be overhauling our homework policy over the next term in order to ensure you are able to support your child's learning effectively at home. Homework can strengthen children's ability to remember learning at school, whilst providing children with the opportunity to over learn key facts and knowledge crucial in their year group (and previous year groups).

Due to the pandemic lock downs and periods of isolation over the last couple of years, inevitably children have developed gaps in their learning and have not had the same volume of time and opportunities in school to over learn key facts and knowledge from age related expectations.

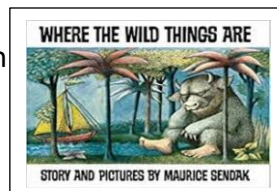
As part of our recovery curriculum at school we have planned lessons which revise the key learning from previous year groups and terms, ensuring prior knowledge is revisited and built on. Homework can play an important part in ensuring that children are building and practicing key skills they will need to progress. Therefore, we would ask that you focus on reading, spelling and Key Information Recall Facts (KIRKs) in Maths e.g. times tables.

Learning Log work can be completed if you wish to engage in some more creative activities which link with class topic work. However, we will not expect children to complete learning log activities as they will need to ensure they have completed reading records, spellings and KIRFs each week. Later in the term we will send a questionnaire out to gather your feelings about homework to support our Homework Policy review.

Where the Wild Things Are

Year 2 have been thoroughly enjoying one of their whole class stories over the last couple of weeks.

The book by Maurice Sendak, Where the Wild Things Are, is a focus for their learning in English this term. The book is such a classic story which has been loved by children for many decades; in fact I can remember studying this book with my very first class (who were a year 3 class) back in 1988 when I first qualified as a 21 year old teacher.



My class were just as enthralled as Mr Williamson's class have been. The children have been imagining what it might have been like for Max in his fantasy world. They have taken their ideas to help them 'act out' the main scenes/sections of the story.

The drama has supported the children in exploring the characters and enhanced their love of reading the book.



In turn they will use the great discussions and dramatic activities to develop their own fantasy story writing and develop their understanding of effective language features.

A final Note:

Have a great week and restful weekend Julia Dickson