

Dear Parents,

May I again take this opportunity to welcome you and your child to Year 4. On the whole the children are settling in well and getting used to the new routines. It's lovely to see the children coming in on their own in the morning and sorting themselves out. Bags and coats go on their pegs, lunchboxes on the lunchbox trolley and book bags or folders and water bottles into the classroom.

The children look very smart in their school uniform; whether old or new. Every jumper that I have so far found has been named which is really helpful as they can be returned quickly to their owners! Please encourage the children to name all their school uniform, including coats and PE kit. PE kit consists of a white t-shirt, black shorts and trainers and an optional black or grey tracksuit. If the weather is cold or wet, the children do need a suitable coat in school as we try to go out to play whatever the weather.

Hopefully you've seen the children's timetable. Swimming is always on a Tuesday and swimming kit consists of trunks or costumes, hat and a towel. Mrs Palmer will occasionally lend a swimming kit. If this is the case, the children will bring it home to be washed. Please could it be returned to school as soon as possible. PE is every week on a Thursday and every other week on a Monday. Sometimes we will do PE on other days of the week in the afternoon, so please could the children have their kits in school all week. The rest of the timetable is fairly flexible and may not be adhered to 100% of the time, however, it will all even itself out over the year.

I have given the children a reading record and a reading book. Please could they bring both to school each day as we will try to hear them read as often as we can. For some children this

will be once a fortnight, but for others it will be more often. We will sometimes have silent reading in class too. Please encourage your child to read regularly at home as well. It really does make a difference. The children have also brought home a learning log. This will be for pieces of homework, but also for messages from me or reminders for the children. Please feel free to write messages to me as well, but could you encourage your child to let me know that there is a message in there. The children will have spellings to learn at home. These are in their little red books. I will set them on Monday and test them on Friday. I will use the little red books for tests too, so please could they come back to school on Friday. I will set separate maths homework on a Monday which will be due back on Thursday.

We have already started our first topic of the term – helping plants grow. We have planted daffodils outside (look out for them in the spring), investigated beans that Mr Potter grew on his allotment, studied a venus flytrap and we are beginning to think why plants are so important. Thank you to the children who have already brought things into show. We are also going to make some sculptures for the entrance hall which we will use to display our painted ladybirds. Once the children have finalised their design, they may well be looking for all sorts of 'junk' from home. This half term we are also going to find out about local historical figures and in particular Horatio Nelson, Edith Cavell and Robert Kett. If the children have anything at home or they go to any places associated with these people, it would be lovely to see it or hear about it.

In maths we are concentrating mostly on number this half term with some work on shape. The children have been working on their targets to do with the place value of numbers, e.g. understanding that the 3 in 4365 represents 300. We will also be doing lots of mental calculations involving addition,

subtraction, multiplication and division. The children's maths homework will reflect what we are doing in class, so please ask them to explain it to you.

This week in English we have been looking at some fun poems and have had a go at writing our own too. Next week, we start a unit of work on stories. We have already been working on the children's writing targets about improving sentences. I am encouraging the children to add more detail to their work by choosing the words that they use very carefully. 'A dog chased me down the street' could be improved to 'A fluffy white poodle chased me along the main road.' This has more specific vocabulary and gives the reader a much clearer picture of what is happening. We are also beginning to find different ways of beginning sentences. Looking out for examples in the children's reading books is one way in which you could help at home.

I will send out a separate letter about the children's targets and what you can do to help during the next week.

If there is anyone (Mums, Dads, Grannies, Grandads etc) who would like to come in and help, whether on a regular basis or just for the odd afternoon you would be more than welcome. Please let me know.

I do hope this information is helpful. If there is anything you would like to discuss, then please come in and see me. After school is better, because I have more time, but I am around in the mornings as well. I look forward to working with you throughout the year,

Rachel Dorling (class teacher)