**Class 4 Autumn Term Update 10/9/18**

Dear Parents, Carers and Children,

Welcome back. We hope you have had a lovely summer holiday and are looking forward to the term ahead. The children have come back motivated and eager to learn and it is lovely to see them all looking so well… and tall!

This year, we have Mrs Martin teaching Monday and Tuesday and Mrs Cohen teaching Wednesday to Friday. Mrs Williamson will be in class from Monday to Wednesday which is excellent for continuity through the transition and we also have Mrs Lethaby and Mrs Cove in class supporting the children on Thursday and Friday respectively.

Hopefully, the children will have been excited to tell you about the lovely changes and improvements around school. We now have a lovely wooden shed down by the staff room which houses the PE equipment on one side and the key-fob shed on the other. The Thrive room has had a make-over and is now an even more beautiful and comfortable for children and staff alike for interventions but also as an extra teaching space. We are very grateful to the people involved in making this happen and to Mrs Williamson and Mrs Lethaby who painted it after school on Thursday. The old PE shed has been dismantled and with an all-weather surface through-out the trim-trail, we now have a much bigger playing space.

Our topic this term is The Scots, Anglo-Saxons and Vikings and we would welcome any books or resources that you have on any of these invaders – this will incorporate the history and geography curriculum this term. Our Art will be related to the Anglo Saxons and we will also be exploring the skills of using collage materials and creating textiles by weaving.

 We continue to follow the National Curriculum for Maths and Literacy. In Class 4, we encourage children to use an on-line maths programme called Prodigy, by logging in securely, we are able to monitor their usage and progress. The children will find out more information about logins etc this week but in the past, it has been a huge hit and highly successful. Please continue to practise and consolidate the times tables and their corresponding division facts as these will make fractions, ratios and percentages much easier to handle in year 5 & 6.

The book we have chosen as our first class-reader is *Why the Whales Came* by Michael Morpurgo. Could we ask that you refrain from reading this book with your children as one of the important elements of our teaching of reading is using the text to make predictions, which is obviously difficult if the child has already read the book! Our next text is *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* by John Boyne if you don’t mind avoiding that too! The new year 5s have made a great start at tackling a whole class text for the first time and have been keen to read out loud and share their ideas with the rest of the class. We firmly believe that the children get a great amount from reading and sharing a text in this way. The children are welcome to take books home from school but they must of course return them when they have finished with them.

We are starting our term of Science with a visit from a dentist and oral hygienist. We will recap previous learning on teeth and personal hygiene and produce some information texts. Following on from that we will be taking a closer look at *forces* and taking every opportunity to do ‘hands on’ investigations.

Our MFL provision from Pilton Academy will continue, although it will be longer fortnightly sessions rather than weekly. We will try to embed this into our daily routines and also have the opportunity to learn and develop basic greetings and pleasantries in other languages.

Music will focus on composition and also touch on Buddhist music before we turn our attention to our favourite festive tunes later in the term! Computing starts with Spreadsheets this term. Please take any opportunity to work on a PC with your children at home, asking them to save and retrieve files from appropriate files and drives and if possible, show them how you might use a spreadsheet if you have cause to. Saving documents, closing down programmes and safely turning off the computer are all valuable skills which could do with practice. At present we have 5 PCs in our library area and we are trying to make good use of them but any extra time, supported at home would be much appreciated.

Children are welcome to bring a pencil case to school in class 4 but please limit it to one because of space. We would ask that they do not bring Sharpies in to school and do not need Whiteboard pens as we provide these and they need to be non-toxic.

Parent consultations are coming up and appointment sheets are now available in the school office so please pop in and sign up or contact the office. If you are not able to make any of the times offered, please speak to one of us and we will find you a mutually convenient alternative.

Following a brilliantly positive response to The Daily Mile last year, we will endeavour to continue this year. The Year 6 children will tell you how they felt the benefits to fitness and concentration when we were doing it regularly and also how hard some of them found it, getting back into it this week. I’m sure they will soon be feeling the benefits! Please ensure they have trainers as well as their PE kits in school every day as we will also try to fit PE in whenever we can. This term we will be doing tag rugby, athletics and football.

As always in Class 4, we have a number of inter-school tournaments and events coming up and will keep you posted on dates and arrangements. We thank you in advance for your support with lifts and cheer-leading on the day of these events. We really appreciate your help with logistics!

Tuesday 13th November Tag Rugby tournament (Reserve Tues 20th Nov)

Tuesday 16th October Girls’ football tournament

Wednesday 17th October Torrington Cross Country

Run Fit club will be from 8am on Friday mornings and parents and siblings are welcome to run with us. There are no pre-requisites apart from a pair of trainers and socks as it will often be wet underfoot! We hope to see lots of you on the top pitch at 8am on Friday mornings.

The Life Education Caravan is in school 25th and 26th September reinforcing our PSHE curriculum about health and life skills. Please ask your children all about it.

The children have had their first couple of weeks of homework; consisting of a reading activity and log, a piece of maths, SPAG and spellings. We are keen to know what the children can do so please do indicate if you have had to assist with homework and let us know if your child is struggling.

We are always happy to arrange a time to chat to you if you have any concerns or issues, so please do email us, contact reception or pop in to arrange a good time.

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Best wishes,

Barbara Martin and Vicki Cohen