

September 2017  
Dear Parents and Carers

Welcome to the new school year. We are thrilled with how well the children are already settling into their classes and look forward to a super year of learning. This letter contains useful information for you and your child over this coming year.

## THE CURRICULUM

The children are taught mainly in their classes although for maths your child will be in a group appropriate to their stage of learning. There are also occasions when we will work together to add variety and share skills. Some children will also participate in smaller groups for focused work. English and Maths follow the objectives of the National Curriculum. Religious Education is taught in accordance with the Gloucestershire Agreed Syllabus.

Our topics for this year are:

**Terms 1 and 2 - Rock 'n' Roll**

**Terms 3 and 4 - Knowing Me, Knowing You**

**Terms 5 and 6 - Ruthless Romans**

We will send an overview as we begin each topic giving more details about the children's learning.

## HOMEWORK

Homework is an important part of children's learning. It provides opportunities to reinforce their learning during school time, develops their research skills and having to hand homework in on time helps them to become independent learners.

### Maths

Homework is set on **MyMaths** each Friday, normally consolidating the learning for that week.

Children continue with their **Maths Passports**, putting a real focus on quick mental recall as well as developing mental skills as they travel around the world. Please continue to support your child when practising their number bonds, times tables and other number facts.

### English/Topic

Homework will be sent home normally during the third week of the topic. It will be presented as an activity bank of tasks along with the date they are due in. Further instructions will be included with the activities. Focus throughout school is on handwriting and presentation, therefore please encourage your child to take care with their homework, ensuring it is well presented and neat. Please support your child with their tasks but don't do them for them!

## Reading

Children in Years 3 & 4 are expected to read daily when possible and answer questions about the text they have read. Please remember to write a comment in the Reading Record when you hear your child read. Just as you enjoy hearing your child read, he or she also enjoys hearing you read so please take time to share a book.

## Spelling

We use a range of strategies in order to develop your child's spelling skills. Whilst spelling is regularly taught as an integral part of English we send home a **weekly spelling list** with appropriate words for your child to practise and learn.

They will bring their list of words home each Friday and will be tested on the following Thursday. You will know how your child has done as the test will be completed on the back of their new sheet of spellings.

We are asking you to support your child as he or she practises the words using the strategy of

### **LOOK - SAY - COVER - WRITE - CHECK**

**LOOK** at the word. Notice the sounds / shape.

**SAY** the word. *Can you break it down into syllables: Wed / nes/ day?*

*Any silent letters? Are there any words within words?*

**COVER** the word.

**WRITE** the word. No peeking!

**CHECK** the word carefully. Check each letter is correct and in the right place.

Practising their words little and often works best.

Other ways you can support your child with spelling include playing word games (eg scrabble, completing word searches together) and looking for patterns in words when reading to and with your child.

We really do appreciate the additional support from home to learn these words as it will make such a big impact on your child's reading and writing.

If you would like further help with ways to support your child with reading and/or spelling then contact the class teacher who will be able to advise you.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Your child will need their **full P.E kit** (clearly labelled with their name) in school **every** day. It is important they have the appropriate kit; **polo shirt or t-shirt, shorts, tracksuit or sweatshirt and jogging bottoms and trainers as well as their indoor daps**. We will be outside in all weathers, unless extreme, so it is important that children have their school uniform to change back into after what could be a wet session outside.

Children in year 3 start swimming at Westonbirt pool on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> September. Children in year 4 will swim with their first session being Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> February. A separate letter nearer the time will give full details. Please ensure that the slip and money is returned as soon as possible.

## FOREST SCHOOL

We are fortunate to have Forest School this year led by Mr Knight on Fridays for a six week block. You will receive a letter before the first session giving more information. Making sure that your child has the appropriate clothes for every session will enable them to participate fully, getting the most from their forest school learning.

## PLAYTIME

Children need to have appropriate clothing for playtime including a waterproof coat with a hood as we try to be outside whenever possible. A snack consisting of fruit or vegetables may be brought in and eaten during playtime. If your child brings wellies they will be allowed on the field to play should the opportunity arise, all year round.

## IN THE CLASSROOM

Your child needs to have their **reading book** and **reading record** in school every day. Children also need a **water bottle** so they can have a drink on hand in class. Providing a suitable **apron** to wear during art activities will help to protect your child's school uniform. An old shirt, adult size, provides the perfect cover-up for messy activities.

## HOT OFF THE PRESS!

**Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> October - Visit to Avebury Stone Circle - Details soon!**

**Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> November - Wild Wonder Project** - Iain Green returns to St Mary's following the success of his visit two years ago when he helped the children to produce stunning photographs of our school wildlife and nature. More details nearer the time.

**Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> June - Friday 29<sup>th</sup> June 2018** - Following the success of our visits over the past two years we are delighted to announce this year's Residential visit to The Wilderness Centre in the Forest of Dean for children in **Year 4**. More details later in the year.

### Final Note

We will work hard to make sure that your child has an enjoyable and successful year of learning and look forward to your continued support and encouragement. Please feel free to approach your child's teacher to discuss any aspect of your child's learning or well being. We especially welcome help from parents and carers so if you are able to offer any help throughout the school please do not hesitate to contact us.

*Mrs Royle, Miss Snell, Mrs Wheeler and Mrs Danton*

P.S.

You can also find this letter, our topic overview and homework on the school website.



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