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Key Stage One Newsletter

It was lovely to see the children so happy and enthusiastic to return to school last week and we hope that all the families had a wonderful time together during the holidays. Blyton class will now be taught by Miss Fernandes, an experienced Year 1 teacher who joins us from a school in Slough. We would all like to say a very warm welcome to her as well as all the new families who have joined our school community this term.

CURRICULUM NEWS

To kick off their learning this term, Year 1 will be learning about Pirates and about one of the most notorious ones, Edward Teach a.k.a 'Blackbeard'! In Year 2, the first topic will be 'Amazing Africa!' and the children will be studying the story 'Kamlesh and the Hungry Lion', before comparing and contrasting life in Uganda to living in the UK.

ESSENTIAL HOME LEARNING

In Year 1 and 2, essential home learning focusses on the key skills of reading, spelling and learning number facts.

Reading regularly with your child at home is the best way you can support your child and help them succeed at school. All children will be expected to read with an adult for 10-15 minutes every day and clearly record this home learning in their reading diary. Unfortunately, there is simply not enough time during the school day for children to practise as often as they need to – so home reading sessions are vital. From years of experience, we know that children who do not practice reading at home are almost certain to fall behind their peers, fail to meet the 'expected standard', as well as not develop the joy of reading for pleasure. Therefore, on the reverse of this newsletter you will find hints, tips, and activities that you can carry out with your child in order to make the most of your daily reading session. You can see that it is quite a comprehensive list although your focus in Year 1 should be on decoding skills (reading words accurately) and, in Year 2, on asking meaningful questions in order to improve your child's comprehension skills. However, do remember that possibly the most important aspect of learning to read is fostering a life-long love of reading – your child's enjoyment of the books they read is very important. Please do encourage your child not to just read their school 'reading book', but also books from the local library – especially the books they want to read – even if that means a steady diet of 'Frankie's Magic Football' or 'Rainbow Fairy' books!



Every week in school your child will bring home a set of spellings to learn. When learning spellings, we encourage the children to use the LOOK-COVER-WRITE-CHECK method. This is easier than orally saying the letters aloud. Spelling practice is an ideal opportunity to practice correct pencil grip, letter formation and handwriting joins in that order of importance.

Children must spend a few minutes a day revising their number facts (number bonds to 10 and 20 as well as times tables). The more children practise these, the easier they will be to remember and the quicker they can remember them automatically, the more their brain has space to work on other, more complex aspects of maths. Number facts can be chanted, sung, or listened to and long car journeys are an excellent opportunity to practise! Additionally, if you are lucky enough to have access to an iPad or smartphone, the apps 'Times Tables Rock Stars' and 'Maths Rockx' are very engaging and teach number facts very quickly.



Further details about how you can support your child with their home learning will be available at the 'Meet the Teachers' sessions on Tuesday 19th September or Thursday 21st September.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns about anything to do with your child's education or wellbeing then please do not hesitate to get in contact with myself or a member of the KS1 team.

Chris Leach
Key Stage One Leader

Event	Date
'Meet the Teachers' (Year 2)	Tuesday 19 th September – 3:20pm
'Meet the Teachers' (Year 1)	Thursday 21 st September – 3:20pm
Parents evening	Tuesday 17 th October
Parents evening	Thursday 19 th October

Before you read:

- Talk about the front cover. Read the title. **What might this book be about? How do you know?**
- Go through the pre-reading activities on the inside cover (if applicable). Discuss reading strategies – **what should you do if you get stuck reading a word?**

As you read:

- Sound out words using phonic knowledge, e.g. /t/ /r/ /ai/ /n/ -> train
- If your child is reading slowly, reread sentences together.
- Use the pictures to help work out 'trickier' words.
- Discuss punctuation (exclamation marks, question marks, bold text, ellipses).
- Discuss new vocabulary and link to real-life experiences (if possible!).
- Don't forget to ask your child questions to make sure they understand what they are reading.
- Talk about characters' feelings and ask your child to explain their answer using 'because'.
- Take it in turns to read – reading a page each often works well. Occasionally get 'stuck' and require their help to sound out a 'tricky' word! Remember to model reading at a good pace, pausing at full stops, and using a 'story voice'.
- Try and link the book to their real-life experiences. **Have you ever lost a toy at the park? Have you ever been kind to a friend?**

After you read:

- Ask simple 'recall' questions about the book. **What animal made Biff feel scared? Whose house did the children go and stay at?**
- Ask questions that help your child understand the language that is being used in the text. **Can you find words or phrases that show that the character is unsure? How did the story make you feel? Why did it make you feel this?**
- Ask questions that help your child understand how the text has been set out or put together? **How does the author link these paragraphs together? Why has the author put that phrase in brackets?**
- Ask questions that help your child to 'read between the lines' and search for 'hidden' meaning. **What were the motives behind the character's action? How do you know?**
- Don't forget to ask your child if they enjoyed the book! **What was your favourite part of the story? Why?**
- Remember to sign your Reading Record! **What did they do well? What could they do next time to read even better?**

Reading with your child

Here are some simple tips to help you help your child with reading at home.

Enjoy it!

- Make book sharing a fun time that you both enjoy – snuggle up with a book!
- Read old favourites together as well as new books.
- If your child reads to you, or joins in when you are reading to them, show them that you are proud of what they can do.

Make time and space!

- Make reading a special part of your day. Try to find a time when you aren't busy doing other things so you can spend 'quality time' reading together – even if it's only for a few minutes.
- Try to find a quiet place away from distractions like the television or the computer.
- Try to find some time every day for reading together – 10 minutes each day is better than a long session once a week.



Be positive!

- Give your child lots of praise, encouragement and support when they read to you. Focus on what they did well, not what they did wrong. Even small successes are important.
- Never force your child – if they are reluctant to read you could offer a small reward such as playing a game they enjoy. If they are tired or very reluctant, read to them instead.

Find out what they like to read!

- Sometimes we read for pleasure but much of the time we read for a reason. Read lots of different things together – stories, information books, comics, magazines, websites, cereal packets, TV listings – anything you and your child enjoy reading or need to read.
- Let your child make his or her own reading choices sometimes. They need to develop their own personal likes and dislikes. It is OK not to like some books! Don't worry if they choose an 'easy' or favourite book over and over again. This is normal and helps children build their reading confidence and enthusiasm.
- Join the local library and let your child choose from the great range of books on offer.

Talk about it!

- Talking about books will help your child become more involved and interested in reading and can help them understand more.
- After you've read a book together – or anything else you choose to read – talk about it. What was it about? How did it make you feel? What did you like or not like about it? What did you learn? Spend some time looking at the pictures and talk about what they tell you. Never cover the pictures while sharing a book.
- You can talk with your child about anything – games, TV programmes, films or other things you do together.

