



Year 5 and 6 Class Newsletter Autumn Term 1 2024 - 2025

Dear Parents of Year 5 and 6,

Welcome to the new school year! I hope you all had an enjoyable summer break, and are welcoming back the regularity of routine (even if not the early morning starts the new school year brings). As always, we have lot of exciting topics and activities planned over the course of this year to help the pupils further develop their skills and confidence in a range of areas, and have already had a 'cracking' start to the term with our DT baking project.

Our Autumn Term 1 Curriculum

Below is a brief outline of what we will be covering in each subject; please do not hesitate to contact me should you have and questions about what we are learning or methods used:

English – Writing	This half-term in English, we are starting by developing our precise vocabulary choices, looking at effective techniques used in adverts such as alliteration, puns, hyperbole and modal verbs, and then writing our own radio-style adverts to promote our crackers created in DT. Following this, we are moving on to reading Phillip Pullman's <i>'Clockwork'</i> which we shall use for a stimulus to develop our sentence structure skills, practising confidently writing simple, compound and complex sentences with a range of co-ordinating and subordinating conjunctions.
English – Reading	Our reading sessions this half-term will focus on supporting the children to develop their VIPERS reading comprehension skills (Vocabulary, Infer, Predict, Explain, Recall and Summarise) with a particular focus on inference skills where children will need to 'read between the lines' to suggest possible answers to questions. Our main text will be excerpts from the book <i>'Survivors'</i> by David Long, which is a beautifully illustrated anthology of incredible real-life stories of extreme survival.
Mathematics	After a quick re-cap of Roman Numerals, we will spend this half-term developing our knowledge and understanding of place value and the number system, before moving on to explore the four operations: addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. As in any maths topic, children will be expected to show a solid understanding through a variety of activities and question styles, including quick mental calculations, efficient use of written methods, and correct application of mathematical vocabulary in both reasoning and problem solving. If you would like clarification on any of the mathematical terminology or methods we use at school, which would enable you to better support your child with their learning at home, please let me know.
Science	Our science topic this half-term is Forces, where will shall be very active scientists, exploring the effects of gravity, air-resistance and friction, and investigating the results of using mechanisms including levers, pulleys and gears to allow a smaller force to have

	a greater effect. As part of these practical activities, we will develop our skills at recording and analysing data in line graphs, as well as drawing conclusions from our results.
Geography	In Geography, we are exploring maps and mapping techniques, aiming to use the eight points of a compass, four and six-figure grid references, symbols and key (including the use of Ordnance Survey maps) to build knowledge of the United Kingdom and the wider world. We will also use fieldwork to observe, measure, record and present the human and physical features in the local area using including sketch maps.
Design and Technology	This half-term, the children are tasked to design and bake a healthy snack, to suit a target market of 6 year olds. Starting by analysing existing products and then conducting market research, the children will use the information collected to create different prototypes followed by a final design before baking their very own crackers. Obviously, no cooking project is complete without the final evaluation, and so we shall finish our DT learning by taste testing and analysing our creations.
RE	Our RE question this term is: Why do religions or non-religious groups celebrate important moments in life? The learning in this unit is designed to enable pupils to learn in depth from different religious and spiritual ways of life, relating to milestones on the journey of life. Through exploring key religious rites of passage including, baptism, Bar and Bat Mitzvah, Hindu samskaras and marriage pupils explore how and why people choose to mark significant moments in life, before reflecting on similarities and differences, as well as their personal thoughts on why they think ceremonies of commitment are or are not valuable today.
Computing	As always, we will be starting the year by looking at the importance of online safety, relating this to their everyday lives and the growing importance of being digitally literate and aware of the positive and negative influences of technology on health and the environment. Secondly, we will be learning about and creating digital 'Concept Maps' - a pictorial way of showing relationships between concepts and ideas which allows you to show information, pictures and links to support an idea or concept. In this unit, the children will learn the correct vocabulary to use, create their own individual concept maps, as well as working collaboratively to create group versions to retell information.
PSHE	In PSHE, our focus is on 'Belonging to a Community,' in which we will learn: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • about how resources are allocated and the effect this has on individuals, communities and the environment • the importance of protecting the environment and how everyday actions can either support or damage it • how to show compassion for the environment, animals and other living things • about the way that money is spent and how it affects the environment • to express their own opinions about their responsibility towards the environment
French	In our French lessons this half term, we are starting by developing our French phonics skills, focussing on the sounds: ch, ou, l, in, on, oi, ique, eau, eux, ille, é, qu, gne, è, e, ç, en, and an, before moving on to a unit all about our pets, in which the children will learn to: recognise and recall eight common pets in French with their correct determiners/articles; use the structure 'I have a pet' in French; describe what a pet is called in French; describe what pet 'I do not have' in French; and integrate the conjunctions 'et' (and) and 'mais' (but) accurately into their work.

Reading and Homework Expectations

The importance and benefits of regular reading cannot be overstated. Whilst children in Year 5 and 6 will become more independent in their reading, parental involvement still has a significant impact. Please continue to read with your child as regularly as you can, and ask them questions about what they have read. This can be about their school book, or any other literature that they enjoy – comics, magazines, recipes and sides of cereal boxes all count as reading. Please also support your child in completing their Reading Record every time they read at home, aiming for three or more times a week.

The children will have two books at school, which they will be encouraged to continue reading at home: a book for learning and a book for pleasure. We will be handing out books designed to help your child develop certain reading skills, and which include questions and prompts to lead to deeper understanding. These books will be changed weekly every Thursday if needed. We would also like the children to have a second book they can choose freely and read for pleasure; they are welcome to borrow books from the school library, our Upper Key Stage 2 library, or bring in books from home as they prefer.

Homework is set weekly online using Google Classroom, and consists of a maths and an English task related to recent learning, as well as set games on Ed Shed to support spelling and typing skills. The week's tasks will be set every Thursday and should be ready to be marked together in class the following Thursday. Homework club will be available to children for 25 minutes during lunch time on a Tuesday where members of staff are available to supervise the children completing homework on school Chrome Books. Should any child not complete the homework on time without a valid reason (we understand that even the best laid plans do not always happen as planned) and is not able to hand it in late the following day, then they will be required to complete some of the homework during breaktime on Friday.

Additionally, in the back of the Reading Record is your child's spelling passports. As last year, children have a passport containing words to learn, which will be tested at least once a term, and highlighted in the passport when each word is spelled correctly. All words in the passports are from the key words lists from the national curriculum, and are used frequently in school, so please to ensure that they are practised regularly at home.

Year 6 - Secondary School Application Deadline

For those who have pupils in Year 6, the Buckinghamshire online portal is now open to submit applications for Secondary Schools for September 2025 entry, with the **submission deadline** on the **31st October**. At any time, you are able to log on to the portal and amend your preferences on a submitted form up until 23:59 on 31/10/24, and you may select up to six schools. Should you have any questions about secondary school choices or the application process, please do speak to either Mrs Bloomfield or myself and we will be happy to help.

Please do not hesitate to arrange a time to meet with me, either by asking me directly or via the school office, should you ever have any questions or would like to discuss how your child is getting on.

Mrs Hood, Year 5 and 6 Class Teacher