

Year 4 Newsletter Autumn Term 2013-2014

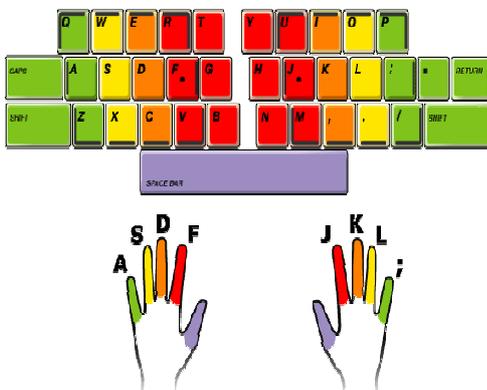
Welcome to a new year. It promises to be a term full of 'Magic', challenges and fun!

We will begin the term by celebrating 'Magical' Stories by popular writers, including Michael Morpurgo and Roald Dahl, through a **Literacy** focus. On Friday 13th (unlucky for some, but not for us) we will be joining a live celebration of Roald Dahl's stories and life via the Puffin Books website. Everyone is excited about coming to school dressed as one of the characters from his books! This is a perfect opportunity for each child to learn and to develop their own story-telling skills. On Wednesday 23rd October you will be invited into school for the morning, to share in a 'Magical Morning of Stories'. Details will be sent home closer to the time.



Art will also be an important focus. We will find out how images of 'magical' animals have been used over the last few hundred years or so, to portray the character and personalities of unicorns, mythical beasts, fairies and gnomes etc. The children will use different media to create their own 'magical' images.

After half-term, our 'Magical' focus will turn to **History** and **Science**, as we research and discover how magicians from different times performed tricks. A magician has been invited to come and run workshops, helping us gain the necessary skills to perform a few new tricks! We will also explore the scientific processes of electricity and how sounds are both made and heard (these were once considered 'magic' because people didn't understand how they worked). Electric circuits will be constructed and used in a variety of games/activities. Hopefully, the children will plan and carry out investigations which prove that girls have better hearing than boys! The evidence and results will have to be analysed very carefully.



As always, **ICT** will be used to support and enhance all learning across the curriculum. Internet safety is explicitly taught, ensuring the children understand potential dangers and know how to use the Internet wisely. This year, there will be increased opportunity for using computers & notebooks for writing. Therefore, it will be invaluable for all children to spend time at home, practicing their keyboard skills. Information about useful websites will be sent home via Home Learning folders.

Daily **Numeracy** lessons will build on the skills learned last year and help to develop more efficient methods for calculating. Word problems using all four operations will be a focus - reading the question is a key skill here! Multiplication and division facts will be used frequently, and therefore it is essential that each child knows the facts to 12 randomly and with speed. Many children still find telling (or reading) the time on an analogue clock difficult. Please make use of opportunities you have at home to ask your child questions like;

What time is it? How long is it until 2:30? What time will it be in 20 minutes?

Your TV program is on at 6:10, how many more minutes do you have to wait?



Home Learning will be given on Thursdays to be completed and returned by the following Tuesday. There will be two folders. This term, Literacy Home Learning will focus on Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation in line with the new curriculum. Numeracy Home Learning will focus on knowing and using number facts accurately, understanding place value of up to 4-digit numbers and/or activities that support our weekly learning in class. Although it is intended that Home Learning is completed independently, please feel free to assist your child. If you do give some support, it is very useful to the teachers if you indicate how your child managed the task.

Passport to Reading folders must be updated regularly at home, and signed by parents. Children are expected to read, both aloud and/or silently, for a minimum of 30 minutes each week but it is beneficial to read for much longer each week. Please ensure this folder is passed in each Thursday morning, for monitoring. Children without folders or without the minimum time spent reading, will stay in at break-time to catch up on this invaluable part of Home Learning.

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| Monday | |
| Tuesday | Pass in 2 Home Learning folders |
| Wednesday | BRING: swimming kit |
| Thursday | Pass in Passport to Reading folder BRING: games kit & recorder Take home 2 Home Learning folders |
| Friday | |

We are always very grateful to parents/other relatives, who are able to come in and support learning. We appreciate help of all sorts; listening to children read, assisting Jeannette at the poolside every Wednesday afternoon, helping to make resources, playing a learning game to reinforce skills etc. Please let us know if you can help at any time...it doesn't need to be a regular or weekly commitment.

If you have any concerns, please do not hesitate to come and talk to us, our doors are always open to you.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Middleton, Mrs Carré and Mrs Newell