



Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Primary School

Autumn 2017

Class Newsletter

Year 1

Class Teacher: Miss. J. O'Connell

Dear Parents

The children have all settled back to school well after the Summer holidays and are once again getting used to the early mornings.

Below are a few suggestions that I hope you will find helpful when continuing to support your child.

Remember that praise and fun are the key to enjoyable learning and motivation.

As the children are maturing it is important that they continue to develop their independence. Please have all monies (apart from snack money which now comes in daily) for school clearly labelled in separate envelopes in your child's book bag, so that each child can independently put them into the class money box. Please do not hand money over to the staff on duty. Any messages need to be written and your child can hand them to me in class.

Religious Education

Year 1 will be following the programme of work outlined in the Curriculum Strategy for Religious Education, 'Learning and Growing as the People of God'. The programme will help the children to continue develop an appreciation of themselves and the world around them.

The children will learn more about the following units: Creation, Families and Celebration, Advent and Christmas.

Mrs Iles will work with Year 1 on Wednesday afternoons and will focus much of her work on developing personal prayer through the above mentioned topics.

Each week the Class Prayer Bag, will be shared which contains short stories about Saint Francis (our Class Saint). If chosen, pupils are asked to write a prayer. This could be to Saint Francis or a prayer linking to the Virtues of the half-term, which we will use in our class prayer time during the week.



Father Craig will regularly visit each class and encourage the children to attend Mass at Our Lady of Fatima Church each weekend. Regular attendance at Mass will help each child to become familiar with words and actions used, as well as helping to develop an awareness and understanding of the significance of different parts of the service and a deeper understanding of how our faith is an integral part of daily life.

English

During the year, Year 1 will be focussing on the stories by Julia Donaldson. If you have these books at home your child is allowed to bring these in if they wish, to share in the whole class reading session.



Your child will bring home a reading book each evening. Please create a comfortable, relaxed atmosphere and listen as your child reads to you. Please sign their diary each night to show what they have read. Encourage them to approach new words by segmenting them or 'reading on', then returning to the word and attempting it again within the context of the complete sentence. Ask your child to look at the beginning and ending of each word. Return to any tricky words at the end of the book whilst discussing the story. Do encourage your child to use the pictures to help with their reading. Please feel free to supplement the school reading scheme with books from home or your local library. You can record these in your child's diary too as this will help me to build up a picture of what your child enjoys reading.

It is really important now to check your child reads 'beyond the text'. To support this you need to ask your child to predict what is going to happen and discuss possible alternative endings to stories. I will include more non-fiction books, please look at the features of these books which include *contents page, index and glossary*. Check your child really understands how to use diagrams and photographs in these books to gather information.

Your child will bring home a library book each week. Books will be changed each week on Mondays. We are trying to encourage the children to choose different books each week therefore widening their experience of a range on fiction and non-fiction texts. They must therefore return their books promptly so that they can choose another book. We are experiencing high losses in the library due to unreturned books.



Writing and Phonics

Phonics lessons taught through Read Write Inc, will continue throughout each week. It is important that your child uses their spelling knowledge when they are writing at home. When completing homework, do ensure your child uses a sharp pencil and forms letters correctly. In class the children will be writing stories and extending their written work by using adjectives (describing words) along with basic connectives such as: and, so but, because, after. They will begin to use the correct terminology: adjectives (describing words), verbs (action words) as these are expectations of the new curriculum.

Maths

Playing games, such as snakes and ladders, is an ideal way of extending addition work as it involves adding on (counting on). Dominoes is also a good game, it can be used in the conventional manner or as a way of making sums using the numbers on individual domino pieces.



In class we will be focusing on Number work: counting, partitioning, adding, subtracting and estimation. We will also be focussing on Shape and Space work: measuring and comparing lengths.

Creative Curriculum

This term our topic is: **Community** which is a Geography based topic. Year 1 will be looking at maps, learning map skills, using vocabulary to describe and compare countries and creating our own maps. They will be reading the stories of Katie Morag to help the children compare two contrasting locations.

Science

In Science Year 1 will be studying Animals and Humans. The children will be learning about the human body and senses and compare them with those of common animals.



Creative Play

Play is an essential part of learning and is often at its best when it is child led. At school we offer plenty of indoor and outdoor play as a way of continuing to develop social skills and imagination along with problem solving, Maths, Science and English. Encourage your child to play, it is often the smallest item e.g. an empty box or tiny toy figure which is the springboard for lengthy periods of creativity for a child.

P.E

In P.E our unit will be Multi skills lessons. These will focus on throwing and catching skills. Please ensure your child has the correct PE Kit in school -navy blue shorts and a plain white T shirt. Remember that Queens Park



(Court Oak Road) and Lightwoods Park (Hagley Road) have excellent play areas for children, as has Sandwell Valley Country Park. These are local, free to use and an excellent way of spending time outdoors. Lickey Hills and Clent Hills are also nearby and provide large open spaces for exploring and walking and outdoor fun which is vital in this day and age of modern technology where we continually strive to encourage and maintain an active lifestyle.

Homework

Along with daily reading I will be sending home small amounts of homework each week. This will be set on a **Thursday** and must be completed by **the following Tuesday**. It is more beneficial to do a little bit of homework each night rather than rush it in one evening. Modelling good working habits while your child is young will help them as they continue through their education. Some homework activities will be practical while some will require written recording. Each week I will send home a sheet explaining what is required. It will be an opportunity to see what your child is learning in school. Use homework as a way of finding out a little bit about our learning. Later in the term the children will also be able to access Education City at home. I update Education City activities regularly which your child can work through at their own pace. While working with your child on Education City beware that they should be getting 90%- 100% on each activity. Children need to read the instructions carefully for each activity.



Snacks

Fruit continues to be provided free of charge for each child every day. This will be distributed at morning play. Toast (20p), milk (20p) and fruit juice (35p) are also available each day. The correct money for these snacks should be brought in daily by the children.

Please check you only provide plain water in your child's water bottle. Children have free access to the water dispenser throughout the day and can fill up their bottle whenever it is necessary. Please be aware that I do not have spare bottles in class and we cannot access hot water in class to hygienically wash bottles that are not taken home at the end of each day.

Inspire Workshop Date

Year 1's Inspire Workshop will take place on **Tuesday 31st October 2017**. Please make a note of this date, so that arrangements can be made for you to be available to work with your child in school. I also look forward to meeting you at the Parents' Evenings in October.

Thank you for your continued support. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask me.

Yours sincerely

Miss. J. O'Connell



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