

Dear Parent / Carer,

Welcome back and a Happy New Year to everyone!

Following my decision to retire, the school governors have been putting much time and thought into planning my replacement. They fully intend that the leadership of the school will be secure and in good hands next September in order that all the improvements we have made will continue strongly. They are keen to keep you well-informed about the changes and you will receive a letter from the Chair of Governors early next week outlining the way forward for the school.

You may remember that at this time last year we wrote about strategies to help children become not only strong readers but also keen readers for pleasure! Many of you took part in our questionnaire which really helped us understand the children's reading habits outside school. We made a number of refinements to our strategies in school and this year we are in the process of setting up a new system called 'Accelerated Reader'. This will initially be introduced to Years 3 and 4 and then rolled out to Years 5 and 6. The programme links online learning and quizzes with real books in our library – it will really excite the children! It will take a little time to set up but it should be up and running by half-term. Of course nothing will replace the joy of reading for pleasure with someone at home and we would encourage you to continue this all the way through school.

As this term gets underway, we are starting a push on handwriting and spelling in line with the new national curriculum. As well as all the work in Literacy and Numeracy, there are exciting projects planned that cover other areas of the curriculum and give opportunities for children to apply their literacy and numeracy skills. Each Year group's newsletter entry will give a bit more detail but below is a summary of some of the exciting opportunities ahead:

	Projects on...	Visits to..	Other
Year 3	The world of Ancient Greece	Using the school grounds for work on <i>fossils & rocks, plants & seeds.</i>	Visit from Mad Science Invitation assembly for parents Book Café
Year 4	China Dragons!	Whitwell Hall – countryside in winter	Invitation assembly for parents Book Café
Year 5	Vikings and Norway Roman settlers	Theatre Royal (Horrible Histories) Castle Museum (Romans workshops)	NSPCC Visitor on keeping safe Book Café
Year 6	Space – the final frontier!	Visiting scientist	NSPCC Visitor on keeping safe Book Café

Safe Use of The Internet

All the children are taught in school about safe use of the internet. Our work in ICT lessons includes introducing them to *edmodo.com* which is a safe educational social platform on which children can learn how to interact safely online. We have been made aware that some children are using an online social website called Omegle, at home. We think that children are unwise to use this site. A quick search throws up the following quote about Omegle:

"Omegle is a free online-chat website that allows users to communicate with strangers without registering. The service randomly pairs users in one-on-one chat sessions where they chat anonymously using the handles "You" and "Stranger"."

We are very concerned about the unregulated and unmonitored nature of this website – and that the prime purpose seems to be to encourage communication with strangers! We have discussed it with children in assembly and wish to draw your attention to the potential dangers using Omegle and similar websites.

Year 5 News

Having completed the first full term, we have been very impressed with the enthusiasm from the children. We were all particularly pleased with the Christmas Performance and hope that those of you who were able to come and watch it enjoyed it as much as we did. The general attitude to learning and behaviour has been good and we know it will continue this term. Most children have enjoyed embracing the learning of French in place of Spanish and I know that the topic subjects that were covered last term were immensely enjoyed by all.

We start this term by saying a fond farewell to Mrs Elliot and wish her all the best with the new baby, when he arrives. We would like to welcome Ms Fisher who will be working on Thursdays and Fridays during Mrs Elliot's maternity leave. The children have all met Ms Fisher last term and I am sure you will all make her feel very welcome.

We are starting the term by continuing to focus on the Vikings so for the first couple of weeks, the homework focus will continue to be on the Viking Project – the hand in date for this is 27 January. This will lead us into a short study on Norway and we will finish the term by learning about the impact the Roman Settlers had on Britain. To support this learning we will have a day trip to Norwich castle on 12 March; details will be sent out just before half term. This is a lovely trip to take part in the touring exhibition and take part in workshops when children can learn how historical artefacts can teach us about the past.

We shall start our Literacy lessons by focusing on legends, in particular Tales of Robin Hood. The children will be asked to improve the quality of selected vocabulary, to give detail to their writing. In addition to this, we will be teaching a weekly Grammar lesson each Friday, where the children will be put into three ability groups with a focus on the specific needs of each group. Their spellings will be set within these groups as well.

We have planned a trip to the Theatre Royal on 26 February to watch Horrible Histories: Barmy Britain. We will be asking for some parents to help us on this trip, so do let us know if you are free and wish to enjoy a trip to the theatre. We will let you know soon about the exact details of the trip.

We have booked our next Reading Café for Thursday 27 March 2014 at 2pm, so put this date in your diaries!

Diary

January	Mon/Tue 20 th /21 st	Y5 & 6 NSPCC workshops
	Thu 30 th	Y4 Road Safety presentations Y4 Book Cafes 2pm
February	Mon 3 rd	Two Y4 classes to visit Whitwell Hall
	Mon 10 th	Third Y4 class to visit Whitwell Hall
	Tue 11 th	Y3 Book Café 2pm
	Mon 17 th	Half-term week
	Mon 24 th	School re-opens
	Tue 25 th	Parent Consultation meetings
	Wed 26 th	Y5 visit to Theatre Royal Parent Consultation meetings
March	Thu 6 th	School Disco
	Wed 12 th	Y5 to Norwich Castle
	Thu 27 th	Y5 Book Café 2pm
	Mon 31 st	Y4 to Whitwell Hall residential week
April	Thurs 3 rd	Y6 Book Café 2 pm

After school clubs this term

Monday	Thursday	Friday
Martial arts (SESMA) (20 th Jan – 24 th Feb) (Yrs 5 & 6)	Street Dance (Kelly Lumsgrove) (Yrs 3,4,5&6)	Football (Community Sports Foundation) (Yr 3&4)

LOOK OUT FOR....Cookery (Yr5) and Mad Science clubs after half-term – We will inform you once details are confirmed

We wish everyone a Happy New Year and hope 2014 is a great year for you!