

Dear Year 4 parents and carers,

It has been a lovely start to term, meeting and getting to know the class. The children seem to have settled in very well and seem to be getting used to the year 4 routines.

I was looking forward to meeting you all at 'Meet the Teacher' evening but I have had to summarise the main points you need to be aware of to support your child during this year. I hope this is helpful.

I have put the information you need into two sections:

1. Year 4 Academic
2. Year 4 Arrangements

Year 4 Academic

Stationery

It would be helpful for your child to have a pencil case in school which contains the following equipment:

- HB pencils
- 15cm ruler
- Eraser
- Pencil sharpener
- Glue stick
- Coloured pencils
- Optional items: felt tip pens/gel pens

Please don't worry if you are not able to supply this - I have equipment in school for them to borrow if needed.

Intervention Groups

Throughout the course of the year many children will receive additional support/extension from the year 4 team. I expect to run a whole variety of groups; e.g. support for reading, Literacy, Maths, Phonics, behaviour, SEAL etc and some of these may run for just a few sessions, a few weeks or in some cases longer. Please be assured that should I have any concerns regarding your child's learning I will of course always contact you to let you know and be happy to discuss this with you. Likewise, if you have any questions, please feel free to come and ask.

Guided Reading

In Year 4, I am teaching Reading in a single lesson. Children will be working on many different objectives e.g. locating and retrieving information from a text, offering opinions about stories/information, thinking about the deeper meanings of a story, thinking about an author's use of vocabulary and what he/she was trying to convey. We will all be working on the same book, where possible.

In addition, there will be two other aspects to reading: the reading journal and daily reading.

- Reading journal - **all children** are expected to have a reading book in school every day whether that is one from home or the class library. This book should be taken home every day so the children can read at home as well as in school.

I will be monitoring their reading through the reading journal to encourage wide reading and to ensure they are reading challenging books. My intention is to listen to them read their books and keep a running record of their independent reading throughout the year. When the children finish their books - they will do an activity before bringing in/choosing the next book.

I have run this reading arrangement for several years now and it works superbly to prepare the children for upper KS2. All the guidelines (e.g. what sort of books, suggested readers etc.) are in the front of the journal. They will be sent home shortly.

- Daily Readers - For those children who need extra support with their reading, I will be setting up a daily reading group. These children will read with me every day. If your child is in the daily reading group and you would like reading books home too, please let me know.

Other reading

It is also important that children read their own selection of books regularly. This could be from the school library, the class library, their own books from home or Hampton/Solihull libraries. They should be looking at a mixture of different texts and genres, including - Information Books, Fiction books/Novels, Magazines, Leaflets, Brochures, Letters (Formal and Informal) etc. Although the children are now of an age when most of them can read independently, please don't discount the importance of you reading to them - they pick up loads from you as a role model (and regardless of their age they still love you reading to them!)

Spellings

Your child will be given spellings most weeks. These will be given out on a Friday and tested the following week (barring any unforeseen circumstances). These spellings will be taken from the New Curriculum frameworks that we use in school or will be words associated with a unit of work for either a topic already covered or one coming up. Please encourage your child to learn their spellings. A variety of strategies that we use in school may also be used at home:

- Look, say, cover, write, check.
- Segment the word into sounds (phonemes).
- Split the word up into syllables.
- Use known spelling patterns to assist with new words e.g. **sound**, **pound**, **round** etc.
- Use a mnemonic e.g. **BED - Big Elephants Dance**
- Say it in a funny way.

Where gaps have been identified in phonics/spellings, I will be setting up a spelling support group and they may be getting different spellings.

Homework

Your child will be given homework every Friday and it should be handed in by the following Wednesday. Homework will be a piece of English and/or a piece of Maths, along with (occasionally) something with a Topic focus. These activities are aimed at consolidating work your child has covered that week, boosting them in an area they need more work on or preparing them for an upcoming topic. Investigation homework and research homework might also be set to support any other activities that might be happening in class that week/term (e.g; Romans/Forces etc). Please 'support' your child with their homework, but remember that it is them who should be completing it.

P.E

During these sessions children will be developing core skills required for a variety of team games, gymnastics, dance and athletics. P.E takes place on a Tuesday at the moment. Please make sure that your child comes to school in appropriate kit - our lessons will be outdoors. For completeness, please note that, indoor consists of the traditional shorts and a t-shirt, with outdoor kit needing the addition of tracksuit bottoms/top and a pair of trainers/pumps.

Year 4 Arrangements

Communication

We have an open door policy and I would actively encourage you to come and see me if there is something that you wish to share with me about your child or any other situation. You may feel it is trivial or not worth bothering us about, however every bit of information helps us to ensure that we can support your child in whatever way they need. This is especially important when your child is going home with someone else. We take the safety and care of your children very seriously and thus either need confirmation from yourselves of who is collecting them or will need to check at the end of the day before allowing them to go - this can be embarrassing/ inconvenient for all parties. I am more than happy to have a chat with you at the end of the day, but please be mindful that my first responsibility is to ensure that ALL children have been collected.

Rewards

- Within the class, I expect every child to have respect for themselves, other members of the class and for property. It is important that they have a positive attitude towards their learning and to do their best. Using the children's ideas, we have put together a class charter highlighting how we can make the classroom a happy and safe place to learn (all children have signed their names agreeing to follow these rules). It is on the classroom door.
- The children have also been delighted to have been given the chance to give me some expectations too. I have these just above my desk and I will try my very best to live up to them!
- Within the classroom, children will be rewarded for good effort, behaviour and achievement in numerous ways. These may include; Praise, stickers, showing their work to a teacher of their choice (or Mrs. Gaughan) and certificates.

Permissions

Throughout the year a number of letters may be sent home requesting permission for a variety of things, from participation in one-off activities to photographing them. If you have any queries regarding these letters, please don't hesitate to come and see me about them before replying. Usually, a quick chat can allay any concerns or answer any questions you may have.

E - Safety

As the children are getting older they are now using aspects of ICT that we as parents may not even fully understand. Depending on your own level of competency, this can be quite scary as it is an area that you feel you no longer have control of. In school we have been teaching the children about the importance of E - Safety from Reception onwards, ensuring that they understand the need to keep their personal information safe, not to share passwords, educating them about what to do if they come across an image, a pop up or a website that they don't like or understand and giving them the ability to make informed choices. If you have any questions or queries about E - Safety then please don't hesitate to come and see me.

Wider Opportunities Strings

Usually, in Year 4, every child has the opportunity to learn to play a 'String' instrument. I hope that this will be continued this year but I have no further details to share with you at this stage.

Milk/Water

- Please ensure your child has a water bottle in school every day.
- Milk is an option for all children, however unlike in Nursery and Reception where it is provided free, from Year 1 onwards it is a cost option. If you would like your child to have milk, then please contact the office.

And finally, a gentle reminder..

Your child is now in Year 4 and so is fully expected to have responsibility for their own learning, behaviour and belongings. Ideally, I want the children to drive their own learning. This means ensuring that they are listening, looking and thinking about what they are being shown or told and then doing their best. My expectations are also that they make the right choices regarding how they behave, making sure that they are being respectful of themselves and others. Finally, we need to ensure that they look after all of their belongings. This includes their homework books, reading book, spelling book and items of clothing. Children will be reminded of what they need to take home with them at the end of each day.

If you have any concerns, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me. My door is always open and I will always help with any worries that you or your child may have.

I am looking forward to a happy and successful year.

With best wishes,

Mrs Brooker

