

## Welcome to Kingfishers Year 3 and 4

### Class Information

As your child's new class teacher, I would like to extend a warm welcome to you all. This letter is designed to give you a brief overview of your child's school life over the coming year in terms of our expectations, as well as providing you some insight into the topics we intend to cover. I am here for you so do please come and see me if you ever have any concerns, questions or suggestions. I, Miss Pritchard, will be teaching the class all week from Monday to Friday. We also have Mrs Goshawk (Monday to Wednesday) and Miss Rutherford (Friday) supporting us in class.

#### General

Communication: If you would like to contact me for any reason, please use the school admin email and I will get back to you as soon as possible. I will also be available at the end of the school day as much as possible, so any general enquiries please do give me a wave!

There are two formal parents' evenings during the year. The first one will be held in November; more details will follow nearer the time. I will be taking the register each morning just after 8:50am which will promptly be followed mostly by spelling, grammar or reading learning. Your child will need to be in the classroom by then to ensure they do not miss any announcements or learning time.

Please ensure sure your child comes to school with appropriate clothing for school, particularly on days of adverse weather. I have a small amount of school raincoats for the children to borrow if they do forget, or is often the case, the weather changes!

#### English

English is taught daily but there will also be additional sessions focusing particularly on spelling, grammar, comprehension and handwriting. The children will explore a wide range of text types to link their writing to during the year and their reading and writing skills will be developed and extended. We teach English through an approach where children work towards a shared writing goal but with different starting points depending on their understanding. This helps to ensure time is not wasted by repeating aspects that children already know how to do. The children will be expected to write independently, editing and improving their writing as part of the process.

The children will also undertake a weekly reading comprehension exercise. It is beyond doubt that the most beneficial way of helping your child make progress is to regularly support their reading at home, both hearing them read and being read to. I would really appreciate your support with this. When reading, check their understanding by asking what is happening in the text during or after they have read a passage. It is beneficial for the children to read both fiction and non-fiction. If your child is reluctant to read at home or if you want support, please do come and see me.

### Maths

Maths is also taught daily. Our aim is to ensure that the children are confident handling numbers and completing calculations and that they progress only when their understanding is completely secure. If the formal strategies they are using are unfamiliar, or you would like strategies clarified, please don't hesitate to see me.

In Maths, we use the White Rose Scheme as a basis and the children will develop their skills through a mixture of activities, including formal written lessons, investigations, practical activities and games. We will be continuing to use Time Tables Rock Stars regularly in school, with regular short tests to check their understanding and progress. For Year 3, they will be learning their 3s, 4s and 8s times tables this year. **All children are expected to know their tables up to 12 x 12 by the end of Year 4. There is a government set times table check in the summer term that the children have to take.** Each child will have a times table rockstars login to use at home, more information on this can be found in the homework section of this letter.

### Topic Work

In our Topics for both History and Geography this year are:

- The Great Fire of London
- Eruptions and Explosions (Volcanoes)
- Greece is the word (Ancient Greece)

Each topic will have a Geography or History focus, as well as links to taught computing, Science, RE, PSHE, PE, Music, Art and/or D.T. This really helps the children revise their knowledge and visit their topic from different aspects of learning. Our topic is often also reflected in our English texts, for example we are using 'A Walk in London' as our first English text this year.

Children will explore a question linked to their topic to help them build and develop their knowledge.

### PE and Kit

During terms in which the children do not have Forest School, PE will be held on Thursday and Friday. This term (Autumn 1) Kingfishers do not have Forest School and so we will have two PE sessions a week. The PE focus will be invasion games. The children need a pair of trainers to wear on those days and if they have various other jumpers/polo tops with them these need to be in a marked bag. Please ensure they have a long-sleeved top for colder weather. We have decided as a school that we will continue with having the children come into school dressed in PE kit. This helps with transition times in the day and ensures they get the most learning time during the day. All kit should be clearly named. Please note, no jewellery may be worn during P.E. sessions. We have a duty to provide physical education to our children and you will be contacted by the school if your child regularly does not have their kit.

### Information

A link to our weekly newsletters is sent home by email and is contains important, up to date information and upcoming dates and events as well as photos and a short description of what the children have been learning that week. **Please make sure you check it weekly.** If you need to contact a teacher directly, please email the admin address [admindiptford@thelink.academy](mailto:admindiptford@thelink.academy) and your message will be forwarded to the relevant teacher. for you.

### Collective Worship

Friday Collective Worship focuses on celebrating achievements and children are welcome to bring in awards they have gained outside school to share with everyone. Please also email the office and let us know if your child has demonstrated the current school value at home and we will celebrate this too.

### Homework

As outlined in our school newsletter on 9<sup>th</sup> September by Miss Edgington, we will no longer be setting a weekly formal homework, previously these have been in the form of weekly spelling tests. Instead, it is more useful for the children to be using their curriculum spellings in context by reading them and learning spelling rules.

Kingfishers' main objective for homework this year is to read. This can be between 10-20 minutes daily. If time allows, a quick note in the children's reading record will help me to keep track of what books the children are reading and when they need to change to a new book. They children have a basket that they can drop their reading record into each morning. I hope this expectation is acceptable, particularly with the absence of weekly spelling tests now. I will instead be setting spellings of the week for the children to use in the work at school from the Year 3 and 4 Curriculum Spelling List.

At times, I may set your child a more personalised reading tasks for instance by setting them two books, one for word reading practice on a particular sound and another book for comprehension which they can have read to them or jointly with you for them to discuss about what they have read. I will make a note of this in their daily reading diary if so.

My other expectation is to practice times tables, this repeated practice is key to learning their times tables. They children can personalise this to themselves, if they prefer using times tables rock stars this is a wonderful resource which I recommend as it follows the speed and format of the Times Tables Check that they will encounter at the end of Year 4. Some children might like to count objects or counters or even play a throwing and catching game with a family member as they recount their times tables.

If your child would like to practice their spellings at home or you would like them to, they have the following resources now available to them below. This will not be set as formal homework for them to bring in and it is personal choice for you to use these at home but they are available to you. I will be showing the children how to use these resources in class and I will send them home with their personal log ins for these resources shortly.

**Spelling Frame:** A good spelling resource which focuses on the spelling rules per year group. It allows them to look at example words for a spelling rule and play games to learn the rules.

**Spelling Shed:** Another excellent resource for learning spelling rules per year group and revising previous years too.

**Times Tables Rock Stars:** Very important for times tables practicing and particularly for speedy recall.

**Phonics Bug:** Really good for practicing sounds for reading and spelling. Has books that they children can read online and have read aloud by the computer to hear the sounds in use.

I hope that this letter provides all of the information you need however please do ask if you have any particular questions. I am looking forward to having a really exciting year ahead and I am really looking forward to sharing it with your children and yourselves.