

## Spring Term 2022

Dear Parents,

A very belated welcome back to Spring Term 2022. I was disappointed to miss our first week or so through illness and particularly our Oak Class Explorer Dome trip. I have been before and I know it was a great way to start our new theme. Normal service is now resumed however!

### Team

The Oak Class team this term remains as Mrs Holden (Class Teacher), Miss Stephens (Teaching Assistant), Ms Foster (PPA cover) and we will shortly be welcoming back Mr Morgan a trainee teacher from Plymouth University.

### Curriculum

I hope you find the Spring Term 1 Curriculum Overview on the website useful. Our big learning question 'Why can't a meerkat live at the North Pole?' initiates a Geography based topic, we will also focus on cultural events such as Chinese New Year and Easter activities as well as the changes in the natural world as we move from Winter into Spring. Under normal circumstances we would have already had an after school 'work sharing' where parents are invited in to look at their child's books and enjoy the displays in the classroom, we look forward to the day we can invite you all in again. **Now that all permissions are in place Oak Class Blog will be up and running again later this week so that you can at least get a flavour of life in Year 1. It can be accessed via the school website.**

### Reading

We are in the process of renewing our benchmark assessment of reading for all children. This gives us a clear indicator of reading levels and key areas for development. Similarly we will be preparing for the Year 1 Phonics Screening which although disrupted by Covid is likely to resume this year.

We have now moved from using Bug Club online to sending the actual books home. Books read at home should give children opportunities to consolidate their skills and the books we work with in school tend to be more challenging in order to maximise progress. **Please ensure your child's reading record booklet and books are in school every day as phonics, key word and other activities will be added as appropriate. Additionally, our reading takes place in guided groups and if we do not receive one copy of the text it means we do not have enough to pass on to the next group. We also ask that water bottles and books are not carried in the same bag as we have lost several copies to leakages already.** Please do make a brief comment in the yellow reading record. Your contribution to the reading process is valued and the record is an important element in planning our next steps. The outline in the front of the reading record is a useful guide for structuring reading at home but if you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me. Later this term we plan to run an information session for parents around Early Reading and Phonics which we hope will be a useful guide to the learning that takes place in school in this crucial area of the curriculum.

### P.E.

Just a reminder that PE is on Monday and Tuesday and children should continue to come dressed in their kit on these days. Trainers with laces are proving to be a bit of a challenge and Velcro is a very welcome sight, some laces just will not stay done up!

### Clothing

It is not uncommon for Year 1 children to need a change of clothing during the day, puddles, spills or 'Oops, I didn't quite get there in time' all happen. If you feel it may be useful, a spare pair of socks, underwear and trousers or tights in the school bag is sometimes a good idea, we do have a stock of emergency items but they are never as nice as your own!

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### **Outdoor Learning**

On Wednesday mornings Ms Foster will often be teaching outdoor learning so wellies and suitable waterproof coats will be vital as they like to access the outdoor space in all weathers. Hopefully by the end of term our thoughts will be turning to sun hats and SPF cream!

### **Snack**

Our free fruit scheme is still running and every child is offered a piece of fruit each morning. Children may bring their own fruit or vegetable snack if they prefer as we cannot guarantee that their favourite snack is available. Some children are bringing plain cheese and crackers or bread sticks as a healthy alternative and others have a very healthy cereal bar (of course not chocolate or high sugar items). We usually ask children just to have one snack that they can peel or manage themselves, we are always on hand to open fruit bags etc but peeling many oranges can be tricky!

### **Water bottles.**

Children are able to access their bottle of plain water at any point during the school day and are reminded to do so at regular intervals. We do ask that these bottles contain water and not squash or other drinks. It is really important that bottles are non-spill or sports cap style rather than screw top as we have had frequent spillages recently. **It is important that every child brings a fresh water bottle daily, we do have access to fresh water for top ups but not bottle brushes etc so we are not in a position to effectively wash bottles left over night.**

### **Names**

Please continue to name everything that your child may take off or put down at school in a font they can recognise, initials or surnames are less easy for them to claim as their own. Lots of children have the same or very similar school shoes and most in Year 1 are a similar size. Please write inside each shoe to prevent a mix up! We will always endeavour to return named items but have little hope of returning unnamed items.

**As always, communication is key. A brief chat before or after school is fine but for a lengthier or more confidential discussion please contact the office and we can arrange a discussion at a mutually convenient time.**

Here's to a wonderful Spring Term!

Yours sincerely,  
Catherine Holden