

## Birkrigg – Autumn 1

Welcome to a new school year and our new class of Year 1 and Reception children.

Our topic this half term is **Castles**.

Miss Turner and Mrs Jessop are the class teachers; Mrs Jessop will teach the children on Monday and Tuesday, and Miss Turner will teach on a Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. Mrs Davies will work with the children on a Wednesday morning .

### **Literacy**

Phonics is taught first thing in the morning and Year 1 and Reception will be taught separately. Year 1 will start Phonics immediately, firstly revisiting the Reception Phonics phases before moving on to the new Phase 5 sounds. Year 1 will start bringing reading books home straight away and as last term, reading books will be changed on a Monday and a Thursday. When you hear your child read, please comment in their reading record. For our Reception children, we aim to start our daily Phonics time the first week that all the children are in full time. Later in the half term as Phonics progresses, Reception children will each get a red Church Walk book bag and a reading journal. A separate letter will be sent out with these along with a first reading book.

In Literacy we will be reading fairy tales, particularly those containing castles, and information books about castles. Reception children will be doing lots of story sequencing, retelling the stories and thinking about what the characters in the stories are like. Year 1 children will work on writing sentences using capital letters, full stops and leaving finger spaces between words. Writing will be linked to texts read in Literacy.

### **Maths**

Like with Phonics, Maths will be taught separately to Reception and Year 1. Reception children will do lots of activities involving matching and sorting, comparing amounts as well as comparing size, mass and capacity, and exploring pattern. We will read lots of stories that provide the starting points for many Maths based activities. Plenty of opportunities will be given for the children to practise their counting as we move on to activities that involve number. Our Year 1 Maths block is all about place value. We will revisit our counting skills, count on and back from different numbers and begin to use the language of fewer, more, the same as, less than, greater than, and equal to as well as using symbols to compare numbers. We will also introduce number lines and recognising numbers as words.

### **Science**

Our Science topic is 'Everyday Materials'. We will compare and sort different materials according to the properties they have. Later in the half term we will carry out a scientific investigation about how waterproof materials are. We will also think about seasonal changes around us as we move from summer into autumn.

### **Geography/History**

We will find out about castles, their significant features, who might have lived in a castle and where some castles are in the UK. We will look at maps of the UK and identify our capital cities. Hopefully before the end of this half term, we will plan and hold a banquet and dress up as fairy tale/knights and castles characters!

## **RE**

This half term, we will think about how we are all special and our own special talents.

We will then explore Harvest time and think about people who may not have a good harvest in different parts of the world.

## **PSHE**

Our topic is 'Relationships', in particular families and friendships.

## **Music**

Our unit focuses on a children's rap, 'Hey, you!', which was written by Joanna Mangona in a hip-hop style and teaches children about the differences between pulse, rhythm and pitch. Children will learn to sing, play, improvise and compose with this song, as well as listening to and appraising other old-school hip hop tunes.

## **Art and Design**

Year 1 children will be revisiting using colour in their artwork, mixing colours and using tints. Reception children will learn about mixing colours. We will look at artwork by the artist Paul Klee, in particular 'Castle and Sun'. The children will have the chance to use paint and collage materials in response to this, as well as construction kits and junk modelling materials to make castles. In addition, there are always opportunities daily for children to explore drawing and painting independently along with model making.

## **Computing**

Our classroom desktop computer is available daily during continuous provision. The children enjoy games which focus on developing their mouse skills. There is also a 'Paint' programme they can access both on the desktop and the big interactive screen. Reception children will gradually be introduced to the internet software Purple Mash and they will be given time to explore the content. To start with, this will be the 'paint' projects in the Early Years section initially linked to 'Castles'. The children will all get their own log in for this so they can access it from home as well. Year 1 children already have their own login. They will complete a unit on internet safety as well as exploring the 'Castles' topic area.

## **PE**

We have two PE times, Monday and Thursday. This half term we will be taking part in a dance unit all about knights, castles and dragons, and a games unit that works on our throwing and catching skills.

Please ensure your child always has a full PE kit in school (red T-shirt, black shorts and pumps) and all items are clearly labelled with their name. Long hair must be tied back, and jewellery removed.

Weather permitting, Reception children will be able to use the bikes and scooters on the school playground and the whole class will get out onto the school field when we can.

Please can you ensure that your child always has a waterproof coat in school. A pair of wellies would also be very useful.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to come and speak to us.

Miss Turner and Mrs Jessop