



Durham Class News

BE LIKE JESUS. BE YOUR BEST. BE SAFE. BE CARING.

Lent (1)

Welcome Back

Happy New Year! We hope everyone had a happy Christmas filled with love and laughter. The Year Two team would like to extend a note of thanks to all pupils and families for their kind wishes, beautiful cards and generous gifts over the Christmas period. Thank you!

The children are already working hard on their new topics. Hopefully, this newsletter will give you a better idea of what we'll be learning this half term.

Religious Education 'To Know You More Clearly'

This half term, we move on to Branch Three of our new RE curriculum, which is called 'Galilee to Jerusalem'. Our work in this branch focuses on Jesus' ministry. We will embed our learning about John the Baptist and retelling the story of Jesus' baptism in the River Jordan. We will be learning about Jesus' temptation in the desert and link this to how we are all tempted to sin, but that God forgives us if we are sorry. We will then learn about some of the miracles of Jesus and summarise what they show us about who Jesus is. Finally, we will learn what parables are and how Jesus used parables to help people understand his teaching. We will retell the parable of the lost sheep as part of our learning.

Prayer and worship remain an integral part of each day and the children are very welcome to bring in and share any prayers or books on our class prayer table.

From **Friday 24th January**, the Jubilee Year: Pilgrims of Hope launches for schools. Please look out for further information about events and celebrations linked to this special year for the Church.

English

In our Talk 4 Writing lessons, we will be developing our story writing skills. Our model text is 'The Dragon Machine' by Helen Ward. We will be practising using powerful verbs to write sentences of three and we will even begin to learn how to use similes. At the end of the unit, we will be writing our fantasy stories about mythical creatures using our poetry 'description toolkit' (all the features we've spotted in our model text).

Following this, we will be learning how to write a good piece of persuasive writing. Our model text for this is the blurb from 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory'. Again, we will learn how to use the writer's tricks so that we can apply these in our own writing and write a blurb for Roald Dahl's 'The Witches' (one of our class novels).

Mathematics

We continue to use Power Maths for the teaching of Mathematics. Our first unit this half term builds on the children's previous knowledge of multiplication as we begin to learn about division. The children will learn about division as both grouping and sharing. We will concentrate on dividing by 2, 5 and 10. We will progress from doing this practically with concrete resources, to representing the calculation pictorially and, finally, to recall division facts confidently.

Our following unit is 'Fractions'. We will be learning what a 'whole' is and about equal parts. The children will learn to recognise and find a half and quarter (of visual representations and numbers). The children will also learn about $\frac{1}{3}$ and the relationship between $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{2}{4}$. We will even begin practising counting in halves and quarters.

The children all have TT Rockstars logins. These can be found on the passwords page of their reading diaries.

Pupils can practise their 2, 5 and 10 times tables in a fun and engaging way. The more practise the children can get, the better. We're aiming for instant recall of multiplication facts. Each week, we present an award for engagement with TT Rockstars or effort in maths.

Science

Later this half term, we will be starting a new science topic, 'Uses of Everyday Materials'. We will learn about the uses of everyday materials including wood, plastic, metal, glass, brick, paper and cardboard. The children will then compare the suitability of different everyday materials for different purposes. We will explore how objects made of some everyday materials can change shape. We will also have a stewardship focus in this topic, learning about how the recycling process allows us to reuse some everyday materials multiple times.

History

In History we will be learning about 'The Plague'. We will learn how rats carried the plague and how it was spread by fleas that became infected after biting the rats. We will compare how people were usually buried with how they were buried at the time of the plague. We will also be learning about the impact of travel and trade on the spread of the plague. Finally, we will find out about eye-witness accounts from the last outbreak of the plague in London – the diary of Samuel Pepys. If you're looking for a day out, the village of Eyam is famous for containing an outbreak of the plague in 1665-1666 and is only 45 minutes away from school. You can also use the following questions to support your child's learning in history:

- What other name was the plague known by and why?
- When was the last outbreak of the plague in England?
- Who was affected by the plague?
- How were people warned that someone had the plague?
- How were the victims buried?
- Why did travel and trade have an impact on the spread of the plague?

Geography

In Geography, we will be building upon our learning in the Advent Term by looking more closely at the continents and oceans. We will be using positional language to describe each continent's and ocean's location in relation to the hemisphere they are in (Northern, Southern or both). The children will also be comparing facts about continents and oceans (size, position, number of countries etc). "Did you know that Africa has fifty-four countries whereas Australia has just one?" You can support your child to remember more by:

- Discussing the difference between a 'country' and a 'continent'.
- Discussing why the world's oceans are so important for the health of the planet.

Design and Technology

This half term, we will be completing our 'Puppets' topic, which was postponed last term due to how very busy we were with our Nativity performances, carol concert etc. The children will be investigating different types of puppets and then designing, making and evaluating a hand puppet. They will be able to use their puppet to tell imaginative stories! Any practise threading a needle would come in handy and be much appreciated!

PE

This half term our PE days will be Mondays and Fridays. On Mondays we will be developing our football skills and on Fridays we will have great fun learning to play hockey and developing our hockey skills.

Music

In our next music topic, we will be learning how the events, actions and feelings within stories are represented. We will be exploring pitch (high and low sounds), dynamics (loud and soft sounds) and tempo (how fast or slow music is played). The children will listen to music to identify these components and then have a go themselves to communicate a story using instruments.

Weekly Homework

We will begin sending home weekly homework beginning **Friday 17th January**. This will be an opportunity for children to practise fundamental skills that they have already learnt in class, such as arithmetic, reading comprehension or sentence work. Homework should be returned by the following Wednesday. Children can further supplement this with regular use of Times Table Rock Stars.

Reading at Home

Children are expected to read for 10 minutes every day and the more often they read the better! This includes reading to an adult. Children's reading should be recorded in their reading diary/planner. There are lots of other useful resources in here too so please take some time to have a good look through. Children will change their own books during our Phonics lesson on Wednesdays. They are encouraged to read the same book multiple times to develop fluency, expression and comprehension, just like we do in class. Our Read, Write Inc Book-Bag Books contain lots of questions and activities to support reading at home. Of course, children should also be encouraged to read more widely too, reading books they have at home or from the library with an adult or independently.

Spellings

Spelling continues to be taught as part of our Read, Write Inc phonics lessons. The children practise spelling words

with the day's focus and are encouraged to "pinch each sound on their Fred fingers" before writing the word. We are encouraging the children to make better choices as to which sounds are more likely to be seen in certain parts of words. You can support your child by practising the common exception words and red words listed in your child's reading diary/planner, and by revisiting words learnt in previous weeks!

Some children are now accessing our Read Write Inc spelling lessons. Each week, we will look at a new spelling rule. We teach this rule explicitly in class and spend 15 minutes each day completing spelling activities. Children will decide on six words to spell and bring these home in their Log Books on a Tuesday. Children will be tested on these spellings the following Monday. Children should bring their Log Books to school every day.

Water Bottles

Children are asked to ensure they bring a water bottle to school each day. They are encouraged to drink water throughout the day to aid concentration. Water bottles should be taken home each night for washing.

If you have any quick questions, please feel free to speak to us at the end of the school day once all of the children have been dismissed. If, at that point, you feel you require a longer appointment, we can arrange a meeting via the school office (01773822278).

We are really looking forward to an exciting half term.

Mr T Ward, Mrs D Parry and the Year Two Team

P.E. Kit

The children will have two P.E. lessons each week – taught by external coaches. Please make sure that your child comes to school wearing their 'active uniform'/PE kit on Mondays and Fridays. Outdoor kit should include: plain black tracksuit bottoms, yellow polo shirt, yellow sweatshirt and outdoor trainers.

Uniform

Please ensure that your child comes to school in the correct uniform. This also included hair accessories, which should be either white, black, brown or yellow. Black shoes should be worn and not boots. In anticipation of cold weather, children may come to school wearing boots/wellies but change into their school shoes once they arrive at school.

We have a significant number of items in school that have been lost/left behind. Unfortunately, we cannot return these to their rightful owners as they are not labelled with children's names. **Please ensure that every item of clothing clearly contains your child's name so that we can return anything that goes missing to them.**

Reminders	
Monday	PE (Come to school in 'active' uniform/PE kit) Bring reading books, diaries and spelling Log Books into school.
Tuesday	Bring reading books, diaries and spelling Log Books into school.
Wednesday	Bring reading books, diaries and spelling Log Books into school. Reading books will be changed. Return homework to school.
Thursday	Bring reading books, diaries and spelling Log Books into school.
Friday	PE (Come to school in 'active' uniform/PE kit) Bring reading books, diaries and spelling Log Books into school. Homework set.

Dates For Your Diary		
06.01.25	Children return to school.	
22.01.25	18:00 – 20:00	SEA Movie Night Our wonderful SEA are hosting a movie night, to which all of our children are invited. Entry is £2 and the children may bring extra pocket money to buy drinks and snacks from the tuck shop before the film and at the interval.
13.02.25	15:00-15:30	Year 2 Class Assembly You are warmly invited to join us in the school hall for our class assembly. We'll be sharing some of our learning this half term.
14.02.25	INSET DAY	
W.C 17.02.25	HALF TERM	
24.02.25	INSET DAY	
25.02.25	Children return to school.	
05.03.25	10:15 – 11:15	Ash Wednesday Mass All are warmly invited to join us for Mass in the school hall. During the Mass, there will be the distribution of ashes as we begin the liturgical season of Lent.
06.03.25	All Day	World Book Day Today, the children are invited to come to school dressed as their favourite book character and bring in their favourite book. We will begin the day with an assembly at 09:15, with a catwalk to show off our outfits. The day will be filled with fun activities to promote the children's love of reading!
25.03.25	13:30-14:30	Our Big Lent Walk for CAFOD This afternoon children will be walking laps of the field to raise money for CAFOD. Please sponsor them generously to support our global neighbours. Please ensure your children come to school in their PE kit and have footwear suitable for walking/the weather.