



Dear Parents and Carers,

### **BE HERE, BE KIND, WORK HARD**

Thank you all so much with your support and co-operation last Friday when, due to the weather conditions, we needed to close the school. We never take decisions like this lightly, but the fresh snow had already fallen onto frozen ground and so the site itself was very unsafe. I do hope the children enjoyed the additional day off and that you were not inconvenienced too much by this.

The children have been in really good form this week and we continue to be very proud of the way they are working together, playing together and learning together.

At the beginning of term we said that the focus for our term at Ark Dickens in terms of rules, for all adults and children, would be, **Be Here** – *attendance every day really does matter and being at school on time too.* **Be Kind** – *if every single person in our school did this every day, what an amazing school we would have.*

**Work Hard** – *nothing at all can be gained without doing this and if everyone in the school worked really hard, again we would be in a great place!*

These priorities absolutely continue and every day we encourage the children to Be Here, Be Kind and Work Hard and where any of these are not in place for a child then we strive to make that happen for them. I cannot emphasise to you enough the importance of ensuring your children always get to school on time and when they are here, work hard. The benefits will be enormous!

### **New Principal: Mrs Fiona Chapman**

Thank you to those parents who were able to join us for the latest 'Meet the Principal' session yesterday morning. It was good to see some new

parents and it was good for parents who attended to have the opportunity to meet Mrs Chapman, who will take over as Principal at Ark Dickens, on 9<sup>th</sup> April. There will of course be other opportunities to meet Mrs Chapman as we go through an important period of change for the school.

### **Uniform:**

You will know how important correct uniform is to any high performing team / school or organisation. The same is absolutely true for the children at Ark Dickens – Proper uniform really does matter. So far we have spent many hundreds of pounds on ties for the children to 'borrow' if they forget to bring theirs to school or have 'lost' them. We cannot keep doing this I am afraid but the children do need their ties. Please could all parents make sure their children have ties and that those ties are looked after when the children change from their uniform at home or when they change for PE at school. All uniform also does need to be named so that we can return them to the children when found.

May I also add that the children need to wear proper school shoes and not trainers and leggings are not part of school uniform. Please could all parents make certain your children are in correct uniform when they come to school.

Thank you for your help with this.

### **Nursery News**

It has been a great week in Nursery especially hearing the children talking about the snow. We have been making Mothers' Day cards with a beautiful painted daffodil. We hope you all have a lovely day and love your cards. Next week we will be learning about the story 'The Enormous Turnip' and asking the children to think about something else that grows in the ground and could grow to be enormous!

We will be setting up a small world area so the children can act out the story.

We are carrying on learning to recognise numbers 1-5, we will be playing number lotto and doing some number puzzles.

### **Reception**

This week the children have been learning about 2D and 3D shapes, we have been talking about corners, sides, faces, edges and vertices. We have been searching for shapes in our environment and naming them. Please encourage your child to look for 2D and 3D shapes at home. In Literacy the children have been writing about planets and what they might look like.

We hope families enjoy the weekend and the Mother's Day celebrations.

Next week our focus is addition in maths, we will be using the language of addition which is 3 add 2 is equal to 5. Please support your child with some simple addition at home, practical adding works best with young children. In Literacy we are working on story telling with pictures.

### **Year 1**

Yesterday we had Portsmouth music hub come in and a fantastic music workshop all about transport. It was great that the children got to learn about different types of transport and how to stay safe when crossing the road. It was lovely that we had some Year 1 children from other schools to join us.

Next week it is our final week learning about adding and subtracting to 20 the children have made a lot of progress! Next week we will be consolidating their learning where they will get to practise all the different skills they have learnt.

In literacy children will be planning and writing their own five part story (opening, build up, problem, resolution and ending) about a toy of their choice.

### **Year 2**

Year 2 have had a fantastic week!

We enjoyed our visit to Waterstones to collect our books. We have been working really hard learning all about money in maths. If you are out with your child over the weekend ask them to help you count out the money to pay for your shopping! In literacy, we have been learning a story about a tiger called Augustus. Ask your child to tell you the story, they can use actions to help them. Next week, we will be continuing our topic work, focussing on desert and African animals. Try to do some research on this with your child over the weekend. Please can we remind you that children need to wear a tie as part of their school uniform. If you are having problems with this speak to your child's class teacher.

### **Year 3 News**

This week Year 3 completed their diary entries, completed their maths unit telling the time and in topic have learnt the science behind bath salts and have created their very own bath salts for mother's day surprises!

Next week we will be researching animals to write non chronological reports, beginning maths unit fractions and in topic we will be learning about the purpose of Water Aid and the habitats of under- water animals.

This week Year 3 walked to Waterstones to personally collect our books using our world book day tokens. The children walked beautifully on their outing and we were told by staff how polite the children were!

### **Year 4**

This week we have continued to learn more about life in Ancient Greece, some of the main events in that period of time and studied another myth - Medusa.

In literacy next week we are going to be focusing on creating our very own Greek God and writing an information text about them. In numeracy we are changing our focus from decimal numbers to area and perimeter of shape.

In our topic lessons, we are going to be focusing on Ancient Greek battles and the children will be designing their own shields and armour. If you have any large pieces of cardboard at home that you no longer need, we would gladly take it off of your hands.

The children have worked incredibly hard this week and we hope that their resilience continues into next week and beyond, assessment week starts Monday 19th March.

### Year 5

This week in literacy we have been learning the skills for writing a historical narrative (a fictional story that is set during real historical events). We are learning about interesting ways to link the sections of our story together as well as using dialogue (speech) to move the story on. Next week, we will be applying these skills as we write our own historical narratives based around the Viking invasion.

In maths next week, we will be refreshing our memories on some areas of maths that we have learnt previously; including shape, area and perimeter. Also, please encourage the children to practice their times tables at home. They all know which table they are working towards and really need to know these fluently.

As part of our Viking topic, next week we will be learning about the religious beliefs of the Vikings. The Vikings believed in the Norse gods; including Thor, Odin and Loki - if you have any comic books on these, please send them in.

Thank you for your continued support,

### Year 6

We hope the children enjoyed their snow day; they were excited by the prospect all week so we are pleased they finally got a chance to enjoy it like the rest of the country!

Next week promises to be as busy as ever with writing being done on WW2 where each child will independently write about an aspect of WW2 that interests them. Please encourage them to research this either using books from the library or the internet so that they have

information to include in their report in addition to what they have found out in school. In maths our focus is on interpreting charts and graphs. There are now several groups up and running before and after school to help children with reading and writing. If your child has been invited, please make sure they attend. It will be of enormous help to them as part of the preparation for SATs. Fresh tasks to be done in the maths and reading homework books will be given on Friday so please ask your child about this and encourage them to complete the tasks over the weekend.

Thank you for your continuing support.

Have a lovely weekend



Miss J. Waelend  
Executive Principal