



Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to a new week at Ark Dickens Primary Academy! I trust you all had a good weekend and are ready for a new week here at school. I apologise for the fact that the newsletter was unable to come to you on Friday and hope that having the letter today does not cause you too much confusion. The Newsletter will return to its normal slot this coming Friday helping us once again to get ahead of ourselves.

Ark Monitoring Visit last Friday:

We had our half-termly monitoring visit by Ark last Friday and I am pleased to say that this visit concluded that the school is continuing to improve at a steady pace. These monitoring visits are a key part of being part of Ark and they are conducted by a team of experts from Ark, which includes an ex HMI (Her Majesty's Inspector). The outcomes of these visits are really important because the Ark Board of Directors need to know that the school is improving and is continuing well on its journey to becoming an outstanding school in the future. In preparation for these visits Principals have to prepare a Self-Evaluation statement to describe how good they believe the school is at the point of monitoring. This self-evaluation has to be based on evidence and it is important that each evaluation for each visit shows progress and improvement.

This time last year I judged the school as having Serious Weaknesses, which in Ofsted terms would be a category 4 (outstanding is a category 1). I am pleased to say that we now evaluate the school as having moved into category 3, which describes the school as 'Requiring Improvement'. This means that the school has progressed from a low place to a better place for the children but, is not yet 'Good' which is the next stage of the journey. So although we have made significant gains there is still a great deal to do. I am pleased to say that the Ark

Monitoring team agreed our self-evaluation and saw many of the improvements which we had identified.

I am pleased to say that the huge improvements which have been made in Punctuality, were crucial to this change of categorisation; so thank you for your efforts here. We do need to keep this going. In addition, more effort needs to be made in terms of attendance generally. Although things have improved here, we need to do better, particularly those children whose attendance is at 90% or below. All of the research is very clear that the lower the attendance, the lower the learning outcomes for the children. Please can I urge you to make certain your children come to school on time every day unless they are being sick or have a high temperature. I assure you we will call you if they are unwell.

An Inset Day Reminder:

Just to remind all parents that school will be closed on Friday 17th March for Teaching Staff to attend an Ark Training Day in London and for non-teaching staff to attend further training here at school. The school will not be open to children on that day.

Nursery

In Nursery this week we will start reading our Talk For Writing book for this term which is 'The Enormous Turnip.' We will be learning some songs about growing, which we will be inviting you to come & hear later in the month. We will also be growing some cress.



Year R

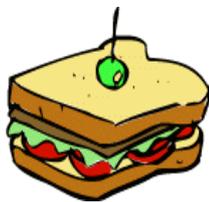
We're very excited in Year R to be visiting the farm on Thursday 16th March. This will be a very valuable learning experience for the children as part of our Farmyard topic.



Please make sure your permission slips and money is given into the office ASAP if it hasn't already.

Year 1

This week in literacy, we will be writing instructions for how to make a sandwich. We are focussing on using sequencing words (first, next, after that) and adverbs (carefully, slowly). In maths, we are learning about doubles and halves so it would be great if the children could practice this at home, maybe sharing items between siblings equally to get half each.



The children are also investigating things that plants need to grow. We will also be observing how a bulb changes as it grows.

Year 2

This week, Year 2 will be innovating our text, based on Cloudy with a chance of Meatballs, and writing our own versions. We are challenging the children to write a fantastic story using the skills we have been learning this term. . In maths, we are continuing to learn about fractions and finding fractions of number and shape. You could try playing this game at home to practice what we have been doing in class.



<http://resources.hwb.wales.gov.uk/VTC/ngfl/ngfl-flash/fractions/fractions.html>.

We are continuing our science work on plants and trees and will start looking at classifying different trees. In topic we will be learning

about China and will get to try some delicious Chinese food.

Our PE days are Tuesday (inside) and Friday (outside). This week Rowling Class will be going to the school library on Tuesday and Peake on Wednesday. New spellings are going home on Monday ready to be tested on 13th March, these are words which will be useful in this week's literacy so please help your child to learn them.

Year 3

This week Year 3 will be continuing with their writing of folk tales in Literacy and multiplying and dividing by 10 and 100 in Maths. Animals have been a key feature in both of our Literacy and Guided Reading texts this half term. With this, both classes will be visiting Pets At Home (in school hours) on Tuesday afternoon (Edison class) and Wednesday afternoon (Picasso class).



We are looking forward to the trip as this will be a great way to both develop our descriptive writing and meet some of the animals we have been writing about in class too!

Year 4

This week we will be continuing our numeracy focus on money, so now is a fantastic time to get your child to help you with the weekly shopping, asking them to do the adding up of the groceries and working out how much change you will be expecting to receive. In literacy, children will be writing their own dilemma stories, after taking inspiration from numerous stories from last week.



We have had a great start to our new topic focusing on Africa. Children are allowed to bring in any artifacts from home which relate to our topic work to share with their friends.



A date for your diary.

As a year group, we found that homework was a key talking point at our recent parents evening meetings. To action this, we have purchased some

superb homework resources that we would like to share with you before issuing them to the children. We are therefore inviting you into the school on Wednesday 8th March to have a discussion regarding this. Please can you make your way to the school reception for 3:30pm where you will be greeted by a member of staff, who will escort you to the school hall.

Year 5

This week, year 5 will be continuing to read Matilda and using the text to inspire writing diary entries. In maths, we will be beginning to learn about percentages for the first time - this week we are focusing on converting between fractions and percentages. In topic, we will be learning about the Aztecs and doing some art inspired by them. Outdoor PE (Chris) – Wednesday. Indoor PE - Thursday



Year 6

In year 6, this coming week we will be looking at biographies and autobiographies of famous people and some key figures from WW2 for our topic; we will use these to help us write our own. Because of this topic, it would be great if you could spend some time this week talking to friends and family about your own life and perhaps looking at some pictures to give you some key memories to discuss and write about.

In maths, we will be investigating area and perimeter of compound shapes and triangles and converting different measurements. This is a great time to practice multiplying and dividing by 10,100 and 1000 at home to help your child in class this week.

Please remember to bring full school P.E kit in with you on Tuesday and Friday.

Attendance

Winners

Well done to all our winners this week : Peake class, Rowling class & Curie class

Also well done to Edison class, Picasso class, Wilberforce class, Curie class, Dahl class & Travers class for the least amount of lates this week.