

Dear Parents and Carers,

I would like to welcome you all back to school and hope that you had a wonderful and well rested Christmas holiday with your families. I look forward to hearing all about Christmas from the children. I would also like to thank you for your generous cards and gifts. It has been a pleasure to read your messages and see the many pictures the children drew in their cards.

In this letter you will find an overview of the work that your child will be completing during this term.

### **Phonics**

The children have now been split into flexible ability groups for phonics and will receive a daily phonics lesson, to help improve their reading, spelling and writing. Their spellings for the week will correspond with the sounds that your child has been learning in phonic sessions, so please don't worry if your child has different spellings to somebody else in the class. If you have any questions please do come and ask. At this stage in the year 1 and 2 children will be given spellings. Year R children will have spellings in the summer term when they have a larger bank of sounds.

### **Literacy**

We will be reading lots of different stories based on different cultures and looking at non-fiction books this term based around animals.

The children will be:

<b><u>Reception</u></b>	<b><u>Year 1</u></b>
Practising correct letter formation.	Handwriting with a focus on correct letter formation.
Listening for sounds in words and finding those sounds on a phonics mat to write. Example, I am going on a lion hunt. The word am is broken into two sounds a...m. On is broken into two sounds o...n.	Using a phonics mat independently when writing. Say the word, break it into sounds, find the sound and write it. How many sounds does a word contain? Example in the story I am going on a lion hunt. Hunt is broken into 4 sounds h..u..n..t or going into 4 sounds g..o..i..ng.
Developing the use of story language focusing on new vocabulary. Example, the words guava or ostrich in the story Handa's Surprise.	Understand and use adjectives in writing to develop story language. Example, Handa put seven <u>delicious</u> fruits in her basket.

### **Reading**

All children in Barn Owls will take part in weekly guided reading sessions this year. The children will be placed into groups according to the phonics phase they are currently working on. They will all have the same book and will look at the text together with an adult to guide them. This includes all aspects of reading beginning with holding a book the correct way up, the title page, knowing the spine holds a book together to understanding what the purpose of the blurb is. We then progress to segmenting (breaking down the words into sounds) and blending them together. Sounds make

words and words make sentences. Example, night is broken down into three sounds n...igh...t. This will be used in a sentence. It is dark at night.

### **Reading books**

It is really important to continue reading daily with your child and to discuss the book with them. Please sign the reading diary to let us know how that is going. Each Wednesday your child will come home with a new set of reading books (they choose these from the phase they are on) alongside a book from the library. The library book is a book that you can read to your child and enjoy talking about it.

The video link here can help you to teach your child to read at home:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9SxF8A2ww1E>

For those children who are reluctant to read try the following:

- Read a phonics-based book only every other night so they do not feel overwhelmed. Five minutes maximum is enough to keep them interested and feel like they have achieved something, followed by lots of praise.
- You do not have to read the whole book in one go. Read only two pages if necessary but work hard to break down the letters and sound them out.
- Tell your child they are going to be the teacher, you sound out a word and get them to correct you.
- If a child is finding it tricky, you sound out the word for them, get them to repeat it and say it together.

### **Maths**

The children will be covering a lot of different areas of Maths this term through adult led activities and their continuous provision. These include:

Year R	Year 1
Addition and Subtraction within 5, 10 and 20	Addition and subtraction within 20
Mastery of numbers within 5, 10 and 20	Place value within 50
Length and Height	Length and Height
Weight and Volume	Weight and Volume

In Year 1, it is important that your child can confidently use mental addition and subtraction to recite number bond facts to 10 (e.g. a quick response to what do you add to 4 to make 10 or to what do you add to 5 to make 9). These skills are fundamental to the depth of understanding that children in Key Stage One should develop. It would be extremely beneficial if your child can practise regularly at home.

### **Curriculum at a Glance**

**Please see the grid "This Half Term" for more detail about the Year 1 curriculum.**

RE	What is the Good News that Jesus Brings?
ICT	Using the chrome books and collecting images
Science	Materials

Humanities (1 <sup>st</sup> ½ term)	Nelson Mandela
Humanities (2 <sup>nd</sup> ½ term)	Kenya
Art/DT	Patterns in Buildings/ Puppets
PE	Athletics, Multi skills and Parachute Games
PSHE	Dreams and Goals, Healthy Me

### **P.E. and staff update**

This term Barn Owls will have a whole PE afternoon on Thursdays with Mrs Mussell and Mr Smith. The children know Mrs Mussel from Thursdays already and many of them know Mr Smith from both breakfast and after school clubs. Please ensure that your child has their correct P.E. kit in school and that everything is labelled. Many items of PE kit remained unnamed last term. Our apologies for those items that get into others' PE bags. The staff and children are working very hard to rectify this with staff encouraging the children to take responsibility for their items by placing them in their PE bags when changing and not on the floor! It is a work in progress and the children are doing really well. The children will leave their kits at school and bring them home at half term.

Mrs Payne will be teaching Barn Owls on Thursday mornings this year and is very much looking forward to engaging with the children. The children already know Mrs Payne and we visited her office during the beginning of term to say hello. They do enjoy telling her all about our activities and sharing their learning.

### **Homework update**

#### **Maths and Literacy homework**

Maths and literacy will be set on a Monday and is to be completed by the following Monday. All reading, library, reading records and spellings books are collected in on a Monday and sent home on a Wednesday enabling them to be marked by staff.

**All children in Barn Owls** will be set a Maths activity on Mathletics to complete each week. Some Barn Owl Reception children may have already completed Mathletics but it is always beneficial to repeat activities so please do so if these are set. When you log on, the home page will ask you to complete an assignment set by your teacher. Mathletics link: <http://uk.mathletics.com/signin/>

Additionally, we would ask all children to complete one Reading Eggs activity per week. I do not set specific assignments but ask you choose one with your child as the app sets the appropriate level. Occasionally I will set a paper task that will be sent home in your child's book bag in place of Reading Eggs so please do check. If no paper task is in there on a Monday, then it's a reading eggs week 😊

For Year 1 Barn Owls spellings will go home in a purple spelling book where children must 'look, cover, write and check' 3 times to practise each word throughout the week. Year 1 children are encouraged to write their spellings into sentences each week. This really does help them develop into independent writers ready for the jump into year 2. We love a silly sentence so go for it!

### **Water Bottles**

Please ensure that your child brings a **named** and filled water bottle into school with them each day so that they can drink regularly throughout the day. Children are actively encouraged to have a

drink whenever they choose and at lunch. We are delighted that they are doing so and we refill their bottles for them. Bottles will be sent home at the end of each day so that they can be washed and returned to school again the following morning. We request that these drink bottles contain water only, which is not only better for children's teeth, but can cause limited damaged to other items if the contents get spilt.

### **Labelling**

Please ensure that all belongings (uniform, coats, lunch boxes, book bags, snack boxes, water bottles etc) are clearly labelled with your child's name. This not only helps your child to recognise their name and locate their own belongings, but also enables misplaced items to be easily identified and returned! Last term we continued to have items that were not named. There will be a lost property box for KS1 located in the outdoor area at the back of Barn Owls classroom.

### **Show and Tell**

Show and tell will continue on a Tuesday afternoon. Please only encourage drawings, models, books rather than precious toys that can get lost resulting in tears. We had a superb collection of home-made books made last term which the children have decided to keep in our book box. The children love reading them!

### **Stationery**

We would be delighted to receive any kind donations of stationery for use in Barn Owls. We really appreciate any donations of extra glue sticks, whiteboard pens, high quality pencils or rubbers, as they keep our forever-dwindling stocks topped up. If you happen to see any going cheap in the supermarkets or have any spare at home then please send them in. We would be most grateful!

### **Helpers update**

We await further guidance regarding Covid but do so hope that at some stage during 2022 we can invite volunteers back into school to listen to children read. This is always a highlight for the children and staff look forward to resuming these visits. I will inform you of this as soon as we have more details.

Finally, I would like to thank you all for your support last term. All our team work hard to make Barn Owls a super, safe and exciting place for the children where they thrive and your feedback and encouragement was much appreciated. I look forward to seeing the children's progress this year.

If you do have any questions please come and chat at the end of the school day where we can either answer straight away or arrange a further meeting if required.

Mrs Thomson and the Barn Owls team.