

Lower School Autumn Newsletter



12th September 2008

Dear Parents

It was good to see so many parents at the information evening on Wednesday. Thank you for your support. For those that missed the meeting, do not worry as this letter outlines the key information and events which are relevant to your child this term.

Curriculum

As a school we have introduced a new curriculum this year to the whole school. We are following the International Primary Curriculum (IPC) which is in line with the National Curriculum taught across England.

The exciting part of this curriculum is that it integrates all the subjects across one topic so that children are making links between the subjects rather than learning facts in isolated units. We hope that this approach will make learning smoother and provide more opportunity for cross-curricular links. Each topic will begin with an Entry Point. This may be a whole or half day spent on introducing the theme in a fun way. For example next week as we begin the Explorers topic all your children will be taking on the role of an explorer and through drama will have the opportunity to discover an amazing place. I am sure that this will really motivate them to find out more. Another big positive of this curriculum is that it promotes independent learning so that all your children will have greater opportunity to research areas they are interested in.

We would really appreciate your help with supporting these topics at home either through discussion, reading books or research on the internet. The two topics we will be covering in the Autumn term are; **Explorers (Autumn1) and Chocolate (Autumn 2)**. Attached to this letter is a list of websites for the first topic which you may want to look at with your child. I will send home web address links to the chocolate topic at the start of the next half term.

Homework

Every child in Lower School has been given a homework diary to help remind them of the tasks they are set each week. Each week they will be set one piece of written English and Maths homework which needs to be completed and returned by the following week. Each task should take approximately 20 minutes. If your child has struggled with the task please stop them after this time and you can always write a note on their homework or in their homework diary. Please could you sign the homework diary each week and teachers will also check these on a weekly basis. Besides this the children are given a list of spelling words to learn. They will need to practise each word in their Spelling Log Book each day, using the Look, Say, Cover, Write method. It would also be helpful if you could practise these words with them during the week. Perhaps pick a couple of the words to spell during breakfast!

Reading

Reading is a crucial skill for all other areas of learning and it is important that we promote a positive attitude towards reading. Each child has been given a new Reading Record Book which needs to be completed weekly. Year 3 children are still developing the mechanics of reading and therefore we would ask that they read a little bit every day (Mon-Fri) to an adult. Year 4 will be becoming more independent but it is still important that they read aloud to an adult twice a week. When you listen to your child read please could you make a positive comment in the Reading Record Book. Children who are reading the correct number of times and have comments from an adult will be given a sticker each week and if they can keep this up for half a term will be entered into the Reading Lottery and may win a prize. Children love to receive these rewards so please support them.

To promote reading in school and at home we will be running a Readathon from October 16th – November 14th. This is a sponsored reading event and more details will be sent home nearer the time.

Communication

If you have an important message for your child's teacher feel free to write this in their Homework Diary. If it is a private message then please write a note and give it to your child to pass on. You may also want to leave a message with the office. Dinner Money should be sent in at the start of the week. Please could you put this in an envelope with the child's name and class. If your child is going to be absent from school please could you phone the office on the first day of absence. When they return to school, please could you also send in note to the teacher explaining the reason for their absence. Unless it is an emergency please keep medical appointments to out of school time.

Letters from school are sent home fairly regularly with up-dates and key information. Please check their bag once in a while to see if there are any lurking about. We also have a notice board outside the school gate where messages and copies of letters are displayed.

Uniform

I am very proud of how smartly Lower School are dressed and they are making a big effort in school to keep their shirts tucked in and their ties straight! Thank you for your support with this.

Likewise their PE kits have also been spot on. Please could PE kits be kept in school in a small gym bag with their name on it. As it gets nearer to winter you may want to send in a tracksuit for PE. You can check which day your child has PE by looking at their timetable on the back of their Homework Diary.

Parents do so well at labelling their child's belongings but if your child has lost something you will find a box of lost property at the school office.

Behaviour

Marchwood staff are always praising children for their smart appearance and excellent manners. For good behaviour, effort and hard work children are awarded house points. Every Year 3 child has now been put into one of our four house teams.

On Friday we hold a Lower School Achievement assembly where each teacher presents about 8 certificates to children in their class/groups who have been working hard. If your child receives a certificate it might be nice to collect them in a folder as a record of their achievement. During this assembly one child from Lower School is presented with the Headteacher Certificate. This is an extremely special moment and recognises a child who has been putting in that little bit more effort. They have their photograph taken with Mr Bassett and this is displayed in the Lower School area.

The majority of pupils at Marchwood Junior are well behaved and work hard. However, we all follow a behaviour system which helps to control silly or disruptive behaviour, such as calling out or fiddling whilst someone is talking. The system is warning, name on the board and then a mark against their name. If your child is still being disruptive after this they will be sent to me as the Lower School Manager and they will be given a Yellow Slip. This slip is kept in a central file as a record of their behaviour. If your child is getting Yellow Slips regularly we would contact home to discuss their behaviour.

Photographs

The school photographer will be visiting on Tuesday 30th September. I thought you would like some prior warning so that you can ensure that on that day they have had their hair brushed and are wearing their best shirt!

Parents' Evening

Parents' Evenings will take place later this term on the 6th and 7th October when you will have the opportunity to meet your child's class teacher. We hope to see you there.

Finally.....I know that there is a lot of information here but hope this keeps you well informed about the coming term. Thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely

Miss Sarah Boddington
Lower School Manager

Useful Websites for Lower School Children

Maths

<http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/maths/>

<http://www.primarygames.co.uk/>

<http://www.numeracyworld.com/index.html>

<http://www.mathszone.co.uk/>

<http://www.athena.bham.org.uk/old/PRNumeracy.htm>

<http://www.subtangent.com/maths/games.php>

English

<http://www.crickweb.co.uk/ks2literacy.html>

<http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/Games/educational/literacy2.htm>

<http://www.firstschoolyears.com/literacy/word/other/hfw/hfw.htm>

<http://www.roythezebra.com/reading-games-word-level.html>

<http://www.magickeys.com/books/index.html#books>

http://www.bgfl.org/bgfl/custom/resources_ftp/client_ftp/ks1/english/story_telling/index.htm

<http://www.mape.org.uk/startower/starpunc/index.htm>

IPC Explorers

<http://library.thinkquest.org/4034/>

<http://www.enchantedlearning.com/explorers/>

<http://www.myhero.com/myhero/go/directory/directory.asp?dir=explorer>

<http://schools.hpedsb.on.ca/smood/explore/pictures.htm>