



A BIG WELCOME TO YEAR 2!

There will be great markers throughout your child's life of the astounding development and progress that they make and Year 2 is one of the best for this! It is an immense year in which children develop at a rapid rate. Not only do we see rapid change but we encourage it! We aim to foster an environment within which increasing independence in all areas is encouraged.

Our philosophy is based around positivity and love; where fun, hard-work and respect for one another lie at the heart and if we feel valued, we are more likely to flourish. We encourage **confidence** in the children's own abilities and rewards and praise are at the forefront of our approach.

We recognise the efforts children make and place great value in this and in line with this, we like to focus on 'ipsative' assessment; where the progress is measured against our last attempt, not against our peers. This encourages the children to take charge of their own learning without fear of comparison. Every learning journey is different and just like the children, will unfold at different rates.

Ultimately, we want to have **fun**! It goes without saying that if we're having the right kind of fun - we'll always make better progress and effort will be effortless - especially when we sometimes forget that we are even learning!

ENGLISH

Literacy is obviously a very important element for us as it underpins learning in all other areas. It is split in to three areas:

Speaking and Listening is often overlooked but is a key area in Literacy and cannot be underestimated. It allows us to rehearse writing and explore and consolidate what we read and understand. It also aids us in building links between what we are learning!

Reading is **key** to accessing a lot of what we learn and as such a lot of time and effort is put into reading development. We endeavour to ensure that children will be part of guided reading sessions on a weekly basis. This includes reading aloud and talking about reading and understanding what we are reading; what we enjoy, how it makes us feel, and how the author has managed to take us on that journey. We are now deploying a different format to our reading scheme called Accelerated Reader. This will provide fantastic opportunities for the children to explore their comprehension as they get to take a short online quiz regarding the book they have read. This is excellent for us as educators as we are able to see the strengths and areas for improvement within comprehension of a text. We are also going to enjoy some DEAR time (Drop Everything And Read) each afternoon for 15 minutes. This means that all participants in class will spend some quality, independent reading time to practise our skills to ourselves.

It is imperative that children have the opportunity to read aloud and talk about their reading. In a recent study, those who read at home four times a week made, on average, four months greater progress than those who read just twice a week - the evidence speaks for itself - even in the busiest schedule, it is worth making the time for reading with your child regularly.

If you would like to explore this research further, these articles are very informative:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/documents/about/research/readtoyoungchild.pdf>

<http://www.cls.ioe.ac.uk/news.aspx?itemid=2740&sitesectionid=27>



The national curriculum splits reading into two dimensions:

Word reading - for year 2, this includes sight reading of High Frequency words and common exception words; reading words quickly and accurately moving on from sounding and blending and reading increasingly difficult texts automatically and without undue hesitation. This is taught through daily Phonics. **Phonics** is an important part of reading. The teaching of phonics focuses on the different combinations of letters. Your children will have at least four short sessions of phonics each week with those who are at a similar developmental stage.


Comprehension - where children are taught to understand what they read. They should be checking themselves, correcting and re-reading anything that doesn't make sense. They should also be able to talk about what the characters might be like from what they say and do as well as predicting what they think might happen - deepening their understanding. You may want to stop a story part way through and talk about it rather than simply having them read it aloud to you. They should also be encouraged to talk about what they like/dislike giving reasons for why they hold that opinion.

Writing - Handwriting is also practised on a weekly basis following a 'cursive' scheme. This means that the letters always begin on the line and end with a joining 'flick'. You may hear us repeating the phrase 'start on the line every time' as this helps children to remember their starting point when writing cursively.

This is the only alphabet taught to the children at this stage (except, of course, for the use of capital letters) and they are encouraged to use this all of the time. Then, when they are proficient at it, they move incredibly naturally on to joining as every letter will join naturally in its cursive form.

Writing is, of course, much more than spellings and handwriting. It's about composition - putting together something worth reading! We strive to make sure that each experience is a contextual learning experience. We encourage the children to use their imagination and develop their own style inspired by real reasons for writing. We then harness this enthusiasm and couple it with the skills needed to produce incredible writing for children so young! They will need to increase their stamina for writing, writing longer pieces as well as planning what they will write - talking it through first, including exciting new vocabulary and being able to read it aloud with good expression and intonation. Of course writing would be hard to understand without correct Grammar and Punctuation. In particular you may come across the 'sentence types' e.g. command sentences, exclamation sentences etc or conjunctions or expanded noun phrases. This kind of terminology will be used in our class and eventually by your children, along with an understanding of the use of this terminology.

Children will be expected to use capital letters and question mark as well as using exclamation marks in the correct places. They will also be developing their use of extra information and description to make their sentences more complex - also including using commas for example in a list and apostrophes in words where letters have been omitted such as can't.




Reading at home

READ, READ, READ! Both listening to your child read and reading to them regularly.

Key Questions

- Why has it happened?
- Why did the character act in this way?
- Find another word which also means...
- Is this sentence true or false?

- Use a variety of reading resources, encourage children to read for pleasure.
- Model correct pronunciation - get them to look at your face when you speak to them, this will help with their spelling.
- Model correct grammar and use of expression.
- Use the key questions to help your child develop greater inference skills.
- Use a dictionary and discuss the meanings of new words.



Useful skills in reading

Reading Strategies

Ideas to help your child read new words.

- Split a word up - segment
- Read past the difficult word and see if you can make sense of the sentence.
- Look at the first letter. What is the phoneme?
- Look at the second letter. Do they make a new phoneme together?
- Look and see if there are any little words in the difficult word. (chunks)
- Look at the pictures, to see what is going on.
- Check the end of the word for suffixes - er, ing, ed, est.
- Listen to what you are reading to see if it makes sense.
- Begin by looking for digraphs/trigraphs/split digraphs.



MATHS

Maths covers so many areas and it is not unusual for children to be naturally strong in one area whilst needing to work hard to achieve in other areas.

Number includes reading and writing numbers to 100; counting in steps of 2, 3, 5 and 10; and comparing numbers up to at least 100 such as sorting them and comparing which is greater or lesser. This also includes understanding what number means; partitioning 2 digit numbers into tens and ones and exploring other way to partition and manipulate the number given.

Calculation involves adding and subtracting mentally a single digit number or ten from two digit numbers and for some two 2-digit numbers. It also involves learning the 2, 3, 5 and 10 times tables. The children will need to recognise symbols such as the add, subtract, multiply and divide signs and solve problems using all four operations.

Our **Fraction** work includes recognising, naming and writing halves, thirds and quarters as well as two thirds and three quarters. This is normally in the context of a shape such as halves of a pizza, again, learning contextually.

In **Geometry (shape) and measures** we learn about 2D and 3D shapes including their properties - identifying the shapes and describing them. We also learn about the units used to measure capacity, length and mass (weight) as well as telling time to the nearest 5 minute interval.

For **Data** we learn to carry out surveys recording our data and displaying it in pictograms, tables and simple graphs.

The main areas that can be supported at home are **Times Tables** which can be learnt in the car or whilst walking from place to place, in many fun ways! There are also a great deal of **online games** and apps if you have a tablet device at hand - it's well worth a google search! Please also take great advantage of our subscription to **TimesTables Rockstars**; a fun and interactive way to learn times tables.

You could also support other areas for instance, when baking or cooking, allow your child to measure, or by allowing your children to use an analogue watch and asking them the time at different points during the day.

TOPIC

Topic lessons are perhaps the most exciting part of the curriculum for most children and they are an excellent way of **inspiring our learning**. We follow what we call '**The Creative Curriculum**' which means that we will find any creative way to learn! It involves being hands on and covers **all subjects**. Don't worry if you can't exactly pinpoint every individual subject every week, on balance they are all fully covered and in very creative ways! Sometimes we even forget that we are learning!

This may involve **theme days** but you will know about these well in advance and also **trips**. We will keep costs at a minimum for these but without your financial support in places, what we attempt will not be possible.



ROUTINES

Reading books will be changed on a weekly basis but not always on the same day. Please be patient with this. If you feel books need changing earlier than that, feel free to put a note in your child's home school link book and read a library book or book from home instead. Reading books will only be changed, however, if the children can talk about them with confidence and demonstrate full understanding so they may want to read them more than once and you may want to spend time chatting with them about their reading.

Behaviour. The school behaviour policy also encourages positivity by starting each day with a green. This is another key area which benefits from our positive ethos in Year 2. Please refer to our behaviour policy for further detail regarding sanctions given if a child is disruptive or misbehaves.

P.E- Our P.E sessions will take place on a Wednesday and another afternoon each week throughout the year until **Summer** term where we will replace the Friday P.E session with a swimming session. Please ensure that your child has a full P.E. kit in school all term. We often have other opportunities than those stated to engage in other P.E. activities, therefore it is important that kits are available at all times. This will be sent home at the end of each half term.

Jewellery- None to be worn on P.E. days. Earrings must be small studs only.

Attendance- it is imperative that your child/ren attend school. Lots of learning happens each and every day and therefore days off can impact greatly on your child/ren's education. Of course, illness cannot be helped and we are sympathetic of this.

Contact details- please ensure that your contact details are up-to-date with our office as we regularly contact parents via text messaging etc. Please ensure that your social media consent form are present and correct and handed into the office also.

Break times- As usual, a 15 minute break time will be taken in the morning where children can help themselves to a fruit snack and are encouraged to toilet at this time and an hour is given for lunch. The afternoon break is no longer at a set time, but will be given when there is a natural break in learning.

HOW YOU CAN HELP...

Encourage 100% attendance,
Check that FULL kits are available at school,
Reading at home **4 times a week**
(this one is our personal favourite- it really does help, see above for tips)
Practising multiplication/spellings,
Talking about school,
Communicate through the home-school link book (theses will be checked daily),
Finally, thank you for taking the time to read this and thank you for your continued support.
We really do appreciate it.
Kind regards, Year 2 team.