

Dear Otter class families and children,

Welcome to the first weekly newsletter of the year. Usually, I will aim to send these on Friday (and keep them much shorter than this).

Many of the children have already completed a lunch time duty, supporting staff in the hall by helping children clear their trays, serving water and generally looking after the younger pupils. There is a rota in place so each child will only do lunch duty once in 2 weeks, although we have lots of children who have offered to do it more often! We have also had lots of volunteers to support Year 5 in a transition period, as the new Badger class get to grips with looking after the huff and puff shed at lunchtimes.

On Friday, the first group of reading champions were appointed. They will work closely with Mr Shackleton to support and encourage a love of reading throughout the school. Well done to those children who have been chosen so far. More reading champions may join them later and we are also about to open applications for prefects and team captains. Lots of the children are already showing what amazing prefects and team captains they will be so I can't wait to see the applications.

### Attendance

Our class has had 100% attendance since the start of term! A huge thank you to you all for supporting the children to be in school every day and on time. Our new 08:45 start time allows us to complete a spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) starter each day, as well as our 5 maths questions. Being in school on time so that the children can complete both of these will really help the confidence our Year 6 children when it comes to the SATs.

### Homework

Well done everyone who completed their multiplication homework.

Homework books have now been given out and your child should have brought home two, one for maths, one for grammar. There is also a reading comprehension book. Homework will be set from 2 of these each week. It is set on a Monday and needs to be completed by the following Monday (the first grammar and maths tasks are due in tomorrow). The children know that I have offered to do a "homework club" on Wednesday lunchtimes for anyone who would rather get it done at school, knows they have busy evenings and won't have time at home, or is struggling with part/all of it and wants some help. If possible, please also encourage them to attempt the homework or at least read through it on Monday or Tuesday so they can talk to me on Wednesday if there is anything they are unsure of. Of course, they can come to me at any point if they are really finding something difficult. Homework shouldn't be stressful but should support the learning we do at school, encourage more independence and also prepare the children for high school.

Reading well and understanding what you read is vital for learning. Where possible, please read with your child at home as often as possible (3 times a week is great). All children have school reading books that they can bring home to read to you and will also benefit from you reading books to them too.

TTRS is not compulsory this term but is still available and I would encourage all children to still use it to keep up the speed of their multiplication fact recall.

### Residential

With the residential nearly here, I'm sure some nerves and worries will have started to creep in for a lot of the children. We have been talking regularly about what a great time they will have and how amazing it will feel to do something that they might find scary. We will talk again on Monday and Tuesday about growth mindset and

overcoming difficult things. We really hope that the children will discover on the residential that they can get through tough times and will be more resilient and ready to tackle any future challenges. Please catch me at the end of the day if there is anything you need to discuss about the residential or if anything big has come up for your child over the weekend so that we can make sure that (despite a few nerves) everyone is excited and ready to go!

### Learning this week

I'm sure your children will have told you about the round of SATs papers we have completed this week. I realise it may seem a bit mean to do this on the first full week back but it is important for me to know where each child is starting from and what we need to work on. I have been so impressed by the marks and by the way the children handled something which would have probably felt quite daunting. They all need to be super proud of themselves!

We have squeezed a lot into our first week and a half back. As well as the SATs papers, discussions about the residential (including what is happening for those not coming) and the subjects mentioned below, we've found time for Music, History, French, PE, Art and Science!

### Maths

We have still managed some "normal" maths lessons, between SATs papers, where we have been strengthening our knowledge of place value and numbers to 10,000,000.

### English

This half term is all about Art and Max. The children have been writing about different illustrations from the book, using inference to make predictions about what is happening and suggesting what might have happened before.

### History

In history, we introduced the Vikings. We looked at key dates, while thinking about the switch between conflict and peace.

### RE

In RE, we are investigating the question "Creation or Science: Conflicting or Complimentary?". We started by watching an animated film of the Oliver Jeffers book, Here We Are. Following this, we had a lovely conversation about the Earth, our responsibilities and our appreciation of what we have. We then started to look at the Christian idea of creation and had a great discussion about creation, science and beliefs. The children were so respectful and mature, it was really great to be part of. The children then started to do their own research about Christianity and creation, comparing this to the idea of creation from other religions.

### Computing

In computing, we looked at how data/information is sent across the internet, looking at IP addresses and data packets. We discussed how this can be used to work with someone on a project when you're not in the same room, or even the same country. The children then put this into action, working in groups to create e-books. The challenge was to work collaboratively using lots of good communication and team work, but in a silent classroom, using only the chat function on the e-book creator to communicate. They have made a great start on their books, which we will complete after the residential. It was lovely reading their messages as they were sending them. There was a lot of great teamwork and problem solving but also lots of really positive messages, complimenting work done by their team. The children really engaged with this activity and were actually disappointed that we had to finish as it was the end of the day. What a positive end to the week!

I hope you're all having a lovely weekend and the children are excited for the coming week.

Please feel free to come and chat at the end of the day if there's anything you need to discuss, or we can arrange an appointment if more than a quick chat is needed.