



All Souls' Catholic PRIMARY SCHOOL

Year 6 – Autumn Term Newsletter

Friday 14th September 2018

Dear Parent(s)/Carer(s),

Welcome back!

I hope everyone enjoyed a well-deserved, relaxing and fun summer break. I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself to those of you who do not already know me and outline some of the exciting things planned for this term. After having a short adventure in Year 4 last year, I am so excited to be back in Year 6 and feel privileged to have the opportunity to teach such a kind, caring and talented class for their final year of primary school.



Year 6 Expectations

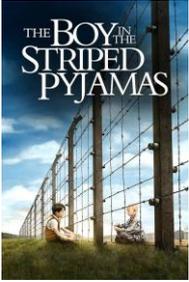
For many reasons, Year 6 will be the most important year of your child's educational life so far and the class have a lot ahead of them this year. Year 6 is very much a transitional year as the children reach the end of Key Stage 2, end their time in Primary Education and take their first steps towards adulthood. They have already made a strong start by getting stuck into the packed curriculum and completing some tricky, but necessary, baseline tests. I am confident that the class is capable of rising to the challenges presented by Year 6 and they have already shown this by establishing themselves as positive role models as the oldest children in the school.

As the oldest children, there is an expectation that they will set the example to the rest of school, in terms of their appearance, behaviour and attitude towards school life. Each morning we expect the children to arrive at school on time, in full school uniform and organised for the day ahead. It now needs to become very much their responsibility (not yours!) to ensure that this is the case so, if you need to, take a step back and allow them to learn to organise themselves, even if it goes wrong to begin with! The children are in the process of being awarded jobs and responsibilities that they will carry out in the classroom and throughout the school. This gives the children more opportunities to develop their organisational skills and practise being reliable and supportive members of the school. Children are expected to complete these jobs autonomously and to the best of their abilities.

The Year 6 curriculum is a very tightly packed one and it is vital that we use our time in the classroom efficiently this year. The children will be expected to work harder and more quickly than in previous years in order to cover the necessary amount of work. There will not be time available for children to finish off work that is not completed within the lesson, so there may be times when they will be expected to work through parts of their lunch times or take unfinished work home to complete. We ask that all children complete each piece of work to the best of their ability and organise it clearly, in accordance with the expectations of the school's policy for presentation. Where work falls below this standard, children will be asked to repeat the work in their own time.

Autumn Term Curriculum

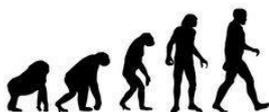
This year, All Souls' have tailored the curriculum to make it more enjoyable and engaging for the children. With this in mind, each term, every year group will have their own curriculum theme which will begin with a launch day and end with a celebration day. Our first curriculum title, launched on Monday, is 'Heroes and Villains'. This unit ties together our History unit 'World War II' with our English text 'The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas' and will involve some exciting pieces of work in Art, DT and Computing. Below is an overview of the curriculum that will be covered in Year 6 this term. However, like all good plans, there is likely to be some variance as the term progresses; this will be updated as and when necessary:



English: Our class text for the first term is 'The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas' by John Boyne. This is a fascinating fictional story based around the Holocaust linking in with our History unit on WWII and also provides fantastic discussion points surrounding the British Values. I am excited to see how this novel will come to life through their writing in a variety of forms including descriptive writing, formal and informal correspondence, diary writing and narrative. This will be supplemented with discrete spelling, grammar and punctuation lessons to support their progression in this area. This book will also provide many fantastic and interesting opportunities to help develop our reading comprehension skills.

Maths: We have already begun our first unit building on their knowledge of place value to understand the meaning and value of numbers in order to prepare them for the challenging maths this term has to offer including problems involving the four operations, co-ordinate grids, shape and fractions. It is even more important that your child's times tables and related division facts are secure as this is an aspect of maths that provides the foundations to many other areas. Any extra practice at home would be of great benefit!

RE: We are beginning with 'Prayers in the followers of Christ' as we develop our knowledge and understanding of the traditional prayers of the Church and some of the signs and actions associated with prayer. We will also study some prayers that are found in the scriptures and engage in the study of the Mass as the central prayer for Catholic Christians. Children will also begin their unit of Sacramental preparation for Confirmation in which they will explore the signs and symbols of Confirmation and gain an understanding of the gift of the Holy Spirit which they will be receiving.



Science: For the first half-term, our topic will be 'Evolution and Inheritance' which will be followed by the topic of 'Light' for the second half-term.

Geography: 'Locations & Landmarks'.

History: 'World War II'.

Art: We will be focusing on Pop Art, looking at Roy Lichtenstein and Andy Warhol.



DT: Anderson Shelters

PE: Disc Sports and Orienteering (Please note that this term's PE lessons will take place on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Children are expected to have their full PE kit with them on both of these days).

Music: Song writing

As I am sure you are already aware, we are fortunate enough to have Mrs O'Shea joining our team this year. She will be teaching Year 6 every Thursday to allow myself to continue to work towards achieving my National Professional Qualification for Middle Leadership. We have organised the timetable so that Mrs O'Shea will be teaching the Science, Geography and History aspects of the curriculum to ensure routine and continuity for the children.

Homework

This year, children will continue to receive homework tasks which focus on their reading and regular practice of times tables and spellings. These basic skills are vital to their education. Keeping their knowledge sharp and learning to apply them in different ways will greatly benefit them this year. Homework will be set on a Monday and be due in the following Monday. If a child does not complete their homework or hand it in on time, they will be expected to attend Homework Club.

Reading – Reading is the most valuable homework that your child could ever do and in Year 6 it is expected that they read for about 15 minutes each day outside of school. Whether loved or loathed, everybody has to read to get about their daily lives and so if your child has no interest in developing their reading as a passion, then they must develop it as a skill! They have been provided with a home reading record which should be completed frequently, detailing what they are reading and with whom. I ask for your support in encouraging and monitoring your child's reading, and that you sign their reading record each week to confirm that what is detailed is a true record (even if it says that they haven't read anything!). This should be brought into school by your child each Monday so that either I or Mrs Elkins can sign it. Your child may still be on our school reading scheme, in which case they will bring a specific book home to read and return it to school to be changed. If this is not the case, then they are classed as a 'free reader' and may choose material of an appropriate ability to read. Please remember that reading is reading, and that reading the sport section of the newspaper with a certain level of interest is far more beneficial than pretending to read a Harry Potter book! Please also remember that, whatever your child's reading ability, there is much to be gained from spending time reading with your child and discussing books. Don't battle with your child over reading! If you are really struggling to get them to do it, talk to me and I'll battle with them instead.

Spelling – Every Monday, Year 6 will be tested on their spelling. Children will be given a list that they will be tested on and will be provided with 2-3 opportunities each week to practise skills to help them remember them. Children who practise their spelling at home as well will always have more success in their spellings tests.

Times tables – Children will be tested on their times tables at least once a week. We will practise and rehearse these in lessons and discuss ways to remember and apply their times tables knowledge. Again, it is vital that children practise their times tables at home in order to continually improve. Dedicated times tables practice at home as well as at school will have a great impact on the speed and accuracy of their maths as well as boost their confidence.

Curriculum Theme Homework Task – Each term, after the curriculum theme launch day, children will receive an additional home learning task linked to their topic for which they will have several weeks to complete it in and the freedom to choose how to respond to it. We hope that this will enable the children to showcase their interests and individuality and look forward to seeing their hard work and talents.

Other – Children may also be given short weekly tasks to complete in preparation for their SATs. We strive to ensure that all homework handed to children is purposeful and therefore we ask for your support with this.

Residential Trip to Plas Dol-y-Moch

As you will be aware, Year 6 are due to visit Plas Dol-y-Moch during the 4th – 8th December 2018. You should have already received a letter providing further details; please return the attached reply slip as soon as possible so that we can make further arrangements. We are all really looking forward to it and are sure that it will be the highlight of the year. Should you have any questions regarding this residential trip, please let me know.

Sacrament of Confirmation

Confirmation is due to take place on Sunday 26th May 2018. Your child will soon be considering who they are going to ask to be their sponsor and also researching the Saint whose name they will be adopting. We have highlighted the

importance of taking the time to make such decisions. Sponsors do need to be above the age of 16 and a practising Catholic. The children are very keen to be Confirmed and take on the responsibility of becoming full adult members of the church and I am looking forward to guiding them on this journey of faith with the help of Mr Cooke, Mrs Quinn and Father Michael. Father Michael is encouraging children receiving this Sacrament to attend Mass regularly and be seen to support the Parish. He has arranged this year for regular meetings with the Confirmandi and their parents and/or sponsor. Further details about the programme can be found in the letter which has recently been sent home. Please continue to check the diary and the website for any updates or changes to the Confirmation programme.

Prayer Friends

A responsibility which goes with being in Year 6 is becoming a 'Prayer Friend' to a child who has just entered Reception. As a prayer friend, your child will become a layer of support for them, looking after them on the playground when necessary, talking to them about school, and accompanying them to Mass in school time, modelling how to behave and engage in prayer. Being a Prayer Friend is something which all Year 6 children love and take very seriously – and many long term friendships have begun from Prayer Friends.

SATs

All Year 6 children working within National Curriculum requirements are legally obliged to participate in end of Key Stage 2 Statutory Assessment Tests (SATs) which identify the attainment of children in Reading, Writing and Mathematics for national comparison. These tests will take place on the week beginning 13th May 2019. It is crucial that your child attends school during this week. During the coming months, further information and guidance regarding SATs will be issued to you. SATs are not something which either you or your child should be worried about – that is our job! Instead, they should be approached as an opportunity to showcase everything they have learned throughout their time in Key Stage 2.

School Website

Please visit the Year 6 class page on the school website to see what we have been up to by reading our blog which will be updated weekly. You will also find a section for letters and another for homework where you can access digital copies of the work set each week, should the paper copies become lost.

I am extremely excited about the year ahead and look forward to helping your children develop academically, socially, emotionally and spiritually – as well as having some fun along the way too, of course! I also look forward to working closely with you and meeting you at the open evening in October. In the meantime, should you have any questions, comments or concerns that you would like to raise with me, please make no hesitation in arranging to come into school to discuss them.

Kind regards,

Jo Hartwell
Year 6 Class Teacher

Sarah Elkins
Year 6 Teaching Assistant