

We are a global community, learning and growing together.



Thursday 7th September 2017

Dear Parents

Welcome back! I hope that you have all had a lovely summer break. The beginning of a new school year is always exciting . even more so this year as I return to St Barnabas after a year away. I am certainly looking forward to all that this year holds and I am delighted that we have made such a positive start to our time together in Year 5.

Our lessons in Term 1a:

Over the course of this first half of the term, our topic will be '*Scarabs and Sarcophagi*'. We will be learning all about The Egyptians as part of our History and Geography study. We will be studying fiction linked to our topic in our English sessions as well as focusing on the technical side of comprehension, spelling, punctuation and grammar. We will also usually have one session of extended independent writing each week. In Maths, we will continue to consolidate and extend our work in number, shape, measures, geometry, algebra and problem solving. Our Science unit this term will teach us more about forces and we will be learning all about our family in French. In Computing, we will be investigating the internet and improving our research skills. Our focus for RE is Islam and in PE we will be working on netball and football (more information about PE is included below). In our Art and Design sessions this term, we will be looking at Egyptian artefacts and creating our own models of scarab beetles and sarcophagi (complete with miniature mummies!).

Each week, we will also have a Philosophy for Children (P4C) session. This links to all areas of the curriculum and gives us a chance to think about big questions and issues that make us think hard about things. Watch this space and don't be surprised if the children start asking big questions over breakfast!

PE:

PE this year will be on **Thursday and Friday** afternoons. Your child will need to have a PE kit in school on both of those days. Please make sure your child has a t-shirt, shorts (or trousers and jumper for colder weather) and trainers with a good grip. If your child has longer hair, they will be required to tie it back for PE lessons. They may not be permitted to take part in the PE session if they do not have correct kit.

Music:

This year, Year 5 have been given an exciting opportunity to try something completely new: As a class, we are going to be having ukulele lessons. We will be having short blocks of lessons taught throughout the year on a **Wednesday** afternoon with time in between each block to practise what we have been learning. Lessons will be delivered by Mr Shelton. The school have bought a class set of ukuleles that will be available for children to use each week. However, if you would prefer your child to have their own instrument, we would be very happy for you to buy one of the school ukuleles from us at cost price (£31) so that your child can then keep it throughout the year and beyond. Please do let me know if this is something you would like to do. Not only will it mean your child has their own instrument (and that keen parents can also have a sneaky go at home!) but it will also help hugely to offset the cost to the school.

Homework:

Over the course of the year, homework in Year 5 will be set in a variety of ways. I will let you know at the start of each term what format this will take. This term, I will set spellings each week. These will be set on a **Monday** and tested the **following Monday**. The children will also have access to Mathletics to help them practise and consolidate their Maths skills. As we start a new year, I would also like to see the children get excited about learning and excited about things that really matter to them. Therefore, this term, I will be asking the children to plan their own research project on any topic that interests them. The children and I will agree an individual focus together and then they will have the rest of the term to work on something of their choice at home. Each week, I will ask the children to provide me with a quick update about how their projects are progressing and we can talk about any problems or questions they may have. At the end of the term, our experts will present their work to the rest of the class. I'm hoping that we inspire each other to find new



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interests we've never even thought about before. The children and I will be talking about this in more detail next week and I will explain it in more detail at the curriculum meeting (see over).

Trips:

During the school year, we try to ensure that children have as many out of school learning experiences as possible. I will always provide information about these trips by letter, giving you as much notice as possible about planned events. Our first trip out will be taking place on **Monday 18th September**. We are heading to the Museum of the History of Science to take part in a workshop linked to our topic and English work. I will send information about this early next week once all the details have been finalised.

Events coming up this term:

Wednesday 13th September . Roald Dahl Day (in school . letter to follow)

Thursday 14th September pm Y5 & 6 Egyptian Workshop (in school . letter to follow)

Friday 29th September 12:30-2pm Visit to Ashmolean Egyptian Gallery . story planning (letter to follow)

Tuesday 10th October 12:30- 2pm Visit to Ashmolean Egyptian Gallery . writing on location! (letter to follow)

Tuesday 10th October International Evening

Wednesday 18th October Music Concert (Years 1,3 and 5)

Other events may also take place over the course of the term. Please look out for letters.

Benny's Buddy Award:

This year, you and your family may be seeing a little more of a new member of our class. Benny the Sheep will be joining us in Year 5. Although he enjoys lessons, he needs to get out and about. Benny is a model member of the class. Every week, he will be watching out for someone in the class who has been working exceptionally well or who has been a superb model of our values. That person will be named Benny's Buddy of the week. Benny will have the chance to come home to spend the weekend with his chosen child. He will come armed with a notebook. Over the weekend, Benny will need help to write an account of his adventures. Benny must be looked after really well and should come back with your child on Monday morning accompanied by his book. We will then hear all about what he has been up to. This should create a wonderful log of his adventures over the year and act as a fantastic way to ensure we keep practising our writing!

I will be holding a curriculum meeting at **3pm on Thursday 14th September**. It will give us an opportunity to meet to talk about the coming year, routines and expectations and for me to answer any initial questions you may have. I will also provide information about Year 5 objectives and other curriculum information which I hope you will find useful. If you are unable to attend the meeting, please do let me know and we can find an alternative time to meet. I am always very grateful for offers of help and contributions of interests and expertise and would be very happy to welcome you to the classroom to help with, or lead, sessions. If you would be interested in coming in to help or if you, or anyone you know, has any skills or opportunities for visits related to our topics, please do come and speak to me.

Finally, please know that my door is always open. Please do not hesitate to come and see me if you have any questions or concerns. If I am not able to speak to you immediately, I would be very happy to arrange a mutually convenient time to meet.

I very much look forward to seeing you at the curriculum meeting next week and to working with you and your child over the coming year.

Yours sincerely,

Helen Manley
Class Teacher