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Monday 8th January 2018

Dear Parents

Welcome back! I hope that you have all had a lovely holiday and that this marks the start of a happy and healthy new year for us all. I have been very impressed with the way in which the children have come back to school this term. They have been settled, focused and enthusiastic – particularly about our new topic. More on that below!

Our lessons in Term 2a:

Over the course of this half of the term, our topic will be '*Chocolate*'. History will lead our topic focus as we learn more about The Ancient Mayan Civilisation, their society, culture, beliefs and their impact on the modern world. In English this term, as well as working on our reading comprehension skills and continuing to focus on the technical side of spelling, punctuation and grammar, we will be linking our fiction work to our topic. We will be exploring Mayan Myths and Legends, turning these into scripts and then using our computing sessions to design and produce short animations in order to bring these myths to life. We will continue to have one session of extended independent writing each week.

In Maths, we will be focusing on improving and perfecting our arithmetic skills. Our focus for RE is Islam where we will be looking at the importance of the Mosque and in PE we will be working on gymnastics and fitness. In our Art and Design sessions this term, we will be completing our planetariums from last term before moving on to make Mayan masks.

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. This term, we will be working on how to generate philosophical questions from a given stimulus.

PE:

There have been a few issues with children not having a change of clothes for PE sessions. All children are expected to have a change of clothes (and shoes!) for PE lessons on **Thursdays** and **Fridays**. This is particularly important in the upper key stage, not only for reasons of personal hygiene but also because we do try to take the children outside for PE as much as possible – rain does not always mean we head inside! Your child may be very soggy if they do not have a change of clothes. At this point in the year, the ground can also get very muddy, so a change of shoes is essential. Please make sure trainers have a good grip as things can get a little slippery.

Ukulele:

I am delighted to let you know that 'Hughkulele' is due back this term to continue our ukulele lessons. We are very grateful to Miss Lea for stepping in while Hugh has been off, but he's very excited to be coming back. Ukulele sessions will return to a **Wednesday afternoon**, so please make sure that if your child brings their ukulele home, they remember to bring it in to school each **Wednesday**.

Homework:

Spellings

This term, we will continue to use homework to learn and practise our spellings. They will be set on a Monday and tested the following Monday as usual.

Maths

This term, I will be setting a 'Weekly Maths Workout'. Each week, your child will receive 6-8 questions linked to different aspects of the Y5 curriculum to complete for homework. Your child should feel free to use any resources they need to help them complete the task. For example, if there is a question on simplifying fractions and they need a reminder of how to do this, they can use online resources, books or human resources (!) to help them. Children should complete their



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work in their green homework books and hand them in on Mondays. We will mark them together on a Monday in class.

Whole School Write-a-thon

As part of our whole school Write-a-thon (your child has been told about this and information will be in the newsletter) every child across the whole school will be encouraged to complete a writing task each week of this term. Each task will have a different focus. The children will also be given a log book to keep a record of their completed tasks which will be signed off by their class teacher when the piece of writing is completed. When we have completed the 5 weekly tasks, there will be a sharing assembly so that we can all see each other's work. In addition, everyone in the school who completes the 5 writing tasks to an acceptable standard will then be rewarded with an afternoon of Golden Time at the end of the process where a variety of different activities will be on offer. Year 5 will have these tasks set on a Monday and they should be completed at home before being handed in for sign-off the following week.

Events coming up this term:

Wednesday 24th January: Y5 Charlie and the Chocolate Factory Science Workshop (whole day in school – letter to follow)

Friday 26th January: Concert Sheldonian 10-11.30am (letter to follow)

Wednesday 31st January: Mayan Workshop at the Pitt Rivers (12:30-2:30pm – letter to follow)

Thursday 8th February: Y5 to Forest School all day.

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

Finally, please remember that my door is always open. Please do not hesitate to come and see me if you have any questions or concerns or if you or your child have something exciting or important to share.

Many thanks for all that you do to support your child and the school. It is always hugely appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Helen Manley
Class Teacher