



**WHITMINSTER ENDOWED C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
A FAMILY, A FOUNDATION, A FUTURE

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Head Teacher: Mrs L Hinkley

Friday 11<sup>th</sup> September 2020

Dear Parents of Class 4!

Firstly, I would like to start by saying how brilliant it is to be back in school with a class full of children. It has been a great start to the term and I know we will have a fantastic year together. It is such a shame that we can't meet in person, the way we usually do, especially as there are many parents this year who's children I have not taught before and it would be great to meet you properly. Many of the expectations and routines of being in class 4 are the same as you will have experienced further down the school, but I will outline a few below. If you have any questions, please do ask; Covid permitting, my door is always open!

With such a disrupted year of learning this calendar year in school, it has been noticeable that concentration levels and output of work has dropped a little. This will build up again of course, and I am not concerned at all. However, the class on the whole are very chatty at the moment and as such, I am trying to reinforce the need to knuckle down and put in maximum effort into their work, as well as outline my expectations for more independence and responsibility for their own learning as they come towards the end of their time in Primary education. Currently, we are trying to catch up on any areas the children missed in the summer term, before beginning this year's topics after the half term break.

SATS:

Many of the year 6 children have already expressed mild concerns that the year will be SATs focused and that we will only do English and Maths! While this is not true, there is no escaping the fact that these tests have to be taken and it is in the school's interests for the children to do well. I do stress this latter point to them and simply ask that they try their hardest and enjoy the success that this brings for them; I do try to make sure that they understand that these exams make absolutely no difference to their long term futures and therefore they do not need to worry about them. I always try ensure we have lots of fun in Class 4 and we will be covering the whole curriculum. The value I put forward to them is work hard to play hard; in other words, if they put the effort in for me, we can enjoy ourselves much more!

During terms 4 and 5, we do sometimes use some of the afternoon time to revise for the tests in May, but any missed subject time here is always made up for in the summer term after the tests. For those parents of year 5 children wondering about how this affects their children, I would say that historically the practice has always helped their progress, as the content of the tests covers Year 3 work up to Year 6. It also helps them in their final year, as they know what to expect! The only SATs based activity that we do practice regularly is a 40 mark, half an hour arithmetic test, that we will be undertaking every 7 to 10 days. This has helped hugely with retention and practice of the many arithmetic methods that the children need to know in all their maths and the children really enjoy being able to see their progress in the scores they achieve as they learn more throughout the year. We have already had our first one and many of the children were pleasantly surprised with what they were able to remember after so long away from the classroom. One small plea, is that in order to really help progress in maths in years 5 and 6, multiplication tables really need to be fluent, so please do regularly practice these with your children if you can!

Homework:

Homework is still being ironed out, in terms of what it will look like and how it will be marked. My plan at the moment is to either set some on purple mash (logins can be requested if your child misplaces them), or send work home. I will usually set homework on a Tuesday. It will need to be completed and brought into school by the following Monday; where we will mark this together in class. Feedback will be given to your



children at this time and team points awarded for effort and completion of the work. The homework itself will usually be a comprehension exercise for reading, and some maths based around work we have covered in the previous few lessons.

#### P.E:

P.E will be taught on a Thursday afternoon. As we are doing all of our allotted PE time on one day, the children should come to school dressed in their PE kits and stay in them all day. Warm tracksuits and hooded tops are fine for the winter months, although we will mainly be in the hall during this time.

#### Covid-19:

Thank you for being so patient with us during both Lockdown and the return to school. It does feel odd still that we are not quite the close community that we have enjoyed for so long. We are committed as a staff to keeping both the children, their families and each other as safe as possible. As you will be aware, we have restricted the number of items being brought into the school, as well as taken home. Children do not need pencil cases – all stationary is provided to them (as it always is!) and these are kept in a zip-lock bag and stored in their drawers. Rucksacks should be left at home if possible and only a small bag for their packed lunch and a water bottle are required. Snacks at break time should be fruit or vegetables and we will remind the children not to consume most of their packed lunch at this time! With regard to reading books, I will not be writing in their reading journals. However, it would be much appreciated if they could keep these up to date, and if you hear them read, it is always lovely to see your comments. I would really appreciate it if they could bring in a book from home to read at school and leave there, or have one of the school books to read each day. This means that they always have something consistent to read and we are not transferring books between locations. Once they complete a book, they can bring it home and leave it for 72 hours, or put it on the quarantine shelf if it belongs to the school.

#### Walking Home:

It is part of the growing up process that many children begin walking home when they reach Class 4. Please could I ask that if you haven't done so, and you would like your children to walk home, that you let the school know in writing, just so we have it on record!

I look forward to a fantastic year ahead and, fingers crossed, seeing you soon.

Kind regards

Alex Wright

