

Autumn Term

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back! And welcome to your new class...Hares!

I hope you all had a wonderful summer holiday and are fully rested in preparation for the long and busy term ahead.

## Reading

Reading in school can take many forms and children in Hares class will take part in a range of reading activities including formal group reading sessions, reading comprehensions and as an integrated part of lessons. A big emphasis is placed on encouraging children to become confident independent readers who can read a wide range of literature and gain a secure understanding of what is being read.

It is expected that every child has a reading book of their choice in school every day; there is no set time or day for quiet independent reading so the children need to be prepared for this to happen at any point of their week. It is important for the children to make their own choices about what they read, selecting books that engage and interest them. When children get to make genuine independent choices about their reading material it increases the likelihood they engage more in reading, and increases their effort and commitment to reading. Research shows children who read independently become better readers, score higher on achievement tests in all subject areas and have greater content knowledge than those who do not. The amount of free reading done outside of school has also consistently been found to relate to growth in vocabulary, reading comprehension, verbal fluency and general information. As reading skills improve, children are better prepared to comprehend other classroom reading materials and subjects.

This year, across the school, but particularly in years 5 and 6, there will be a big push on reading, as class teachers we will read to the children daily from books that will offer rich vocabulary, settings and characterisation that challenge and story plots that offer the opportunity to use their imagination, question and inspire... brilliant writers are born from the books they are exposed to.

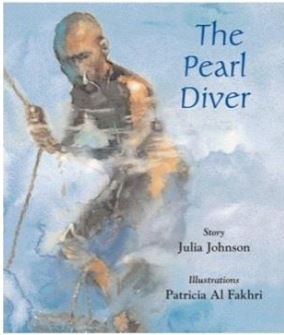
Alongside the books the children will read, and be read to in class, the children will use a magpie 'wow' word books; the idea of these is that they will be responsible for transferring vocabulary they have seen and heard into a mini dictionary that they can use in their own writing to help build on their vocabulary choices. They will have access to these books all day and will be encouraged to use them all of the time...watch out for year 5's writing to rocket!

Reading Journals – Children will keep a formal reading record as they have done in previous years. However, new to Year 5 and 6 this year are hardbacked diaries. Children will be expected to read everyday and record in their diary what they have read and how many pages etc. Please remember that reading comes in many forms... a story book, information book or page on a website, a magazine of interest, a recipe book etc the list is endless!

## English

I am looking forward to sharing our class books with your children, the first book we will read, enjoy and study is *The Great Wave* by Veronique Massenot, this is a story book inspired by the Japanese artist Hokusai who painted 36 views of Mount Fuji. The 'Great Wave' is one of his most famous pieces... hopefully (fingers crossed!) by the end of term you will be able to see our recreations of this wonderful painting!!





Following on from this book we continue to read stories from other cultures when we read 'Pearl Diver' by Julia Johnson. Long before the discovery of oil, pearl diving and fishing were the main sources of income in the Arabian Gulf. The life of a diver was full of hardships and dangers and so the story will take the children on an adventure, below the seas surface, in search of pearls. We will use this book in our English lessons, art and geography. The artwork within the book beautifully recreates scenes from both above and below the waters of the Arabian Gulf, we will use water colour, oil pastels and wax resist paintings to show these scenes.

### The timetable

The timetable in year 5 moves around regularly, depending upon the needs of the children, the subject content and other timetable pressures. I will write a daily timetable up for the children so that they are aware of what is happening and give them as much notice of big changes so that they remain in routine as much as possible.

In science this term the children are studying 'living things and their habitats' which will cover topics such as the life cycle and reproduction of a flowering plant, insect and amphibians.

Our geography topic this term is mountains, volcanoes and earthquakes. The children will learn the key features of each type, how they are formed, we will do some map/compass work and look at how to read OS maps, the lessons will also cover the effects of volcanic eruptions and earthquakes. I am hoping there will also be an opportunity to model these in papier mache.

### PE

For this term, Hares will have PE on a Tuesday and a Wednesday. Where possible, weather dependant, all PE lessons this term will be outside. It is imperative that children have the right kit, they must have warm tracksuit bottoms and a top that can add additional layers as the temperature begins to cool. Children cannot do PE in their school shoes, they must have a second pair of trainers, this is for their own safety as some school shoes are not appropriate for PE, it is also to limit the damage made to expensive shoes and protect the classroom carpet when they return to the classroom after lessons. PE is part of the national curriculum and cannot be opted out of, if your child has an injury or illness and you feel it would be wise for them to miss PE then a note from home is needed. If children do not have the correct PE kit reminder letters will be sent home. Can I also ask that all PE kit and shoes are named; you'll be amazed how many children claim 'they aren't my trainers!'

The outdoor sessions for autumn term will focus on sports that use a ball, such as football, basketball and netball. The children will practice the skill elements of controlling and passing a ball, the importance of different playing positions such as defence and attack, tactics and rules as well as match play. And also cross-country; running skills and games to build stamina. Our Wednesday sessions for autumn 1 are being taught by Premier sports and the children will have uni-hock followed by rugby. For autumn 2 the children will have gymnastics, taught by Hannah Palframan, who the children have now had for the past 3 years, the great thing about having Hannah back in school is that she now knows the children well, she knows their areas of strength and areas to develop so she can offer PE lessons that cater to each of the children's needs. We are really fortunate to be able to offer this opportunity to the children as gymnastics is a challenging lesson to teach for a class teacher, the children get lots out of these lessons and really enjoy them.

On the occasions where we do need to come indoors for PE and for the gymnastic lessons the children must have shorts and t-shirt, it gets very warm inside and particularly for gymnastics jumping and stretching in tracksuit bottoms is not easy.

Please note that all PE kit must conform to the uniform policy. Furthermore, earrings are to be removed or not to be worn on PE days and long hair needs to be tied back.

## **French**

This year French will be taught by a specialist language teacher Madam Moden, who will be coming in weekly on a Wednesday morning. Once again the children are fortunate to be taught a foreign language by a specialist French teacher, having 45 minutes every week.

## **Homework**

Homework will be sent home on a Tuesday and will be due in on a Monday, it will alternate weekly between maths and English, the maths will always be a follow up on a lesson they have covered in class. I advise the children to look at their homework Wednesday night when they get it so that they have time Thursday and Friday to ask for help in school. The homework should take no longer than 30-45 minutes and certainly shouldn't cause upset or arguments at home, the children should be able to do the homework themselves with some small support from yourselves. Any concerns over homework please pop in.

## **Spellings**

Spellings this year will continue to follow the same pattern sounds for each year group as previous but the way in which we teach them will be slightly different. We will be sending further details of this to you very shortly.

## **Help**

If you have any free time and are interested in coming in to help listen to readers or work with a small group in class then please get in touch, the children really benefit from extra help in class and we always have room for extras 😊

Meanwhile, if you have any queries, concerns or questions, please do not hesitate to ask. I hope that this year will be an exciting, enriching and rewarding year for everybody in Hares Class and I very much hope that you will join us in helping to make this happen.

Best wishes and thank you in anticipation for all your support,

Jane Warner and Hannah Tyzack

