

## Autumn Term 2017 in Rowan Tree Class

Rowan Tree Class has had a cracking beginning to the new school year and we have got off to a flying start. Year 3 children, who may have felt a little unsure to begin with, are quickly becoming familiar with life in their new class.



Year 4 children offer a fantastic role model to their new classmates as they rapidly build on the knowledge they acquired last year. This is going to be a busy term and the added fact of the class sharing two teachers over the week means that getting routines and procedures in place has been our priority, but the class is coping well with this. Much of our work this term will focus on our whole school topic “Our World” with links made across curriculum areas, as outlined below.

In History we are exploring the Victorians, specifically the lives of Victorian children at school. We can see the legacy of this in our own Victorian establishment and the children will be getting to learn the history of Garboldisham Primary School and the system of education at this time. In Art, as well as Design & Technology we will be making several links throughout the term to this topic by, first, looking at typical food for children and having a go at making our own Victorian lunch – nothing fancy mind! Closer to Christmas, we will be learning about the traditions of decorations and cards and will be designing our own Victorian Christmas cards. Other elements of art and Design will link more broadly to the Victorian era and the students will be making their own Stephenson’s Rocket trains from recycled materials. A request for materials collected from home will be sent shortly.

In Geography, the class is studying the coast, rivers and mountains. We will be learning about how they are formed, how they are used by humans and animals, whereabouts in the world major examples are found, and where local examples are. (Perhaps not the mountains!) We go outdoors regularly for outdoor education, where we look at our natural environment close up. We are teaching the children to make assessments of their activities so that they can be safer and more confident outdoors.

Our first job in Literacy is to ensure that sentence construction is secure and that children understand the different functions that nouns, adjectives, verbs and adverbs perform in a sentence to ensure they can express themselves accurately. To link to our Victorian topic, some of their Literacy classes will get them looking at examples of Victorian literature from the Bronte sisters to Thomas Hughes. As we approach the end of term we will look at the seasonal classic, A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens. Literacy will also be addressed through Guided Reading groups, which have just started, and through individual reading sessions delivered by Mrs Halliwell. The children bring their reading books home each day and need to ensure they return them the next day. Getting students into a regular reading habit every day will boost their abilities in spelling, sentence construction and vocabulary choice enormously. Each time you read with your child, please record it in their reading record, writing the date, title of the book and the pages that have been read. We are very keen to promote reading for pleasure and a life-long love of reading and really appreciate your support with this.

Spellings will be issued each Tuesday to be tested the following Tuesday. The children learn spellings from the Year 3 /4 statutory spelling lists, as well as families of words which share letter groupings.

The children in Rowan Tree class have the benefit of being taught mathematics by two teachers; Mr. Jones and Mrs Nightingale. Mr Jones teaches the whole class number work, while Mrs Nightingale focusses on time, shape, data handling, area and volume and teaches the smaller year groups separately. Science follows the theme of Our World. The children have been taught how to plan, carry out and record experiments fairly, to introduce them to good scientific practice. They are taught in year groups for this during the carousel of lessons. In the coming months they will investigate materials and how they can change state.

In PSHE and RE the class has started to think about the things that are important to them and that money cannot buy. The RE focus will more specifically begin to tie into our Victorian topic and will look at Victorian attitudes towards religion. A visit to the Methodist church will prompt the children to think about the religious views and activities at this point in history.

We will be having fortnightly French lessons on alternate Wednesday afternoons. The aim is to be able to explore our world through this beautiful language and will focus on topics ranging from: understanding the days of the week and months of the year; counting; being able to introduce ourselves; give basic information to each other; and explain our likes, dislikes and hobbies.

The children are offered a wonderful variety of music lessons this year. Mr V visits on Wednesday afternoons to teach the whole class recorders. James offers guitar tuition on Wednesday mornings and children can also participate in violin and piano classes with Frances. ICT will focus on the safe use of the internet through cross-curricular research, along with the practical aspects of keyboard skills. These will be developed through topic activities and writing articles of the school newsletter.

Please ensure that your child has their PE kit in school throughout the week. They should bring it home on a Friday to be washed for Monday. Also, the children need outdoor and indoor shoes for school every day, a good pair of wellies and a warm, waterproof coat – especially on Mondays! Now that the weather has become very autumnal, keeping the children suitably warm and dry is key. Thank you for your support in this!

We have both very much enjoyed getting to know the class so far and have high hopes for lots of achievements and exciting work this year. There will always be a member of staff on the gate in the morning and in the playground at the end of the day if you would like to speak to someone about any queries you might have. Or if your child has any worries, is feeling under the weather, or has anything else going on that you think might have an impact on their learning, please do not hesitate to speak to us.

We hope that your child will enjoy a fantastic year in Rowan Tree Class.

Ms. McGahey, Mr Jones and Lorraine Sheldrake