

# LANGDON PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

Issue 2 –October 2023



What a busy term we had last term and a great start to the school year. This year the teachers are working on revising and improving our curriculum to ensure that children really do get the best learning opportunities. To make sure that you know what your child is learning they will send you a 'Knowledge Organiser' home each term which tells you all about the main topic that the children are studying and what core information they need to know by the end of that topic. For some English lessons, our writing and reading focus will be linked to the topic too so that children become immersed in the subject and develop strong and sustained learning links that they can use in future lessons.

So, how can you use the Knowledge Organiser to support your child's learning this term? Well, you can do almost anything that will encourage your child to learn the key information on the organiser or to support their experience of the topic so that their learning becomes memorable. The following are a few ideas that you can use:

1. Make a set of flashcards that include all of knowledge items that your child needs to know and use them in quizzes with your child. How many answers can they get right?
2. Ask your child to tell you all they can about the items on the organiser and then add to that information by talking about what they missed and about what you know too.
3. Give your child key vocabulary and the definitions separately and see if they can match them up.
4. Practice spelling key vocabulary.
5. Research the topic on the internet using the suggested child-friendly sites. Make books, posters or mind-maps of what you find out.
6. Watch child friendly TV programmes or listen to radio productions that talk about the topic for example, Tokyo Class could listen to the BBC Radio productions of ancient Greek myths at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/ks2-ancient-greece/zk73nrd>
6. If possible, visit any events, venues, locations etc that support the topic for example, Canterbury Class could visit the Transport Museum in Dover to look at modes of transport for journeys.



And remember, send photos of any home learning to us on Seesaw.





# BREAKFAST CLUB AND AFTER SCHOOL CLUB

After two rounds of advertising since September, through the local press, social media sites and on the Kent Teach website which details all local schools vacancies, I am sorry to say that I have not had any applications for the role of After School Club supervisor. This is on top of several unsuccessful rounds of advertising before the summer too and several unsuccessful approaches to companies offering care in school after usual working hours, through a private arrangement.

The governors and I have decided therefore, with very heavy hearts and a full understanding that this will be difficult for many parents, that it is time to close our after school club provision. Whilst I am very grateful to the teachers for keeping the provision open over the last few months, the school is unable to sustain the cost of using this method of staffing long term.

The after school care club and the stay and play provisions will therefore close for business on Thursday 30th November 2023.

In the meantime, I urge anyone who is able to offer help or after school care to individual children to talk to the parents who currently use our care provision about any support they can provide. As a school, we will continue to look for sustainable ways to provide full wrap around care for your children at a cost that is both affordable for you and for us.

On a brighter note, I am delighted to welcome Tara Pollard to the staff group. Tara, who is mum to Ronnie and Brie, will be working in Breakfast Club with Tracey Dodd each morning. Our Breakfast Club is a self sustaining provision and there are no plans at all to change this in the future, which is good news. Tara is also joining Whole School Meals as their lunchtime catering assistant so the children will get to know her when they have their lunchbreak too.

## STUDENT SWAP

You will by now know that Mrs Davison is well into her year of teacher training, working under the guidance of Mrs Keem. I am happy with the quality of teaching that the children in the class are receiving from both teachers but also delighted that we are able to offer more individualised support to our children due to there being more adults working on a one to one or small group basis with the children during the day, supporting their usual teaching experience.

As we approach the end of this term, Mrs Davison will be visiting a second placement school as required within her course and another apprentice teacher will be coming to visit London Class.

Term 3 will see the two teachers swap schools in order to experience working in a different environment, so the children will have a new teacher working with them for a short time. Again, this teacher will work under the guidance, mentoring and monitoring of Mrs Keem, and myself, to ensure that the children get the best possible learning opportunities.

At a time when the numbers of applications to initial teacher training are very low, I am proud that Langdon can be part of training the next generation of teachers and in ensuring that they move towards being excellent practitioners.

## WINTER WEAR

If your child hasn't brought a pair of wellies (named of course) into school yet, please could you organise for this to happen as soon as possible. We like our children to use the whole grounds, including the school field, for play activities rather than being crammed onto the playground and for this reason, they need a change of footwear for when it is wet or muddy.

Also, in preparation for the wetter and colder weather, please could you check that your child has a dark pair of jogging bottoms in their PE bag – not leggings please, these are not suitable for PE lessons, being thinner and offering less facility to trap and warm air between the fabric and the body which helps to keep the children warm on colder days.



## READING WITH YOUR CHILD

The National Literacy Trust, an organisation that supports children's speaking and listening, reading and writing reported in 2020 that, 'There can be few things as powerful as regularly reading to a young child. It has astonishing benefits for children: comfort and reassurance, confidence and security, relaxation, happiness and fun. Giving a child time and full attention when reading them a story tells them they matter. It builds self-esteem, vocabulary, feeds imagination and even improves their sleeping patterns.'

Have you noticed that they didn't mention that it also helps to improve their speaking and listening skills, their understanding of story structures and language and how these are used for effect or their own decoding, inference and deduction skills when reading? Well, it does! Reading is of real benefit to your child socially, emotionally and educationally.

Reading to your child has so many benefits and because we probably all know this, we probably all do it with our children . . . or do we?

Did you know that the National Literacy Trust's surveys found out that less than half of parents read regularly to their children; in fact, they found out that parents are more likely to plug their child into a screen rather than spend time with them, reading to them.

Only 45% of 0-2 year olds are read to by an adult every day or nearly every day and this decreases over time. Even when children enter school and reading becomes a crucial part of the curriculum, only 44% of 5-7 year olds engage in sharing a book with an adult. I wonder, in fact, how many of us still read with our 10-11 year olds? Yet we should because of the benefits of doing so.

The benefits of reading with a child are well researched and documented. Currently in UK schools there is a huge emphasis on reading to and with children. Ofsted inspections look at how teachers engage children in book activities and how often they read quality texts to them. It is perhaps, the most influential skill we will ever teach children to do - it is used in every aspect of our teaching, across the whole curriculum and, more widely, in every aspect of life. Imagine not being able to read a sign, notice, newspaper, post on Instagram, letter or any other written piece of information. Imagine not being able to follow and enjoy a story, learn about heroes and villains, discover hidden messages and meanings or play with humour, rhyme and repetition. I would go so far as to say, there is hardly another thing that we teach in schools that is as important as engaging with and understanding the printed word through reading.

Some of our classes this term, have had a 'push' on promoting reading at home - children reading to themselves and reading with others. I would encourage parents, as their child's first and most important teachers, to go one step further to support their child's reading and understanding and to reverse the figures that the National Literacy Trust report. Let's make reading with and to our children a priority for every child at Langdon because we want to give them the best possible opportunity to learn and achieve, and because we want to develop the extra qualities that come with 'regular and often' book sharing experiences as mentioned in my opening paragraph above.

Find a quiet time during the day, bedtime is perfect, to snuggle up with your child to share a book, no matter how young or old they are.

Choose a story or text that you and your child can enjoy together.

Take time to look at and talk about any pictures.

Remind yourselves of what happened last, predict what might happen next.

Use funny voices - your child will love it when you 'become' the character.

Ask questions as you read - Why did he do that? What do you think that was? What do you think?

For older children, read a chapter a day, talk about the cliffhangers and bombshells.

In our experience, the children who are read with and to are the ones who are most successful at learning in school, who make most progress over time. Ten minutes a day of quality book engagement can make a lifetime of difference, and ten minutes quality time with your child a day isn't a lot to ask. Let's make a difference for our children, by reading to them. Let's start today.

## HOMework

For Key Stage One, the teachers will send home a number of tasks, linked to the work the children are doing in class, for them to do at home to support their learning. Some of these tasks will be longer activities, that your child may need your support with and some will be shorter tasks so that you can choose which ones fit in with your busy weekend schedules.

In Key Stage Two, children will have an English and a mathematics activity to do each week. This may be an online task, using Atom Prime, or a paper based task. Each homework task in Key Stage Two is due in by Wednesday at the latest. There are several reasons why we send homework home.

Firstly, because parents tell us they value and want homework for their children. Consistently, in parent questionnaires and in parent meetings we are asked to give children homework so that parents know what their child is doing in school, so they can support their child's learning and so that we can offer what other local schools are offering in terms of homework.

Secondly, and for us more importantly, to build good habits for future education and for life. Working on learning tasks at home, organising your time wisely and independently seeing a task to completion is good preparation for secondary school and the world of work. Ask any ex-pupils about homework in secondary schools and they will tell you that there's a lot and that the little they did in primary school helped in preparing them for this burden, minimising the shock.

We encourage our children, as they move through the school, to become more independent and take more responsibility for homework themselves. Teachers talk about when is a good time to do homework, where is the best place to do it and what quality they expect when the homework is being worked on. They also talk about how children can make use of homework club (Monday lunchtime) as a space for getting homework done if doing it at home is impossible.

We know from your feedback, that you value homework and we thank you for the support you give your children with it. As always, if your child is struggling with homework, come and talk to the class teacher who will be able to help with strategies or ideas to make your child's experience with homework, and your's, more successful.



## Diary for Term 2

SAVE THE DATE

6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

30 October 2023	Beginning of Term 2	
1 November 2023	NHS Flu Vaccinations for YR-6	
2 November 2023	London Class Assembly	2.40pm
3 November 2023	Orchestra Concert at Shirley Hall - Tokyo Class	12.30pm - 3.00pm
8 November 2023	Year 3/4 Dodgeball Competition	2.15pm - 4.00pm
9 November 2023	Canterbury Class Assembly	2.40pm
17 November 2023	Children in Need - Details to follow	
wb 20 November 2023	Assessment Week for Years 1-6	
23 November 2023	Paris Class Assembly	2.30pm





# Diary for Term 2



27 November 2023	Staff Development Day - school closed to children	
4 December 2023	Learning and Progress Meetings	9.00am - 6.30pm
5 December 2023	Online Safety Day - Internet Safety	
5 December 2023	Full Governing Body Meeting	3.45pm - 5.30pm
6 December 2023	Key Stage 2 trip to Marlowe Theatre Pantomime - Aladdin	1.00pm - 5.00pm
7 December 2023	Year 5/6 Tchoukball Competition	10.00am
13 December 2023	Key Stage One Performance - The Nativity	1.30pm
14 December 2023	End of Term Achievement Assembly	9.00am
14 December 2023	Christmas Dinner and Parties	12.00pm - 3.15pm
15 December 2023	Key Stage Two Christingle Service o/c End of Term 2	1.30pm
2 January 2024	Staff Development Day - school closed to children	
3 January 2024	Staff Development Day - school closed to children	