

Sapphire Class

Welcome back to this new academic year! Despite only being the first few days into the year, we are delighted with how well the pupils have settled into Sapphire Class and the progress that are beginning to make already in their learning and general development. The transition from Ruby into Sapphire Class is a big transition. However, our Year 1 children have adapted and risen to the early challenges of Sapphire exceptionally well and we are extremely proud! I have been equally impressed with Year 2 who have been exceptionally caring and fantastic role-models for our new Year 1! I am a very lucky teacher to have such a great class!

As I made you aware during the meeting, this was recorded on Teams so please feel free to log into Teams, download the recording and watch the meeting over should you feel this would be advantageous to you. This will be available for you to download for two weeks; of which afterwards the video will 'expire' and will no longer be downloadable.

I am fully aware there is a lot of information here. If you have any questions, please do catch me at the gate at the end of the day, or feel free to email me directly at Lucy.Gatward@stjohnsprimarysch.org.uk However, with the latter, please be mindful that I will be teaching and won't be able to respond immediately. I will however endeavour to respond as soon as possible.

Staff: The staffing structure in Sapphire Class this academic year will consist of **Mr Stringer (Class Teacher) and Mrs Hargate (Teaching Assistant)**.

Other adults will be working in Sapphire Class for certain lessons/activities, including:

- Mrs. Hocyk (Relief Teaching Assistant/ Parent Mentor) various lessons throughout the week, including Humanities.
- Madame Sylvie for French (for Yr.2 only)
- Mrs. Miller for Music (Yr. 2 can attend choir on a Wednesday 3pm – 4pm)
- Mr. Pople for P.E. and after school club

We are very fortunate in the school to have a range of specialist teachers which really enhances the teaching and learning for the pupils in Sapphire Class.

Structure: In the morning, we 'split' the class into small, nurturing groups for Reading/Phonics, Writing and Maths. This allows us to really target the learning in accordance to the needs of the group as well as the latest assessment data which we use to inform our planning on a weekly basis. We find that the children in their groups really feel comfortable just to the small nature and this really helps to further accelerate the learning that takes place.

The groups the children are put into are very fluid, meaning we do move children around at times to ensure the group they are in is always the correct one in terms of pace and manageability as well as the needs that arise. It is then in the afternoon we come back together as a class.

Uniform

Monday and Thursday – PE kit as these are our PE days. **Please ensure the correct kit is worn.**

Tuesday and Wednesday – normal uniform in accordance to the Uniform Policy

Friday – either normal uniform or PE kit!

Reading Records: Over the course of the week (Friday – Thursday), it is expected that there are **five clear entries** in the reading record. These will be expected to be in school on a **Friday** along with the reading books from the week. We will thoroughly check these reading records for these entries and will be signed by an adult. These will then be re-distributed, along with new reading books on a Friday. Please ensure you spend at least **15-20 minutes per evening** engaging with a high-quality, engaging reading session. I really cannot fully emphasise enough just how crucial this is.

For ideas of what you could comment on in the reading record, please refer to page 2 in your supplementary resource booklet.

Phonics Practice: I cannot express enough the importance and significance of daily phonic practice at home. In school, we dedicate 20 minutes on a daily basis for phonics where we revise Tricky Red Words, Speed Sounds Sets 2 and 3, different ‘real’ and ‘alien’ words and much more. Please do ensure that this is followed up at home on a daily basis as phonics really does support everything else in school! **For more support and resources, please refer to pages 2/3 in your supplementary resource booklet.**

Phonic Screening Check: In the June of Yr.1, children complete a ‘Phonic Screening Check’. This is a list of 40 words (some real, some nonsense, some are tricky red words). This is completed 1:1 with Mrs. Notley. The purpose of this test is to test pupil’s ability to use their phonic knowledge to read these words correctly. The vast majority of the words in the check are phonetically plausible, meaning they can be sounded out and read correctly should the sounds be blended together accurately. Words contain sounds from all Speed Set Sounds (especially SS2 and SS3). The pass mark over the last few years has been **32/40**. If this is not passed in the July of Year 1, then pupils are required to re-sit this Check when they are in Year 2.

Book Bags: These should be brought into school on a **Wednesday along with homework** and a **Friday along with reading books/reading records**. These do not need to come into school on a Monday, Tuesday or a Thursday.

Behaviour: We will continue to use the whole-school behaviour chart system (new to Year 1).

Each day, all children will start on green and it is an expectation that the children **end the day** on green. At the end of every half-term, pupils who have stayed on green for the entire half-term will receive a certificate in the final celebration assembly. Then, if your child has spent the entire academic year on green, they will have a ‘special afternoon’ in July where these children will spend an afternoon out of classroom

participating in a special event (to be discussed with and agreed by our school council). A child will move down the chart if they do not follow the classroom/school expectations; if this is the case, they will need to ensure that by the end of the day their behaviour is at an expected level so that they can start the next day on green. For more information on this, please refer to your resource booklet (page 6).

Dojo and Team Points: In order to further promote positive behaviour and expectations in Sapphire, we will be using Class Dojo. This is a point-based reward system. At the beginning of the year, we agree as a class what these positive behaviour rules are that we can get points for. When we see a child demonstrating one of these characteristics (or more), we will award them with a point. On a Friday, the girl and boy in both year groups with the most points will receive a prize from the raffle box!

In school, we also have 'Team Points', with the children split into four teams (Ennis, Farah, Wiggins and Simmonds). In Sapphire, we are saying that for every 10 dojo points a child receives, this will equate then to 1 Team Point.

Homework – general message: Homework is a really important part of a child's learning and we really need all parents support with this. Homework will always be differentiated to ensure that the level of challenge provided will be correct for your child and matches what is being taught in your child's group.

All homework will be given to your child on a Friday and will be expected back to be completed by the following **Wednesday**. The completion of this homework is so crucial as tasks are carefully assigned to reinforce and consolidate the learning taking place in school.

All children will be given two homework books – a Literacy book and a Maths book. The task sheet will be stuck into these books on a double page spread and it is an expectation that homework is completed in either a pencil or a handwriting pen (if your child has one in school). Please do not complete any homework using other equipment, including gel pens and felt tip pens. When I mark the homework ready for re-distribution on a Friday, not only will I be marking it for content, but also for key things such as presentation, effort and neatness.

Spellings: Your child will also be given a copy of their spellings on Friday in their Literacy homework book and they will need to know them for a test the following Thursday. The words in the spelling grid are differentiated in terms of the number of words – some children will receive up to 5 words and then, when we feel they are ready, this will slowly increase until they reach 10 words per week. These spellings are linked with the sound(s) that is/are the focus in the week's Phonic lesson. **In Year 1, we begin giving spellings once the children are settled and we feel they are ready, but Year 2 will receive spellings from Friday 10 September!**

Dictated Sentences: These sentences are designed to put the words in the spelling grid into a context so pupils can see how the words on their spelling grid can be used in everyday writing! The idea of this is to also help develop the key skill of 'holding information.' To complete this correctly:

- Read chunks of a sentence out to your child at a time (up to you how much you read at any one time)
- The pupils 'hold' what you have just said and repeat it back to you
- The pupils then write this down
- **Repeat this process until the sentence has been written.**
- Check the writing to ensure: it is as neat as it can be, capital letters & full stops are accurately used, accuracy of the spelling and letter formation/sizes/joins

Times Tables: Year 2 pupils are signed up on Times Tables Rock Star and will be expected to practise their times tables at least three times a week (Monday to Friday). I am able to log into Times Tables Rockstars and monitor the frequency of logins. Early practice is key, as by the end of Year 4, it is a national requirement that children know their times tables in preparation for the Multiplication Tables Check. Therefore, it is really important that quality time is devoted to this. **By the end of Year 2, it is a requirement that pupils know multiplication and division facts for the 2, 5 and 10 times table.**

Again, I fully understand and appreciate this is a lot of information but please do not hesitate to talk to me/email me at Lucy.Gatward@stjohnsprimarysch.org.uk and I will response to you as soon as is possible.

I look forward to working with everybody this academic year and I am sure it is going to be a very successful academic year.





