

Welcome To Year 4!



Dear Parents/Carers,

Friday 8th September 2023

Welcome back to school and welcome to Year 4!

We hope you have all had a good summer break and your children have enjoyed their first week in Year 4. We are looking forward to working in partnership with you over the coming year. This should be a very enjoyable and stimulating year as we have so many exciting learning experiences planned!

Staff

Willow Class

Teachers: Mrs D Rogers: Monday to Thursday; Mr A Campbell: Friday.

Mrs L Casey (Covering the class every Tuesday afternoon)

Oak Class

Teacher: Mr J Rushby: Monday to Friday.

Mrs C Eddy (Covering the class every Tuesday and alternate Thursday afternoons).

Shared Teaching Assistants: Mrs C Eddy (Thursday am), Mrs B Lacy (RWI support)

Communication

The children should now be used to walking round the outside of the building to the classroom from the gate independently. Please ensure that they **arrive at school promptly** for the time the gate opens: 8:45. After hand washing and organising their belongings, the children enter the classroom and often begin the day by practising important maths and literacy skills.

Home School communication books (**Fish books**) will be issued next week. As well as recording reading at home please use the book to communicate with us for any minor queries and to let us know of any changes to collection arrangements (including play dates) or appointment times.

We can also be contacted via email:

deborah.rogers@firslower.org

adam.campbell@firslower.org

joe.rushby@firslower.org

If you wish to discuss anything with us of course, at any point during the year, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

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Reading Books

In Year 4 all the children are part of the Accelerated Reader Programme and can choose books matching their correct ZPD directly from the shelves inside and outside the Year 4 classrooms. Their ZPD will be calculated according to their performance in the termly Star Tests. Whenever they complete a book they will do a mini quiz which tests their comprehension of that book.

Please hear your child read as often as you can (3 times a week would be beneficial,) try to set aside a few minutes most days, even if your child is a confident reader, they will still reap the benefits. (About 15 minutes a day is the recommendation in educational research). Reading aloud is a very different skill requiring the children to adopt a storyteller's voice and a lot can be gained from discussing events and characters, predicting what may happen, inferring information (reading between the lines) and discussing the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary and the effectiveness of exciting vocabulary. Please do not feel that you have to read a whole book in one sitting; little and often is usually best with time to read the words and time to chat and comprehend what has been read. The children will also be reading in school as part of their literacy lessons, doing comprehension activities from extracts of books and they will be heard individually once every half term by their class teacher to assess their progress. **Please ensure that your child has his/her reading book and reading log (fish book) in school every day. They may like to carry them in a school book bag to protect them from the elements; letters can also be carried in this way but please do not put water bottles in there as they often leak. Small rucksacks, e.g. a Firs rucksack can also be used for this purpose.**

In addition to this, all the children are able to choose a library book from school which they enjoy reading in spare time and in quiet reading sessions; this book stays in school. These books will be chosen from from our newly opened library.

Uniform and equipment

We would be grateful if you could ensure that all of your child's uniform, coat, water bottle and school equipment is **named**; this helps us to return lost property items back to their owners quickly. Please ensure that children are dressed according to the school's uniform policy and are ready to begin the day as **smart learners**.

The children do not require their own pencil cases in school. The children do not need to bring any personal items from home into school. Water bottles should be brought to school every day with fresh water inside. Please also ensure that your child has a **healthy snack** for break time.

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PE

Willow Class will do PE on Tuesday and Thursdays (We are remembering it like this: if it begins with a 'T' we are doing PE!)

Oak Class will do PE on Tuesday and Wednesdays.

Your child should come to school in their green and black school PE kit on their PE days, still looking like smart learners for other lessons that day. We are keen to encourage a positive attitude towards sports and exercise so please ensure they are dressed appropriately for the weather with jumpers, fleeces and tracksuit bottoms(all green/black) as it grows colder as we will be doing PE outside each week. We prefer that children wear comfortable **trainers**. Please ensure that earrings are left at home and hair below shoulder length is tied up on those days.

External sports coaches will be coming in to teach the children at different times throughout the year.

Immediately after half term we will be going swimming at Flitwick Leisure Centre on Wednesday afternoons for 7 sessions. (More details to follow).

Homework

We will be sending out learning logs next week for the children to use to record their homework. Tasks will be uploaded to Google Classroom soon and spelling lists will also be found there once the children have been assessed. Completing homework is expected of the children and very important for the transition of the children to year 5 so thank you for your support with this.

Art/DT

During Art and DT sessions the children will often engage in messy activities. Please ensure that your child has an old **named** art shirt that they can leave in school for these occasions. Please don't buy anything - an old adult sized shirt or t-shirt is ideal.

Spellings

We will be teaching the children spelling patterns and families as well as common exception words and then providing different spellings for groups to practise, including overlearning spellings to help with long term memory and transfer into free writing. The children will have a spelling assessment this half term to establish their confidence and accuracy. For now, please spend time practising common exception words sent with this letter.

Each week use the Look, Say, Cover, Write, Check method to help the children to learn spellings; again, **little and often works best**. Please also revisit those not mastered from previous weeks. Spelling tests will be termly to assess retention of spellings.

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Maths

At the end of this year the Year 4 children will be sitting a national online test assessing their ability to recall their **multiplication tables** at speed (6 seconds per question including typing the answer!) Please support your child to learn their tables by making regular use of **Times Table Rockstars** as well as any other games, charts, quizzes, etc that will help at home. At intervals we will send home their 'heatmaps' which shows their progress. Each question is listed and coloured accordingly: the greener it is, the more confident they are with that answer; red questions are those to be practised most, grey means they haven't met that question very often yet.

In addition to this please practise everyday opportunities for using maths eg. counting in many different steps, using money, telling the time, looking at the properties of shapes, sharing into fractions, measuring and reading charts and tables. Practise number skills like 1, 10 and 100 more and less, doubling and halving, counting in tens starting from any number (eg. 73, 83, 93, 103, 113, 123) number bonds (eg. $4 + 6 = 10$, $12 + 8 = 20$, $30 + 70 = 100$, $42 + 58 = 100$) and quick mental addition and subtraction.

End of Day Arrangements

During the course of this year we will be writing to parents about allowing children to walk home without an adult in the summer term (as this is a good preparation for middle school next September). However, until that point we still need collection arrangements to be the same as in previous years. **If there are any changes to this, including an older sibling taking that responsibility, we would ask that you contact the office or e mail ourselves or write in the fish book as normal. Please ensure that any e mails are sent the day before as we cannot guarantee that we will read an email in time during the busy school day.** Thank you.

Please ensure that you pick up your child from school at the correct door and adhere to the one way system to help everyone. Oak Class should be picked up from the hall door leading onto the courtyard and Willow Class should be picked up from the door leading on to the Year 4 corridor from the courtyard. The exit is then from the end of the year 4 corridor onto the playground. Thank you for waiting outside for your children and not coming into the corridor - this allows us to clearly see who is picking up and keep all children safe. Thank you for not entering the year 4 corridor from the exit door for the same reason, even if picking up more than one child. We appreciate your help with this.

Parent Helpers

We welcome parent helpers to hear readers or support art and DT lessons. Please email the class teacher if this is something you would be interested in doing.

Thank you in anticipation for your support

The Year 4 Team