

Friday 6th December 2019

Dear Parents/Carers,

*A bit of a long one today, so grab yourself a brew and read the following (incredibly!) important information…;-)*

**Reading books**

Well, they are finally here! Of course, there may be one or two teething problems as we get used to the new expectations and where our books should be pitched for our children so please bear with us and write us a quick note in your child’s reading journal if there are any issues. Although the books are sequenced accurately, the new colours do not coincide with the old ones.

*Reception and KS1:* please note that the books are very much linked to phonics and spellings as well as comprehension and understanding. Do take a look at the very useful notes at the front of the books as these give you an idea of the key letters and sounds the children have been focusing on at school. You should also now have access to the online books too if you feel the hard copy has been exhausted. If you feel that the children are racing through these books, please do note their fluency, especially in reading those key words at the front, before thinking they are too easy. Of course, again, if they are, then let us know in their reading record and we’ll either explain our reasoning or move on to the next set. We also remind you again that equally as important is children’s enjoyment of reading – if you feel they can’t explore a greater depth of understanding in their Bug Club book, then please do read other books too…we do not want to stifle enjoyment or hold our children back. We just want to consolidate and ensure understanding first! Children are always welcome to get books out from our infant or junior libraries, or read books from home, so do make a little note of this in their reading record too!

*KS2:* much the same really – do keep us posted on how it’s going by noting in reading records and please encourage your children to make a note in there too! Again, a love of reading is the most important thing and we certainly do not want to get in the way of that. Like we said, we’ve no doubt any initial issues will be ironed out in no time! Thanks all.

**Clothes Bank – yes the big, blue one at the main entrance!**

As you all know, we very much want to be a place which cares for our wider community and the wider world. We now have a clothes bank which has been provided by the College for International Co-operation and Development. Clothes and shoes donated will sponsor volunteers to go to Southern Africa and India and work on development projects such as tree plantation, HIV/AIDSprevention, social work with orphans, construction of schoos and clinics, education, women’s empowerment and sanitation and clean water supply. A member of the college will be leading an assembly at school soon to give the children a greater idea of how their donations will help. For more information go to [www.joincicd.org](http://www.joincicd.org)

**Christmas Fair**

Thank you so much to our wonderful PTA for taking the time and effort to organise and run a lovely Christmas Fair. Thanks to Santa, Elsa and Olaf for being there too!

**Come on everyone…let’s build our alumni community**

As we mentioned last week, we are starting an initiative in collaboration with the education charity, ***Future First.*** It involves building a community of former pupils (and even friends of those former pupils) who are willing to forge closer links with our school and perhaps be on hand to help us out and inspire our children in all manner of ways. So please get talking – sign up yourself and ask others to sign up on our online portal…the opportunities are endless! Thank you and here is the link (and there’s a poster too below…let’s watch our community grow!

<https://networks.futurefirst.org.uk/signup/urmstonprimary>

**KS2 Spellings…a note from Mrs Hall!**

Can we just take this opportunity to say a big well done to everyone for their hard work in learning their spellings and the progress being made.

In order to celebrate this achievement, from January, we will have Spelling Achievement board in the corridor of the main building, where children can come and add their photo each week when they pass their test. It will not be ranked by level, but will be an overall achievement board celebrating success at all levels.

Spelling is such an important life skill and here at UPS we recognise this and aim to support each and every child in becoming a competent speller, where not only are words learnt for tests, but rules are embedded and can be applied across any writing activity. With this in mind, when a child comes to be tested, we will be asking them to write a brief explanation of the rules that they are learning about.

For example: Red Spellings are related to long 'a and the long 'e' sounds, so a child may write: "when the long ‘a’ sound is at the end of the word it is an ‘ay’ or an ‘a-e’ but is normally an ‘ai’ in the middle of the word!(sometimes it doesn’t work though – like ‘sea’ or ‘tea’.

*With the long ‘e’ sound, the ‘ee’ and ‘ea’ are usually in the middle; the one ‘e’ (like ‘he’) and the ‘y’ like ‘happy’ are usually at the end.*

This will not determine whether a child passes or not, but will reinforce the learning taking place. Each rule is provided on the colour spelling sheet sent home, so that you can support the understanding of each rule. Thanks for your support!

**KS1 English Workshop**

We’ll be running a KS1 English workshop, much like we’ve done in KS2, in January. We’ll be discussing how reading, writing and spelling is taught (they are inexplicably linked after all!) and answer any questions you may have! Watch this space for more details!

**Science ‘Question of the Week’**

Our last focus was, ***Who is Dr Jane Goodall? Why is she a famous scientist?*** If your junior children were listening they’ll now know why! This week, the question is ***‘Why do Mr Stockwell and Mrs Haslam put salt on the playgrounds when it is frosty and icy?’*** Please do talk to your children about this and help to further enhance their curiosity in the world around them!

**Catch-up Flu Vaccines**

Flu vaccines will be given next Wednesday 11th December for anyone who has signed up for their child to have one. If your child is ill, it is important that the nurses are made aware of this before administering the vaccine.

**Mission Christmas**

Thank you to everyone who has donated gifts to the Mission Christmas appeal. If you feel you can, we would love to receive donations of any new unwrapped gifts for children aged 0-18. We have been given a collection date of Tuesday 17th December but would ask that you please bring them as soon as you can.

**Continuing with E-Safety**

Keep an eye out for our monthly newsletter which hopefully will help with some valuable information on current apps, games and E-safety issues that your child (and us adults!) need help with. You should have received our December issue.

**Being more**

We are still receiving calls and emails about how our children are ‘being more’ outside school. This is always lovely to hear so please keep them coming!

**Dates for your diary**

Wednesday 11th December, 2.10pm – EYFS Christmas Play

Thursday 12th December, 10am – EYFS Christmas Play #2

Thursday 12th December, 2.10pm – KS1 Christmas Play

Friday 13th December, 10am – KS1 Christmas Play #2

**…you should now have received some tickets…**

Thursday 19th December, 2pm ish (may be a touch before!) - KS2 Christmas Story and Songs – St Clements Church ***(NOTE THE CHANGE OF DATE!)***

Sunday 15th December, 3.15pm – Greenfield Church Christmas Service

Friday 20th December, 2.45pm – Christmas Jumper Day & Carols in the KS2 playground

Have a lovely weekend!

Kind Regards,

*Mr Parker and Mr Doherty*

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