



Happy New Year!

It is very exciting to welcome our Hippos back to school last week. We hope that you have had a lovely Christmas break which has given you the opportunity to recharge, refresh and spend time with family and friends. We were so proud of how well the children returned to school and we have had a lovely week getting to know each other!

This half term is all set to be exciting, fun and jam packed with adventures and learning!

Our new topic is called 'Amazing Animals'. Firstly, we will be learning about owls and nocturnal animals; then penguins, other Antarctic and arctic animals; and finally dinosaurs. We have exciting books to read, science activities to carry out and lots of art and craft opportunities planned for the next few weeks.

Understanding the World – We will collect dinosaur facts to create our very own class non-fiction book. We will learn about fossils and make our own. We will learn about Mary Anning and talk about habitats.

We will be investigating freezing and melting whilst we learn about arctic and Antarctic animals.

We will also be learning about nocturnal animals and how their days and nights look different to ours!

We will continue our learning of the seasons and use our senses to spot signs of Winter and Spring.

Physical Development – Our PE this term will focus on dance sessions where we will move in time to music and express ourselves to the different music played. The children will also do Squiggle whilst you wiggle using scarves and music. This is so beneficial, developing their gross and fine motor skills in preparation for writing.

We will be having a big drive on the children using scissors and also using their knife and fork independently.

RE – Our focus in RE is to 'Why Are Some Places Special? We will be thinking about places that are special to us and to our community. We will learn about why churches are special to Christians and mosques are special to Muslims.

We will also learn about Chinese New Year (Year of the Fire Horse, Tuesday 17th February)

PSHE – The Hippos will be focusing on how we keep ourself safe and healthy. We will also learn about who in our lives and communities help to keep us safe. As part of this, we will have a visit from the fire and police service.

Expressive Art and Design – The Hippos will be learning new songs and poems during their 'Amazing Animals' topic. Some will be linked to animals whilst others will be linked to their maths work and the weather.

The Hippos will be exploring using different paints and mixing their own colours. They will use oil pastels and watercolours. They will use clay and also create models.

We will also be singing Nursery Rhymes at our very special 100 year celebration of Longton Primary School!

Maths – In maths we will be looking at the concept zero, none or nothing. We will be counting on as well as counting back. We will take part in games using a dice to recognise the patterns without having to count the dots. We will continue to look at how numbers are made up of other numbers and work on our number bonds and doubles.

Phonics – In Phonics we have now moved on to the next stage. We will be building and also breaking down CCVC and CVCC words (for example - sleep & boost) We have a new set of Rainbow words which will be stuck in the reading record books. Please continue to revisit your phonics wallet. We will also recap these daily.

Reading - Reading books will continue to be changed weekly. The reading book should come into school each day completed with a signature and comment. **Please continue to read daily.** This helps the children to practice the new words and sounds that we learn in class.

Literacy – During our new topic we will be creating story maps and a class scrapbook. The children will be encouraged to discuss exciting describing words as well as learn actions to words during our stories.

The children will take part in daily writing activities during their play as well as in small working groups. The children will be encouraged to use their handwriting with swooshes and flicks.

The children will retell our stories using story maps, puppets and the story sacks provided. We will also create our very own dark wood story area where we will need torches to read when we visit our 'Owl Babies'.

As part of our role play, we will be developing a vets and a pet shop. This will allow us to incorporate all of our new learning about amazing animals!

Housekeeping

- Please ensure that your child has their coat, gloves and hat every day (**named please**)
- We do go outside every day and we definitely will be running outside if the snow comes! If you took wellies home, please send them back as the children cannot go on the field without these.
- Water bottle needed every day – no juice.
- Please send a fruit snack daily if the children are not having toast.
- Book bags to be returned daily with reading books – books changed each week. We will test book changing this week and inform you if the day will remain the same or change.
- No toys to be brought in please – during Show and Tell, the children can share a picture, a photograph, any awards they have received, a ticket or a leaflet.

Messages – If you have an urgent message to pass on please do this in a morning, however as we are trying to help the children to come into school as confidently, calmly and independently as possible please see staff at the end of the day if needed.

Blog – We will continue to share pictures and pass on information through our class blog. We hope you enjoy sharing these pictures with your child (great for when the Hippos tell you they have nothing today)!

Thank you for your continuous help and support.