



Monks Risborough Church of England Primary School

Peters Lane

Monks Risborough,

Bucks. HP27 9LZ

Tel: 01844 345590 Fax: 01844 274978 Reg. Charity No. 1073117

e-mail: office@mrisborough.bucks.sch.uk

Headteacher: Mr T. Baskerville

8th September 2016

Dear Parents,

I hope that you and the children have had a happy and relaxing holiday over the summer break and are now ready to start a new, exciting academic year! I am thrilled to have joined the Monks Risborough team and am looking forward to the year ahead. This letter covers topics such as the timetable, classroom organisation, and homework. It is not meant to be totally comprehensive so please feel free to catch up with me if you have any further questions.

In class 2 this year, the children will be taught by myself and Miss Jeffrey. The school's experienced Learning Support Assistant, Mr Gouldstone will support the children in the class. Mrs Beerling will teach the class on Monday afternoons. This year each class has been given a name based on a well-known bird and class 2 are to be known as 'Red Kites'.

Should you wish to speak to me about the year ahead or any concerns that you have then please catch me at the end of the day or notify the office. Please do not make your own way into the classroom first thing in the morning as my priority is preparing the children for the day's learning. If it is a matter of urgency then please go to the office who will deal with any issues or notify me.

I have been told about the fantastic success of the 'Monday Mile' and am pleased to announce that it will continue for the foreseeable future. Our first mile will take place next week, the week commencing Monday 12th September. Please ensure that your child comes to school wearing their running shoes and brings their school shoes in a carrier bag to change into for the rest of the day.

Children will soon have a chance to sign up to and participate in a range of clubs, during and after school, which will commence during the week of Monday 26th September.

This half-term's school value is **Community**.





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Class 2 – Timetable and classroom organisation.

1) P.E. – will take place on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Your child needs a white t-shirt, white shorts, **black** outdoor trainers and (indoor) plimsolls kept in a P.E. bag with a tie string so that the bag can be hung on your child's peg. All items need to be named and the P.E. kit should be kept in school unless you feel that it needs to be washed!

2) Reading books should be brought to school everyday in a book bag.

Reading books can be changed every day although **3 times a week is ample** as it should also be recognised that discussing the storylines and being read to is equally important as it develops a life-long love of reading. It is now your child's responsibility to inform us when they want to change their book so please can you help us in this aim by reminding your child that they need to change their book before you say goodbye in the morning.

3) Spelling folders should be brought to school on Fridays.

Homework

The school's homework policy states that children in Year 2 should be completing the following tasks outside of school hours if they are to make 'expected' progress:

- (i) Reading
- (ii) Spellings
- (iii) Times tables (mental maths)
- (iv) Half-termly learning logs

Reading – reading regularly is very important. The **school's expectation is that children will read with an adult from 10-15 minutes every day**. Possibly the most important aspect of learning to read is fostering a life-long love of reading – your child's enjoyment of the books they read is **very** important. Therefore, please encourage your child to not just read their school 'reading book', but also books borrowed from the local library – especially the books **they** want to read! Remember, your child will benefit from reading a variety of storybooks, non fiction, poetry books, comics etc.

How You Can Help – help your child with mechanical reading skills i.e. recognition of vocabulary. When they cannot recognise a word, encourage them to use their phonic knowledge





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to sound it out, e.g. /d/ow/n/s/t/air/s. Otherwise, use contextual clues – which word will fit in and make sense? Does the picture help your child to guess the unknown word?

Before reading, encourage your child to think about what might happen in the book simply from the clues on the front cover. During reading, talk about characters in the story or predict what might happen next e.g. what kind of person is Goldilocks? What do you think will happen when Little Red Riding Hood goes into Grandma's house? After finishing a book, discuss their favourite part of the story and how the story might have ended differently, e.g. how would the story be different if the lumberjack had not turned up? In Class 2, as most children have developed strong decoding skills, the focus of parent-child reading sessions should be on the **comprehension** aspect of reading and this focus should take up as much time, if not more, as actually reading the story.

As your child reads, encourage them to note the use of punctuation and how it helps to make sense of the text. Encourage your child to read with expression. Notice important presentational techniques. E.g. why is BANG written in capital letters? Why has a series of dots been printed...? Why is a word written in italics?

Reading and word activities can help your child to focus on a particular aspect e.g. how many words on this page begin with a capital letter? Why? Let's see how many words we can find with the 'ow' and 'ou' sounds.

Spellings

Every week in school your child will bring home a set of spellings to learn. These spellings will include words that follow a specific 'spelling rule' as well as two high frequency words or common exception words that they are expected to know. Since the introduction of the new Spelling, Punctuation, and Grammar (SPaG) SATs paper for Year 2 children, the government have 'raised the bar' substantially and now require them to learn a much more challenging set of spelling rules. This will be reflected in the increased challenge your child will face when learning their weekly spellings.

Spelling practice is an ideal opportunity to practice correct pencil grip, letter formation and handwriting joins **in that order of importance**. If you are unsure about any of these aspects of writing please do not hesitate to come in and have a chat. When learning spellings we encourage the children to learn their spellings using the LOOK-SAY-COVER-WRITE-CHECK method. This is easier than orally saying the letters aloud.





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Maths

By the end of Year 2 it is expected that all children should have learnt their 2, 5 and 10 times tables as well as their number bonds to 10 and 20. The ***school's expectation is that children will practise their number bonds and times tables with an adult for 5 minutes every day.*** Tables can be chanted, sung, or listened to on CD and long car journeys are an excellent opportunity to practise! Mental arithmetic is another important aspect of our work in daily maths lessons- at home your child can practise mental arithmetic skills in games and everyday tasks such as sharing sweets, counting up the value of coins, telling the time, working out how long is their favourite T.V. programme, etc...

End of Key Stage 1 Assessment

I appreciate that it is rather early to be thinking about the end of Year 2 when your child is at the beginning of this academic year. However, I feel it is important to make you aware that your child will be assessed in reading, maths, as well as spelling, punctuation, and grammar in May 2017. There will be some formal tests as well as teacher assessments. Therefore, it is especially important that you do not take your child out of school for any reason during May.

In conclusion, I would just like to add that most children are very conscientious and work hard in school. Therefore, in order to perform their best in the classroom it is important that after school and at weekends they have time to pursue their own interests, recreational activities, as well as relax. If you do have any questions concerning any aspect of the curriculum or how your child is progressing, please do not hesitate to come into school and speak to me.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Simon Mullen

