



Jessie Younghusband School

Year 1 – Curriculum Letter – Autumn Term 1

Welcome to Year 1! I am really looking forward to working with your children, in partnership with you, to ensure that they have a very happy and successful year.

Unfortunately, current restrictions mean that the informal 'hello' chats that we would usually have during the first few weeks of term won't be able to take place this year. However, I already know some of you through teaching your older child(ren) and I look forward to meeting everyone in person properly as the year progresses. In the meantime, if you do need to discuss something with me, please do get in touch via email at sarah.peart@jys.org.uk.

The purpose of this curriculum letter is to give you some useful information about the learning themes, routines and expectations of our class, which I hope you will find both informative and helpful in assisting your child during their first term in Year 1. An 'Introduction to Year 1' video, in which I introduce myself, show you around our classroom and talk about this term's learning themes, can be found on our school website:

https://www.jys.org.uk/website/year_1/133441.

You will also be able to find long term planning documents for each subject on the school website which will give you an overview of the areas of learning and curriculum content that the children will be studying as they move through the school.

Morning Routines

We are going to ask our Year 1s to leave you on the playground and come down the ramp by themselves, where they will be guided in to the Year 1 classroom. One of the school's senior leadership team will be on the playground to support them to do this.

From what we have already seen this term, the children are already beginning to take responsibility for sorting out their belongings and settling quickly to the first task of the day. This is an important step forwards in encouraging the development of their independence and organisational skills. Thank you for your support with this.

Reminders:

- The **school reading scheme** has been updated to ensure clearer progression that is closely matched to the phonics learning that the children do as they move through Year R and Key Stage 1. As a result, you will now find that each reading book has a colour spine label which has a number on it. For example, within 'Red' band, certain books are labelled with a '1', whilst others are labelled with a '2'. It is important that the children have the opportunity to read the '1' books before moving onto the '2' books.



Due to the current situation, children will be helped by an adult to **change their reading book** in school **once a week**. The book will be sent home in a plastic zippy wallet, inside their bag, in order to protect it from water bottle spillages or becoming accidentally bent or torn. Please enjoy reading and re-reading the book at home with your child several times in order to develop their fluency and understanding of the story. Please also continue to write in your child's **'reading comments' book**, noting any particular observations that you make during each reading session. The 'reading comments' book should be kept in the plastic wallet with the reading book and brought into school every day please. Once a book is returned to school, it will be quarantined for 72 hours before being placed back on the reading scheme shelves for others to use.

The children will be heard read regularly in school but, again due to current circumstances, school staff will read a different book (from the same book band) with your child at school and will keep notes about your child's progress in a separate log, rather than in your child's 'reading comments' book which we would normally do. I know that some parents have previously used the 'reading comments' book as a way to pass on other (non-reading related) communications to staff. However, as we will not be looking in these books at the current time, please send me an email with any comments or questions instead.

Reading at home is essential; daily if possible. We encourage the children to visit the library and to read other books at home, as well as those from the school reading scheme. This could include fiction and non-fiction books, children's newspapers, joke books and magazines/comics. In fact, the wider the range of genres that your child reads, the better! Reading with your child regularly, and discussing books with them, will not only help them to develop their fluency and comprehension skills but will also help them to foster a real love of reading.

- **Home Learning activities:** to reduce the amount of paper and books being passed between home and school at this present time, we will not be setting formal "home learning" in the first autumn half term. Instead, we are encouraging children to read, learn their spellings, practice their times tables. If they would like to independently learn more about any of the topics they are studying in class, then we would encourage this.
- **Spellings:** again, to reduce the number of items passing between school and home in the current climate, these will be posted on the school's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) and can be accessed online. Spellings will be in place for Friday to be learnt ready for a test on the following Friday. This routine will begin soon.
- **P.E. kits** – again, due to the situation we are in due to Covid-19. for the first half term, we are asking that children only bring in a change of shoes for PE (trainers preferably) which should be left in school all week from Monday morning, as the children may need them for lessons, clubs and ad-hoc sporting activities at different points during the week.
- Please send a written note in if your child has a verruca and cannot do P.E. barefooted or if your child is unable to take part in P.E. for a medical reason. For safety reasons, no watches or jewellery should be worn during P.E. lessons. If your child wears earrings and it is not possible for them to be removed for P.E., please let me know.
- A weekly '**Show and Tell**' session will be held each Friday afternoon, to allow the children time to share any exciting news with the class. This will be done on a group-by-group rotation basis and the children will be told in advance which group's turn it will be each week, in order to give them time to prepare. There is no expectation that every child will want to participate but everyone will be given the opportunity to do so. Given the current circumstances, children will not be able to bring in any physical items to 'show'. However, you are welcome to email me a photo of something, which we can display on our whiteboard during their talk instead. Please encourage your child to choose a 'Show and Tell' topic that will be of real interest to others in the class! This might include something that is related to our current in-school learning theme or a photo from a recent special event, experience, day trip or holiday. No 'favourite teddy/toy' talks please! As the time slot for each 'Show and Tell' session is limited, your child may want to prepare 3 fun facts about their topic in advance, to help them to talk confidently in front of the class.

This half term

This half term will be an exciting and stimulating one, with many cross-curricular links. This means that there will be strong links between subjects and children can see their learning as being connected, relevant and purposeful. Our main learning theme for the half term is **'Weather Wizardry'** in which we will focus on learning all about the weather around the world and the seasons. This theme will have links with literacy, maths, science, design and technology, art and computing.

Forest Schools

Year 1 have the exciting opportunity to take part in Forest Schools sessions later this term. Forest Schools allows the children to learn outside of the classroom and to explore their environment and surroundings. A letter to explain more about this will be sent out in due course.

Ideas for supporting your child's learning:

- Keep reading regularly with your child at home.
- Help your child to practise reading and writing the numbers from 0 to 10 and then to 20. Can they show you what a number represents by using beads, coins, toy cars, pencils or pieces of dried pasta for example?
- Practise counting to ten (and then to twenty) together, going forwards and backwards in ones. Start from zero first but then give your child different starting numbers when they are more confident. Can they say what is 'one more' or 'one less' than any number up to ten (and then up to twenty)?
- Talk about the weather with your child! Discuss how the day length is getting shorter and talk about what changes they can see and feel in the environment around them as the season of summer gives way to the beginning of autumn.
- Talk about any plants and trees that you have in your garden or that you walk past on your way to school. What are they like? Help your child to compare and contrast them. Talk about the different parts of a plant (e.g. stem, leaf, flowers). Can your child name any of the different plants and trees that they see regularly?
- If possible, plant some vegetables or bulbs together at home and watch them grow!



I look forward to getting to know your child over the coming weeks and I hope that they will gain many rich learning experiences throughout the busy and exciting year ahead.

With very best wishes,

Mrs Neville