



10th September 2021

Dear Parents,

Hello all – we hope you have had a lovely summer! We are really excited to be at the beginning of a new academic year and to be welcoming an almost brand new set of children into our Falcons class. Everyone has returned revived, and the weather is glorious, so things are normal for September so far!

As well as our heartfelt welcome, we would also like to use this letter to introduce you to the routines and systems we have in Falcons Class. If anything is unclear, please do ask one of us, send an email or pop a note into your child's reading journal.

Here we go...

Reading at home

Sustaining a reading journal is so much more than homework. The discipline of regular reading develops fluency as well as a superb learning attitude, which we see impacting on effort, ability and progress in class. The following Y5/6 objectives are addressed through reading journals:

- Checking that the book makes sense to them and exploring the meaning of words in context
- Identifying and discussing themes and conventions in and across a wide range of writing (features of a particular genre)
- Making comparisons within and across books (e.g. comparing characters or books by the same author)
- Participating in discussions about books, explaining their understanding of what they have read and providing reasoned justifications for their views.
(Possibly in presentations and debates, using notes where necessary.)
- Recommending books that they have read to their peers, giving reasons for their choices.

Independent reading and journal writing also develop vital skills that underpin learning in all subjects, holding a learner in very good stead throughout their education, and life. Taking on the responsibility of reading at home means we can concentrate on the skills that are harder for the children to access independently. Here is an example of three such Y5/6 objectives we will be working on in class this term:

- Summarising the main ideas drawn from more than one paragraph, identifying key details that support the main ideas précising longer passages.
- Drawing inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justifying inferences with evidence.
- Discussing and evaluating how authors use language, including figurative language, considering the impact on the reader and how it contributes to meaning.
- Predicting what might happen from details stated and implied.

The quality and quantity of reading is an important part of reading at home. Children should read books that provide the right level of challenge – easy enough to be accessible, but challenging enough to be stimulating. We will have introduced the children to our fantastic class library, and Mrs Bostock likes nothing more than helping children choose books that are the right fit, so please do encourage your child to make the most of this.

We are asking the children to read at home for a minimum of 20 minutes **5 times a week**. We ask for four quality entries (of a minimum of four sentences) to be written in the children's journals each week along with the completion of one task. We still expect the children to read on a task day, and to see a date and page numbers for that day, but the task replaces the journal entry itself. Tasks coincide with the National Curriculum expectations for reading - completing them independently enables the children to consolidate, practice and develop the skills they learn in class.



We have explained these requirements to the children; the following is stuck into their journals to act as a reminder: EVERYTIME - EVEN ON A TASK DAY:

- Date
- Book Title eg: The Boy At The Back Of The Class
- Page Numbers eg:p.49-60

AND ON A NON-TASK DAY:

- MINIMUM FOUR **QUALITY** SENTENCES (record thoughts/feelings/information about what you have read, or use VIPERS).
- LEGIBLE HANDWRITING.
- CORRECT PUNCTUATION – **ESPECIALLY FULL STOPS AND CAPITAL LETTERS.**
- ANY WORDS TAKEN FROM THE TEXT MUST BE SPELT CORRECTLY.

We are asking for reading journals to be handed in daily, from Monday to Friday. This will change to weekly once we are confident the children are familiar with the routine and are meeting our expectations.

Maths Homework

As always, homework serves to consolidate new skills learnt in class, or to revisit and practise existing ones. Maths homework will be **set on a Tuesday and is due back in the following Monday.** We are happy for work to be handed in early if completed before then, and in fact we actively encourage everyone to attempt the work in advance in case they need to check anything with us. Occasionally personal assignments will be set on MyMaths and we will let you know when that is.

Spelling Homework

We have a formal spelling lesson **every Monday.** This will involve a spelling test and the introduction of the new rule/words for the week. Homework will be given out at the end of the lesson and is expected back the following Monday. Spelling homework is different to Maths in that we ask the children to do a little each day (10-15 mins) in order to practise the words/rule set – there is no educational value in sitting down the evening before the test and cramming the words as they are forgotten as soon as the test is over. A list of activities is stuck into the homework book to help with daily practise, we encourage the children to select from these to alleviate boredom and learn more about the structure of the words - we find the words are more likely to 'stick' using this method. Sometimes a specific task will be sent home, or we might assign a specific activity from the list. Due to the nature of the spelling homework, it is not usually marked but it is checked weekly and we expect to see evidence of daily practise.

Presentation

Good presentation is a necessary part of life in our class, this is primarily because we need to be able to read the children's wonderful work, but it's also important that they take pride in the things they do. Legible handwriting, with the correct punctuation, is therefore expected at all times. This includes reading journals and maths and spelling homework books - it would help enormously if you could 'remind' your child of this when writing at home as this expectation can be 'forgotten' if we are not present!

PE

On a **Tuesday**, all of the children will have indoor PE (Dance) with Mrs Hunter, their kit needs to be in school so that they can change before the lesson. On a **Wednesday**, Y5 will have swimming, Y6 will have outdoor PE (Hockey) with Mrs Rae. For this they need to come to school already changed. Please adhere to the school PE uniform for both lessons.



Our Timetable

Please find a weekly timetable attached. The following serves as a simple outline for the term:

- **English and Maths fluency** Each day, from 8.50-9:20, the children will be divided into groups for targeted English and Maths 'fluency.' The purpose of this is to keep basic skills ticking over so they aren't forgotten. These will include spelling, grammar and punctuation skills as well as number facts.
- **English:** As it's more interesting for the children, and subsequently creates work of depth and quality, I like writing to link in with other learning. This term, writing will be based around our History focus. We will begin with non-fiction, exploring persuasive texts, before moving onto narrative poetry. After half term there will be a fiction focus.
- **Maths:** We will begin the term with a focus on place value, this will include rounding and negative numbers. After that, we will move onto addition, subtraction and multiplication, starting with division after half term before moving onto fractions.
- **History:** Over the course of history, monarchs have been forced to pass their power over to Parliament, to understand this we will be conducting case studies of selected monarchs in order to establish how and why this shift of power happened.
- **Science:** To begin with we are going to be exploring the properties of (and changes to) materials – this includes work on dissolving, mixing and reversible/irreversible change. After that we will look at Earth and Space, we're hoping to be able to visit the fantastic planetarium at We the Curious in Bristol – fingers crossed!
- **Art and DT:** We will continue to block out our Art and DT projects with two focus days at the end of each term. We find this gives the children quality time to develop skills a little more independently, and become engrossed in the creative process. Before half term DT will involve cooking with seasonal ingredients, so brace yourselves for some delicious treats!! After half term it will be Art - the children are going to have a go at Tudor portrait painting.
- **Computing, Music, RE and Italian**
In Falcons this term, Italian will still be taught by Liberata Paradiso, with the children split into Y5 and Y6 groups. The children will be learning a brass instrument and taught by a specialist music teacher (thankfully.) Mrs Fairhurst will teach computing (the focus is E-Safety and digital writing, followed by Garage Band) and Mrs Hunter will teach RE, beginning with creation, moving onto harvest, remembrance, incarnation and the Christmas story.

Apologies for the lengthy letter, we know it's a lot but your support is highly valued (and makes a significant difference to your child's learning) so it's important to share these things with you.

Here's to a happy, successful term!

With very best wishes to you all,

Sophie Kerr Lynn Bostock Sarah Edmunds



		8.50 9.20am	10.15am	11.00am	1.00pm	3.15 Home
MON	8.40-8.50 Early morning tasks and registration	English/Maths Fluency	Grammar and Punctuation 10.15 Assembly	Maths	Computing Mrs Fairhurst	Music (Brass)
TUES		English/Maths Fluency	Reading Comprehension	Maths	Indoor PE Mrs Hunter	RE Mrs Hunter
WED		English/Maths Fluency	English Writing, Grammar, Punctuation	Maths (Y5 11.15-11.45 Italian)	Y5 Swimming	Y6 Italian <u>Liberata Paradiso</u> Outdoor PE Mrs Rae
THURS		English/Maths Fluency	English Writing, Grammar, Punctuation	Maths	Science/ Humanities	Science/ Humanities
FRI		English/Maths Fluency	English Writing	Maths	Science/ Humanities	PSHE followed by SHINE SKILLS at 2.15 Assembly 2.45

LUNCH 12 - 1pm

10.15 Assembly, 10.30 Snack and Story followed by break at 10.45