

Benwick Primary School



High Street, Benwick, March, Cambs. PE15 0XA

Telephone: 01354 677266

email: office@benwick.cambs.sch.uk

Headteacher: Mrs. J. North, BEd Hons, NPQH

www.benwick.cambs.sch.uk

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Link Up Owls – Summer Term 2017

Welcome back!

Where has the time gone? I can hardly believe that we are already beginning the third and final term of the year; it seems that only yesterday I was welcoming the children to the class after the summer holidays, and now here we are getting ever closer to the end. We have a busy and exciting term to look forward to where the children will continue to build on the amazing skills they have developed over the course of the year.

Our theme for the term is **Dazzling Donaldson** – this is an English-based topic, built around the books of the famous children's author Julia Donaldson who is probably best known for writing 'The Gruffalo'.

In **English** we will be spending the first part of the term enjoying several **Julia Donaldson stories** and using these to help us work on our reading, writing and communication skills. At the end of the unit, we will be writing our own stories using some of the characters Julia Donaldson has created; watch this space! Later in the term we will move on to looking at **newspaper reports, biography and shape poetry**, again all themed around Julia Donaldson and her books.

Our **History** and **Geography** learning will also be inspired by Julia Donaldson's books; over the course of the term, we will find out about pirates (in relation to the book 'The Troll' – trust me, it is about pirates!), dinosaurs ('Tyrannosaurus Drip'), the seaside ('Sharing a Shell') and China ('The Magic Paintbrush'). As these are all 'mini-topics' within the main Dazzling Donaldson topic, we will just touch on these areas, spending a week on each.

During the weeks where **Computing** will be the focus in the afternoons, we will be using approved internet sites to research the life of Julia Donaldson, and will then work in pairs to present what we have found out using Microsoft Power Point. This also lends itself to finding out about internet safety and how to protect ourselves when we are working online.

Our **Music** weeks will again be based around Julia Donaldson. Luckily for me, as well as being a fantastic author she has also written songs to accompany many of her stories. We will spend time learning these songs before choosing instruments and creating musical accompaniments to go with them.

In the weeks where **DT** or **Art** is the focus, we will be thinking about making healthy snacks and the drawings of Axel Scheffler, Julia Donaldson's long-time illustrating partner. This half-term we will focus on the **DT** side of things, where we will learn about healthy eating and make a dish mysteriously entitled 'Owl on Toast' (if you know 'The Gruffalo', hopefully you won't think I'm too crazy!). After the half-term, we will move on to Art and creating some of our own characters in the style of Axel Scheffler.

RE this term centres around 'Stories Jesus Told', where we will be learning about well-know Bible stories such as Noah's Ark, The Good Samaritan and The Lost Sheep. As well as carrying out craft activities linked to the stories, we will think about the messages Christian people take from them.

Maths as always focuses on the key areas of number, shape and space and data handling. Alongside continuing to hone our arithmetic skills and calculation methods, we will also be having a go at lots of 'reasoning' and problem-solving activities, where the children are encouraged to apply these skills to different situations.

In **Science**, we are initially finding out about **Plants**; their different parts and their purposes, the difference between deciduous and evergreen plants, and the best conditions for plants to grow in. After the half-term, we will instead focus on how to keep our bodies healthy, including caring for our teeth, the effect of exercise and hand hygiene.

PE will take place every **Friday afternoon** for Year 2 children. All children need to have a full named PE kit in school, with an appropriate change of footwear. Your child must have their hair tied back, and earrings taken out for PE. Year 3 children will be going swimming with Mrs Goulbourne for the best part of the term, and this will also take place on **Friday afternoon**. In the second part of the term, all of the children in Owls will have the wonderful opportunity to take part in some extra PE lessons organised by the Witchford Schools' Partnership, and I will let you know more about this when I have the details.

Homework

Reading –Your child should bring their reading book home every night, and can change it themselves whenever a book is finished. I know that time is very tight in our busy lives but just ten minutes reading at home each evening can make a big difference to the children's progress. I know lots of you have seen fantastic progress in your child's reading and this is something I'm really keen to build on this term. Don't forget, if your child has moved on to the 'Accelerated Reader' scheme, you can log on to find out how well your child is performing in their comprehension quizzes.

<https://ukhosted32.renlearn.co.uk/2233>

Maths and English – Maths and English homework will be given out each Friday, and I would like it to be handed back in by the following Wednesday **at the latest**, please. This will give me an opportunity to mark it and organise new homework in time for Friday. The homework will be based around things which we have learned during the week.

Spellings – Spellings will also be sent home on a Friday and will be tested the following Thursday or Friday. We'll record the children's scores in their homework folders each week so you can see how they're getting on.

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One final word in what has been a long 'Link-Up Letter' – the Summer Term inevitably means Key Stage 1 tests (**SATs**) for all Year 2 children nationally. I will be sending a letter home very soon which will give you more information about what the tests involve, but I would like to make you aware now that we will be doing the tests in the week beginning **15th May**. At this point I would please ask you not to worry about the tests or put any undue pressure on the children; although of course they are important, the 'levels' the children receive at the end of Year 2 take into account my teacher assessments from across the year as well as the SATs scores, and so they are not 'the be all and end all'. All we ever want is for the children to do their best.

As always, if you have any worries, concerns or questions about any aspect of school life, please don't hesitate to contact me. 😊

Mrs Johnson
Owl Class Teacher