



J1 NEWSLETTER



SPRING 2018

Welcome back, Happy New Year! We hope you all had a lovely Christmas. This term is English term and the school focus is **Creative Writing**.

We will be looking at Capital Letters and when they are used and encouraging children to look for capital letters in the environment.

In class, we are continuing to develop fine-motor skills by cutting, threading, sticking and modelling with playdough. We still have a focus on mindfulness, particularly having a quiet moment to just be still. We would like to encourage you to put down computer games and turn off mobile phones and tablets for half an hour a week to allow time for shared activities and stories with the whole family.

Reading

Reading continues to be a major focus at this level and picture books are great for children of Reception age. They can be encouraged to read some of the words they recognise and discuss the pictures with you, as well as having some important time with you to share and discuss.

If you have older children in the family, encourage them to read to the younger members who love to have a story read to them.

We would like to encourage you to find different books for your children to enjoy and maybe ones that we don't have at school, to broaden their knowledge and understanding. Also as they begin to read more words, you may like to find books to read and enjoy at home other than our Oxford

Reading Tree scheme with Chip, Biff and Kipper – variety is the key!

At the moment, the children are learning to de-code and we are teaching the high-frequency sight words so that when they start to read the stories, they make sense and are enjoyable. Children need to be able to understand what they are reading and re-tell the story in their own words rather than just de-coding words on a page.

Reading throughout the school is based on understanding of the text or story. Please discuss the story or words with your child as they may be able to read the word, but may not know what it means. This is very important for their future work in comprehension. Even discussing the picture can lead to conversations about characters and the plot and extends their vocabulary.

Our next topic will be based on a Space and Aliens theme. The following books will be used in school:

- Q Pootle 5 in Space
- The Man on the Moon
- Bob's Best Ever Friend
- We're Off to Look for Aliens
- Here Come the Aliens
- Roaring Rockets
- Aliens love underpants



We would be very happy to share any favourite 'alien' themed books you may have at home as well as any factual books you may have about space or the solar system.

This topic will extend across the areas of learning and will provide opportunities to look at non-fiction books about space and spacecraft, rockets and the lunar landings, amongst other things.

Positive Parenting

This is being held on Monday 16th January 6.30 – 8pm in the school hall if you wish to gain support and guidance using helpful strategies to manage your child's behaviour. Please see the separate letter and return the slip to us as soon as possible as there is a maximum of 20 places.

Letterland

We will be revising the letter sounds and introducing the 'Best Friends' (double consonants *ss ll ff zz ck*) – these are two letters but they only make one sound together, for example, 'miss' or 'well'.

Please join us for our Letterland Evening on Monday 23rd January from 6.30 pm where we will be taking you through some of the Letterland stories and how we present them to the children.

Handwriting

We are working on anticlockwise turns in letters c, o, a, d, g, q and s. Children are becoming more confident and we do lots of pre-writing activities to aid their pencil control.

Waterproofs

Waterproofs and wellies need to be returned to school in a named carrier bag by Monday 9th January. Please also provide gloves and a hat as the weather can be cold at this time of

year. If your child has an old coat or jacket at home, you may like to send this in to go under their waterproofs for extra warmth as we go out in all weathers!

Earrings/Hair

Any girl with pierced ears may wear earrings for swimming or PE, but this is at your own risk.

Nail polish should not be worn or other items of jewellery unless they are pertinent to your religion.

Forthcoming Events

Between now and half term:

J1 Coffee morning	3 rd March
Positive Parenting	16 th Jan
Letterland evening	23 rd Jan
S4 Bring and Buy Sale	10 th Feb
Half term	11 th -19 th Feb

Please look at the school website regularly for updates -

www.mertoncourtprep.co.uk

Snacks

Just a reminder that we do encourage the children to bring in two healthy snacks – fruit is ideal and no chocolate, crisps or nuts please.

Uniform

In order that your lost items may be returned to you quickly, please would you ensure that all items of uniform are **visibly labelled**.

A school coat is now compulsory and available from Oz. Please ensure it is big enough to fit over their blazer and remember hats, gloves and scarves must be regulation uniform.

Merit badges should be removed from blazers as we start afresh this term.

We look forward to a busy and successful term.

The J1 Team.