

Newsletter

Friday 13th January 2023

MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD

This past week I have had the pleasure of showing visitors around and I want to compliment the children, who did not know they were to be visited, but presented in such a way that their behavior for learning did not fail to impress! Every class we visited showed the children hard at work and those who were moving around school were polite and courteous, demonstrating our school values perfectly.

I hope that you were able to log on to the website after last week's newsletter to have a look at the curriculum information that is shared with you. The yearly overviews will not change but there will be termly updates when topics change and I will notify you of when this occurs. This week I want to draw your attention to Knowledge Organisers which we have started to use in school:

What is a 'Knowledge Organiser'?

A Knowledge Organiser is a go-to document for a unit of work (generally topic or science): each one identifies the key information that children will have learnt about by the end of a topic or theme. It also acts as a tool to support children in retaining and retrieving knowledge for life-long learning.

How do they help teachers?

They are used as a planning tool - to plan the essential knowledge that children need to cover in the unit

- Key dates
- Key people
- Key events
- Key vocabulary and definitions, and key concepts - in 'child friendly' language

How do they help children?

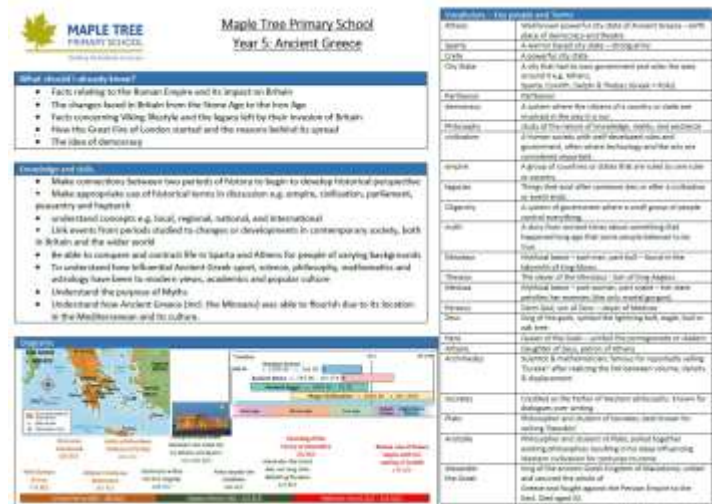
They provide the essential knowledge that children need to cover in the unit shared at the beginning so children know what they are going to be learning. Knowledge Organisers help them to remember key dates, key people, key events, vocabulary and definitions and key concepts. They can be used as a fun assessment tool to help remember the units. They improve their ability to remember. Each organiser used in school, also has an accompanying quiz, which is regularly taken by the children in school to help children recall the key knowledge from each unit of work.

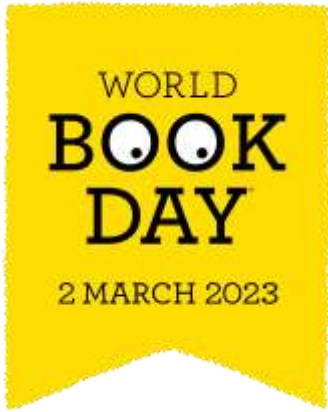
How do they help parents?

Parents will have a better understanding of what the children need to know. They will allow parents to build on their knowledge at home and provide an easy tool for parents to quiz children at home (and children to quiz parents!).

Once each Knowledge Organiser has been completed, we will gradually place them on the Knowledge Organiser page which can be found off each Class page for your information. - eg [Our Pupil - Classes - Yr 6 Elder Class - Knowledge Organisers](#)

If you have any questions regarding our curriculum, please do contact us. I hope you all have a good weekend.





World Book Day—Thursday 2nd March 2023

Plans for World Book Day are well underway, therefore we want to give advanced notice for a few things.

This year:

- We will be encouraging pupils to dress up as a book character—you may like to join in with the staff book theme of Harry Potter.
- We will be holding a 'readathon'.
- We will be creating a school book that we have hopes to publish.

More information will follow soon.

A small plea from Miss Hyde:



I have been scouring the internet for a plush or stuffed maple leaf to feature as a character in our school book but have been unsuccessful. Are any of you wonderful parents/grandparents/carers able and willing to crochet or knit a maple leaf that could be stuffed to become a cuddly toy? If you think you can help—please send an email to teacher@mapletreepriamaryschool.com, or leave a message

with the office and I will be in contact!



DementiaUK

Fundraising:

At the end of this month Miss Hyde is walking 26.6 miles (a full marathon) in London to raise money for Dementia UK in memory of her late Grandad.

Dementia UK is the specialist dementia nurse charity. Their nurses, called Admiral Nurses – who they continually support and develop – provide life-changing care for families affected by all forms of dementia, including Alzheimer's disease.

She has been busy completing long training walks after work and at weekends in the wind and rain, but has been reinforcing the school message of 'Be bright and be seen'.

She says 'I work hard to maintain a fit and active lifestyle because I try to be a positive role model for the children in the school. I am especially passionate about inspiring young girls to not shy away from outdoor and physical activities. Challenges like this not only raise much needed money for charity, but push us mentally and show school values like determination and perseverance.'

If you would like to donate [click here](#). Thank you.



AR Spring Challenge

This week we have launched a class vs class challenge in KS2, to see which class can be the first to have every child pass their AR target this half term. The winning class will win a golden afternoon of their choice.

Miss Hyde is monitoring the 'stats' every Wednesday, when she has her assembly by monitoring how much reading and quizzing is happening. She is also picking a reader of the week every week and this week's was Charlie A in year 5, who was the first child to hit his target this half term. Well done Charlie!

Online Safety Update

Christmas has now come to a close and a new year has begun. As pupils and staff return to school, discussions turn towards what new tech the children received for Christmas. For many the answer will almost certainly be 'a Fortnite battle pass, a new PC, a PlayStation 5, a VR headset etc'. All devices which allow both access to the internet and expose children to voice chat, text chat and photo sharing with complete strangers.

VR headsets:

This year presents a new online safety risk, VR headsets, connected to Facebook's Metaverse have been released onto the marketplace. The Metaverse seeks to link users to the internet as a Virtual Entity through the use of Virtual Reality Headsets. This amplifies the danger children are exposed to online. To help you understand this new, fast changing

issue the NSPCC has published a guide to both the Metaverse and VR headsets. To find out more please follow the link: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/virtual-reality-headsets/>

Fortnite:

Since its release 2017, the battle-royale simulator – Fortnite, has maintained popularity amongst children. The game, which features cartoonish renderings of characters, bright colours and non-visceral consequence free violence, has had a mass appeal to children. Each Christmas more young pupils enter the crowded multi-player lobbies, to the point that there is not a school pupil in the country who hasn't owned it, begged their parents for it or played it round a friend's house. As a result more children than ever are exposed to multi-player chatting with strangers, and financial exploitation via the game's spend-to-gain-advantage operating style. Allowing children to use real world money to gain perks and costumes. From criminal blackmailing, to the coercion of nude exchanges by online 'friends' posing as children, the danger this game presents from a safeguarding perspective is clear. As an added complication, the slang surrounding the game used by children is near-incomprehensible. Fortunately to allow for better understanding of the game, Internetmatters.org has published a guide to understanding the game and its terms. You can find the link below: <https://www.internetmatters.org/hub/guidance/fortnite-battle-royal-parents-guide-keep-kids-safe->



New books!

Thank you again to all parents and carers who bought books at our scholastic book fair. We have started to spend our reward money on some new books to be used across the school. Do you recognise any of our favourite texts?



Mulberries and Fir

Yew and Aspen



Poplar and Elder

Last term in Year 4 (Autumn)



Our first theme in Year 4 was the 'Romans' and throughout the Autumn term, the children showed great enthusiasm. In English, we explored explanation texts, recount writing, adventure stories and legends. The legend of Romulus and Remus was a particular hit. The children developed their ability to describe both characters and settings.

We were extremely lucky to be visited by Cat and her team as well, who are archaeologists that are currently excavating alongside the A428— just a stone throw away from school. With Cat, we explored childhood in the Roman times and created a basket from weaving natural

(although dyed) materials together.



In science, we learned how our ears work to listen to sound and also the human digestive system. We created a physical representation to show the process of how each organ plays a part. Through looking at the different types of teeth, we were able to compare them to animals and explore how some animals have evolved to have specific teeth based on their diet.



This term in Year 4 (Spring)

Through our theme of 'Rainforests' this term, we will be learning about the geography of rainforests, living things and their habitats in science, and the ancient, fascinating Maya civilisation in history.



So far in maths, we have been learning about factor pairs to help our understanding of multiplication and division. We have also focussed on our mental strategies, learning tips and tricks to give our minds more room to think about harder problems. After building fluency with multiplying and dividing by 10 and 100, we will learn formal methods of multiplying and dividing. Times tables are becoming stronger, but we are still practising our 7s, 8s as these are tricky.

In PE, Mrs Payne will be teaching a unit on dance. Poplar class have been practising travelling around the hall in different ways, sequencing a variety of moves together. We are also continuing to build our team work skills.





PSHCE at Maple Tree Primary School

Personal, Social, Health, physical and mental, Citizenship and Economic (P.S.H.C.E.), Relationships and Health Education (R.H.E.) are at the base of all that we do in preparing pupils for the 21st century. P.S.H.C.E. and R.H.E. enables children to become healthy, secure, independent and responsible members of a diverse society. Although P.S.H.C.E. is non-statutory, we see it as an important and necessary part of all pupils' learning. All children participate in P.S.H.C.E. learning using the 3D curriculum, through topics, such as, Health and Wellbeing, Relationships and Living in the Wider World. P.S.H.C.E. is taught weekly which can be through discrete learning following our scheme of learning, or circle times that identify specific needs of each class. R.H.E. is taught throughout the year within our scheme of learning. Again, any needs of individual classes may be identified and discussed within a circle time or with individual children.

Monthly Mental Health & Wellbeing Focus: This month is Inspirational Quotes. Teachers are given a daily quote to share with their classes at the start of the day. There are also two Mental Health activity stations (as photographed) around the school with self-help activities for pupils to take away inc. calm-down cards and mindfulness colouring.

Each year group has a new focus each half-term. For Spring 1, 2023, they are as follows:

Preschool/Reception: Making Relationships, Self Confidence/Awareness, Managing Feelings/Behaviour

Year 1: Relationships—Bullying

Year 2: Living in the Wider World—Communities

Year 3: Health & Wellbeing—Healthy Lifestyles

Year 4: Health & Wellbeing—Safety

Year 5: Relationships—Healthy Relationships

Year 6: Relationships & Health education—Drug and & Substance Abuse

Our pupils' mental health & wellbeing is supported in several ways using a whole-school approach. Pupils have the opportunity to check-in with their class adults twice per day at register time using a thumbs up/down in preschool and choosing a number between 1 to 5 in Reception to Year 6.

1 2 3 4 5



Pupils are encouraged to talk about their feelings and/or worries from a young age to support their mental health throughout the school day and beyond.



Changes to our Attendance Policy

We have updated our Attendance Policy and Leave of Absence Request form which will be shared with you later this term, but we are noticing an increase in leave of absence requests. Please do remember that these are unlikely to be authorised unless the circumstances are exceptional; we are keen to ensure that children are meeting, or even exceeding, their attendance target of 97% so that their education does not suffer.

We have also changed the policy for contacting parents of children in Years 5 and 6 who may be absent beyond 1 day. If we have not heard from parents/carers to say their child is still off, the school office will call home to check whether your child is at home or is meant to be in school. This is a safeguarding measure as our Year 5/6 children generally tend to walk into school by themselves.

This week's House Winners



Congratulations!

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Thursday 19th January 9am - 9.45am Parent Forum

24th - 27th January Year 6 Mock SATs week

Wednesday 8th February 4-6pm Parents' Evening

Thursday 9th February 4-7pm Parents' Evening

Monday 13th - Friday 17th February Half Term

Wednesday 22nd February Thinking Day - Brownies and Guides may wear their organisation uniforms

Thursday 2nd March World Book Day

Friday 31st March EYFS and KS1 Easter Assembly for parents

Monday 3rd - Monday 17th April Easter Holidays

Monday 17th April INSET day


Tuesday 18th April - Term starts

Attendance Awards

Our target is 97%

Week beginning 28th November

The best attendance award is presented to: **Rowan** class!

Blossom (Mulberries) 91%	Berries (Mulberries) 83%
Fir (YR) 95% 	Yew (Y1) 93%
Aspen (Y2) 96%	Rowan (Y3) 97%
Poplar (Y4) 93%	Juniper (Y5) 91%
Cherry (Y5) 95%	Elder (Y6) 93%