



Curriculum Information

Sycamore

September - October 2021

Produced by:

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www.swansfield.northumberland.sch.uk



Welcome to the first Upper Key Stage 2 newsletter of the year. It's been wonderful to have the children back at school; listening to their stories and hearing their laughter and excitement once again. We are happy to report that the children are settling well into their new classes and routines and we are all enjoying working and spending time together.

Our topic for this half term is Raging River

This includes:

Geography - Local study of the River Coquet

Children will begin by explaining the features of the water cycle and why it is a closed cycle. They will use atlases to locate rivers both in the UK and around the world. They will continue to practise their map reading skills by using four and six figure grid references to give accurate locations on a map and interpret Ordnance survey maps, including the use of a key. They will understand the key features of rivers and compare these along the different points of a river's course. The children will also explore how a river can change over time and consider what may cause this. Children will end their work by observing, measuring and sketching maps of a local river, including the key features of its course.

History - Local study of Cragside / Lord Armstrong

Children will begin by investigating the history of Cragside House and Sir William Armstrong. They will follow on by investigating Sir Armstrong's love of energy and water and how he constructed the world's first hydroelectric power station using an array of hydraulic mechanisms to operate labour-saving devices in the house, making connections to how his machinery is also used on the London Tower Bridge.

Design and Technology - Structures: Building Bridges

Children will learn how simple bridges are constructed using beams, pillars or piers before progressing to make and test beam bridge designs. They will learn how trusses are used in bridge designs to spread out compression forces. They may then either build and test model truss bridges, or use software to explore how truss bridges may be constructed. Following on, the children will explore how arches are used to spread and redirect compression forces acting on bridges. They will then build and test model arch bridges. Finally, they will learn about how suspension bridges use tension to support bridge decks spanning large distances. The children will end the unit of work by drawing upon their new knowledge from the above to design, build and test a bridge design against a given, specific criterion.

Science - Light

Children will learn of multiple ways to classify natural and man-made light sources, distinguish between these as well as items and materials that reflect light. They will investigate how light travels in a straight line creating shadows as well as how light can change direction when it is reflected. When investigating, they will need to hypothesise what characteristics reflective surfaces will have. Within this unit of work, they will also look at how light is needed to see, and consider how our eyes work. Children will then consider what questions could be asked about shadows, how shadows may change as well as what causes this. They will then conduct practical shadow investigations where they will test their ideas and prove their findings. They will finish the unit of work by exploring the similarities and differences between shadows and reflections.

Science - Electricity

Children will start by recapping their prior knowledge regarding electricity and circuits, then identify, discuss and test to find differences between series and parallel circuits. They will move on to suggesting ways in which changing circuits could affect the brightness of a bulb or the speed of a motor, investigating these ideas through practical activities. Children will learn about a variety of symbols used in circuit diagrams and use these symbols to create diagrams of circuits. To finish this unit of work, the children will design a series of investigations to test ways in which wires of different lengths, thicknesses and materials may affect the brightness of a bulb.

Computing - E Safety

The children will begin by investigating similarities and differences between in-person and cyberbullying. They will work together to identify strategies in order to deal with this before progressing to understanding privacy seals of approval. Children will begin to recognise ways in which the internet and social media can be used both positively and negatively whilst understanding the information that should not be shared online.

Other subjects:

P.E. Swimming OR Sports Coaching with NUF (Tues) and Team Games with NUF (Fri)

French The High Street

P.S.H.E. Being Me In My World

Music Charanga: Livin' on a Prayer / Happy

R.E. Islam: What is the best way for a Muslim to show commitment to God?

English:

Faraway Fiction: Kensuke's Kingdom

Children will explore the text focussing on vocabulary and the emotions of the character. They will develop their inference skills by exploring images and text that supports the story and use this to write a prediction using these as evidence. The children will then progress to developing their retrieval, sequencing and drama skills while exploring the chapters before moving on to using the text to inspire their writing.

Poetry: The River by Valerie Bloom

Children will explore the poem identifying figurative language and the structure following the rhythm of the river. They will use their knowledge from their Humanities lessons to understand the geographical references in the poem. After being drenched in vocabulary, the children will write their own poem about a river using figurative language.

Mathematics: Place Value and Calculating

Children will develop and demonstrate mastery in their knowledge, skills and understanding of place value and calculating this half term. They will read, write order and compare numbers up to at least 1,000,000 (Year 5) / 10,000,000 (Year 6) whilst determining the value of each digit and rounding them to the nearest 10, 100, 1000, 10,000 and 100,000. They will also use negative numbers in context, calculating intervals across zero as well as read Roman numerals to 1000 (M).

When calculating, children will use formal written methods, adding and subtracting whole numbers with more than 4 digits (Year 5 and Year 6) as well as multiplying and dividing numbers with up to 4 digits by a 2-digit whole number (Year 6). The children's ability to 'reason' will be developed throughout all of their mathematical work as they are continuously encouraged to explain, justify and deepen their thinking.

Homework & Spellings

Weekly Tasks: As communicated on Friday 10th September, every Monday, your child will be set a selection of online homework tasks, these will all be outlined within their Google Classroom account. Tasks will be based upon what the children have been learning in class in order to consolidate their new knowledge, skills and understanding. All children will have six days in which to complete and submit their homework. If your child has any difficulties accessing their homework online, please contact their class teacher and alternative arrangements can be discussed.

Spellings: Last week, your child was given their login details for our online spelling programme 'Spelling Frame' (www.spellingframe.co.uk). Spellings will be set on a Monday and made live for six days. It is important that your child routinely practises their spellings as well as completes two online tests each week.

Mental Maths: Your child has also been given their login details for Times Tables Rockstars and Sumdog (www.trockstars.com / www.sumdog.com). These online programmes should be used by your child on a weekly basis to develop and secure their times tables skills. Metal maths skills will be tested on a weekly basis by class teachers.

Reading: Your child will access their weekly reading homework online through Reading Plus. They will need to read online for a minimum of 30 minutes each week, selecting the texts that they are interested in and answering a range of comprehension questions in order to demonstrate their understanding.

It is also important that your child reads a range of literature. Please encourage them to read magazines, letters and newspapers for at least one hour per week in addition to the above homework expectations.

Disclaimers: As detailed in the letter dated 13th July, disclaimers are a really important step for our Upper Key Stage 2 children in terms of their independence and preparation for secondary education. The vast majority of children show the necessary maturity and self-control and behave well acting as good role models to younger children. Please can we continue to ask for your support with regards to the expectation of outstanding behaviour which goes along with the disclaimer. We appreciate that many parents rely on the convenience that the disclaimer brings however if your child's behaviour causes concern then we will ask you to come into school to discuss their behaviour and this privilege may be withdrawn.

Additional items in school: Each child has been provided with a stationery pack again this year so please ensure that pencil cases and equipment remain at home. Each child will however need to bring a clean, named water bottle to school each day.

Mobile phones should only come in to school under exceptional circumstances. Children will have to leave them in their coat pockets and school will take no responsibility for loss or damage to mobile phones in school.

Although mobile phones are not used within school, please could we also ask that children's use of social media outside of school is carefully monitored by all parents. If you would like further guidance regarding age restrictions or parental controls, we are more than happy to provide you with this information.

PE Kits: As communicated last week, children in UKS2 will be having sports coaching sessions on a Friday with staff from the Newcastle United Foundation. They will need to come to school dressed in their outdoor PE kit on this day.

Please note that our Upper Key Stage 2 children will either swim or have an additional coaching session with NUF on a Tuesday this term as well. Details can be found in the UKS2 PE letter sent to parents last week.

Wellies and outdoor shoes: Please ensure that your child has a pair of named wellies or outdoor shoes available in school at all times for playtime as well as outdoor learning activities. Children in KS2 will continue to participate in a Daily Mile Challenge so additional footwear in school is essential.

And finally, from the Upper Key Stage 2 team...

Thank you for all of your support and positive comments over the last week, they really are appreciated. If you have any further queries or questions, please just get in touch, we are always here to help.

Take care,

Mrs Murdy Miss Back Mrs Rutherford Mrs O'Connell

Please also use the school website to keep up to date with your child's learning. Teachers regularly update their class pages with photographs and important information for parents.

