

NEWSLETTER



Swansfield Park Primary School, The Avenue, Alnwick, Northumberland NE66 1UL

JANUARY 2021

Happy New Year and a remote welcome to the spring term at Swansfield Park, we hope you made the most of the Christmas holiday. It seems a distant memory as events have moved on so quickly since and once again we find ourselves in another national lockdown.

Firstly, I hope that you are all well, safe and secure. The wellbeing of our children and families is our primary concern, even though we are not at school we are always available, working remotely from home. **If you need support, please contact myself (Jenny.Smith@swansfield.northumberland.sch.uk) or any member of staff and we'll do our utmost to help – you can find all of our email addresses on the school website or use the admin email at the end of this newsletter.**

Things are not quite the same as during the previous lockdown in March, we are open to those nursery and pre-

school children who want a place as well as children of critical workers and also to meet the specific needs of some children and families.

At the moment this feels like a fine balance. We will always try to accommodate and help children and families who need support however in the interest of safety and well-being please can we request that you use a school place only when essential.

Would you like to become more involved in the running of our school? Why not become a parent governor - we currently have a vacancy. Governors play a very important role within our school. If you are interested and would like further details, please speak to me.

Best Wishes

Jenny Smith



Swansfield Park
Primary School



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www.swansfield.northumberland.sch.uk



Being “well connected” has always been an advantage in life though perhaps now this holds more truth than ever.

Access to online learning is essential for our children and in the Autumn term we carried out the **Technology Survey**. Over the past week we have been contacting parents to ensure that those without access to devices are able to get on with their learning either in school or by using paper copies.

We have received **£800 from Alnwick Town Council** to support online learning and have ordered **4 new chromebooks**. This donation will help us to support the children who are currently working in school due to lack of technology to stay at home.

As I mentioned in my blog before Christmas we are going to set up a **repurposing and gifting scheme**. If you have an old laptop, chromebook or iPad at home why not donate it to school. Dave, our computer technician, will wipe the devices and install the necessary safeguards before we gift the device to one of our families. *Please contact the office if you have any hardware available for this project.*

So far we have been delighted to receive 2 offers from the community and we are awaiting receipt of 15 DfE laptops which were ordered earlier this week, this additional equipment should enable us to help families with more than one child currently sharing a device – watch out for further information about the roll out of these resources.

It has always been the case that adversity promotes progress and COVID 19 is no exception. Over the past term we have introduced our older children to **google classroom** and introduced an array of high quality online learning packages including Bug Club, Reading Plus, Spelling Frame, Times Table Rock Stars and Numbots. This **blended learning** approach is the way forward. It replaces the traditional approach to home learning, encourages the development of life-long learners and it saves paper!

In the meantime, did you know that you can use some games consoles to access the online learning available on the school website? Try following these instructions:



PLAYSTATION

Identify the PlayStation internet browser icon (WWW with dots around it).

Press the PlayStation logo on the controller.

Go to the library and find options for games and applications.

Go to applications and you will find the internet browser.

Navigate to your online learning platform and log in as usual.



XBOX

Plug a keyboard into the Xbox USB slot.

Go to my games and apps.

Find and select Microsoft Edge.

Navigate to your online learning platform.

Family Learning Challenge

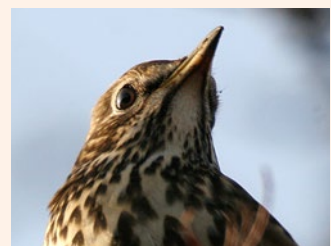
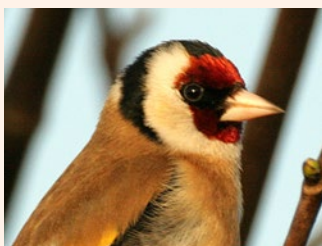


Every January we encourage our children to take part in the big schools' birdwatch both at school and at home.

This year we are using the birdwatch as a stimulus for our family learning. Let's get ready to take part in the **Big Garden Birdwatch on the weekend of 29th - 31st January**. Encourage your children to build a bird hide, make their own bird identification chart or prepare some soup to keep them warm while watching the birds. How about making fat balls or threading cereal or dried fruit on to string then decorate a tree or bush in the garden to attract the birds, become a wildlife photographer or simply paint a picture of your favourite birds.

We look forward to you sharing some wonderful work.

Do we have any budding statisticians out there who might like to collect information about the types and number of birds seen around Alnwick? We could make a graph to present the results and perhaps write a report from the information gathered - let your teacher know if you are interested.



The Lit Review

with Mr W



As a school, we have embarked on an ambitious project to move our reading materials online. Whilst children in Upper Key Stage 2 have been using Reading Plus since they returned in the autumn, new to the school is Bug Club. Bug Club gives our children access to hundreds of texts across all genres, is bright and colourful, and is suitable for all year groups from Reception up to Year 6. Together with Reading Plus, Bug

Club ensures that we provide our children a package of online reading resources to continually challenge them and develop their reading skills. Especially important in the current circumstances is the fact that we have ensured that all of our children continue to have access to quality reading materials at all times. However, the best sales people for how effective both programmes are is the children themselves!

“

Bug Club is a great online reading programme which lets you read whole books with a few questions throughout. When you finish a book you get points which you can spend on furniture and games in the treehouse. You can also spend them on playing great games. I feel that this is an essential reading programme for kids. It lets me read whenever I want.

Rachel, Year 6



“

Reading Plus is an amazing reading programme for children. It has a light grey bar or blue bar which help your eyes to stop jumping around the page. You also get to pick the story you want to read so I feel it makes me concentrate on what I am reading. I enjoy going on Reading Plus every week because it helps me read at a better speed.

Ella, Year 6



“

I absolutely love it, it's great that there's always something to read.

Henry, Year 4



“

It has a good variety of stories.

Addy, Year 4



“

It's a really handy way to do our class reading.

Isabel, Year 4



“

I've enjoyed everything I've read so far.

Amy E., Year 4



“

It lets me read books that I don't own.

Catherine, Year 4



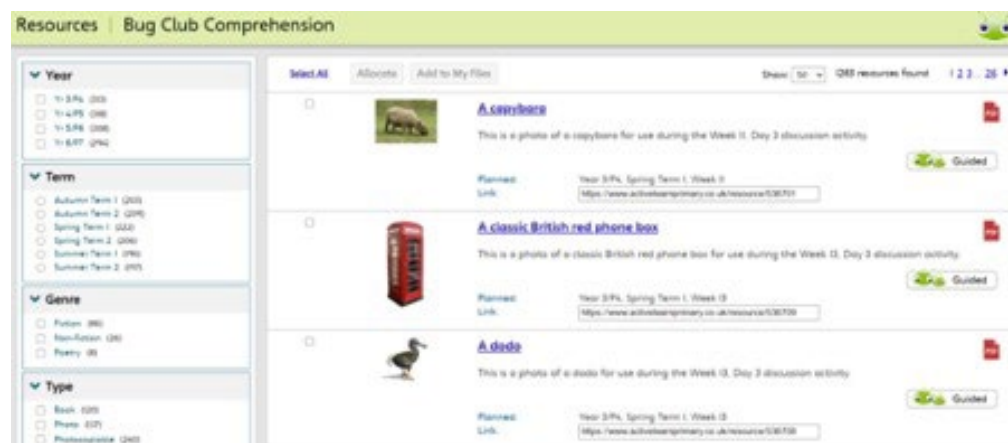
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In addition to online reading, this year we have provided all children in Years 3 to 6 access to Spelling Frame, an online spelling resource which allows the children to practise their weekly spellings through fun games. It also breaks the words down into their syllables or phonic sounds and puts them into sentences for the children. Recently, children in Upper Key Stage 2 have also started further embedding their learning from English grammar and punctuation lessons using SPaG.com. The future is online!

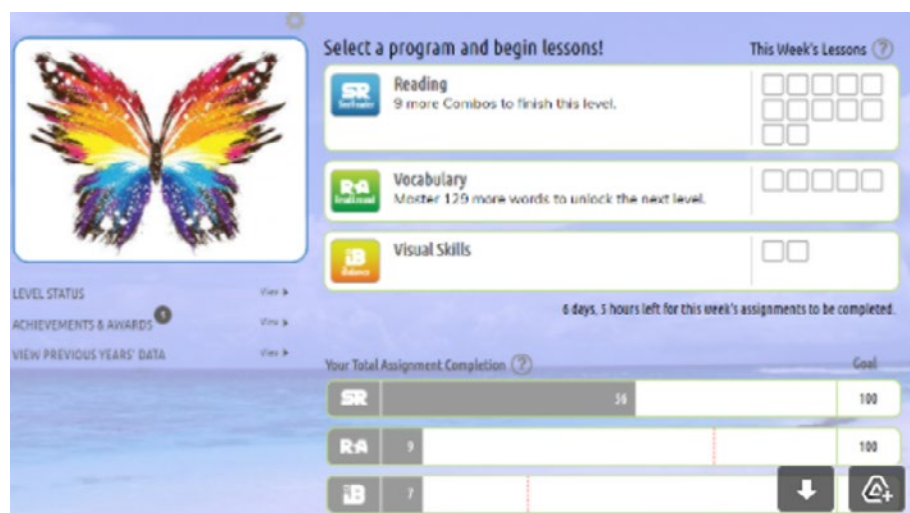


Bug Club's home screen

Children can access all of their books from their online library



Teachers can choose from hundreds of books... these 1,233 are just for Key Stage 2!



The homepage for Reading Plus

Communications

We use many different ways to communicate with parents.



Keep up to date through the school website at:
www.swansfield.northumberland.sch.uk



Email the office at:
admin@swansfield.northumberland.sch.uk



Check the text messages received from **Teachers2Parents**
- please ensure that the office have an up to date mobile number for you.



Read the **Head Teacher's weekly blog** posted on the website and on Facebook every Monday for the very latest news.



DIARY DATES

Friday 15th January
Reception Application deadline
via Northumberland's online portal

Tuesday 11th February
Safer Internet Day

Friday 12th February
Virtual School closes
HALF TERM HOLIDAY

Monday 22nd February
School reopens – back to learning!

Thursday 4th March
World Book Day

Friday 12th March
Comic Relief

Friday 26th March
School Closes
EASTER HOLIDAY



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