



## Hatfield Heath Primary School

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Head teacher: J H Clements MA

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Dear Parents,

A very Happy New Year to you all. Please find below an overview of the topics that we will be covering this half term. This overview helps the school practitioners and parents work together to support the children's learning. You may like to explore these topics at home by playing games or looking at library books. Also you may have relevant items at home which the children could bring into school to show everyone.

### Topic work

Our first theme this term will be 'Polar Regions'. Within this topic we shall be thinking about winter weather, learning about penguins and taking part in many different learning activities across the curriculum. We are inviting the children to come to school dressed in black and white for a special 'Penguin Day' on **Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> January**. If your child wishes to go a step further and come into school dressed in a penguin costume that would be great – you may even see the teachers dressed up as penguins too!

After our work on 'Polar Regions' our next planned topic will be 'People who help us'. We would like to enhance this topic by having visitors to class along this theme, such as doctors, police, vets, optometrists etc, to tell us about their jobs. If you feel this is something you may be able to help us with, please let us know as soon as possible.

*Perhaps your child has a book at home with a penguin or other animal from a cold habitat as the main character, or maybe even a non-fiction (information) book linked to our topics – please bring it into school as we would enjoy reading it as a class.*

### Maths

The main areas of maths which we will be focussing on this half term are –

- Counting forwards to and backwards from 20
- Naming and sorting 2D and 3D shapes
- Addition and subtraction- finding the answer to addition and subtraction questions and developing understanding of vocabulary such as add, plus, altogether, take away, left and equals.
- Comparing and measuring the length of different objects
- Knowing the days of the week in order

*You could help your child in this area by continuing to play board games, such as Snakes and Ladders at home. Rolling the dice and moving the correct amount of squares helps with counting (using one-to-one correspondence) which is a skill used when adding or subtracting. Discussions during the game can also support mathematical development. For example, "you are on number 5 now. Which square will you be on when you move forward two spaces?"*

### English

This term we shall be focussing on gaining increasing independence in writing. We will be writing sounds - such as those on the blue or green Letters and Sounds cards - from memory (as an adult says

them) and using the correct formations. The children will then be using these sounds to attempt to spell words, sounding them out carefully (segmenting) and representing the sounds they can hear. We are encouraging the children to attempt to spell any words in this way, including those on the white sheets they regularly bring home within their Letters and Sounds cards.

The children will also be continuing to learn how to spell the tricky words so that they can include these in their writing. These words (e.g. the, to, put) are on the front of your child's blue or green Letters and Sounds cards so they can also be practised at home.

*Please encourage your child to mark make at home, writing their name and other familiar words or letters. Children often enjoy mark making in a variety of different ways such as using chalk on the patio, painting, felt-tips, writing on a piece of paper taped to a wall or even under a table. Involve your child as you write notes, messages or shopping lists so that writing is modelled for them and they can begin to join in. For example, your child may like to help write the weekly shopping list or make a label to display their latest Lego creation. Initially they may write just the first sound, but they will then begin to write other sounds they can hear, such as writing "crt" for carrot. This is an important step in learning to write.*

At Hatfield Heath Primary School we firmly believe that the most confident and enduring readers and learners are those that develop a love for reading at an early stage. The children that are the most confident and regular readers are also more likely to have the tools to support and transfer these skills into their writing. Please ensure your child practises their reading skills (i.e. sound recognition, reading the words from their blue or green cards, reading and discussing their book) as often as possible, with a minimum of four times a week. Children also benefit from reading a book more than once, both to practise the sounding out skills and also to understand and discuss the story. We will continue to award 'Regular Reader' certificates each time a child reads on four or more different days during a week. The children have really enjoyed receiving these in class.

Please continue to write a note in your child's home-school diary each time you have heard your child read their school book, an online book, or when they have practised the words or sounds from their Letters and Sounds cards; just 5 minutes each day makes such a difference at this stage. Parents regular use of the home-school diary helps us to monitor the children's progress both at home and in school and also ensures that we know when a book has been completed and therefore needs to be changed on the next book change day (Mondays and Thursdays).

In school we will continue to practise reading skills: recognising and naming sounds; blending sounds together to read words and sentences and recognising rhyming words during daily phonic sessions. We will also be encouraging the children to sound out in their head as they read, rather than aloud. This develops fluency and also helps the child to follow the story they are reading.

## **Art**

This term we will be studying the artist Mark Rothko. The children will be using a number of different resources to create their own pieces of work inspired by this famous artist. Through this work the children will also be learning about primary colours and how these can be mixed to create new colours.

*If you have any Dulux paint colour swatch cards (shown in the picture) that you could donate to the class we would be very grateful. We will also be needing lots of newspapers for our art this half term – please send these in as well. Thank you.*



## **PE**

Our PE lessons will continue to take place on **Wednesdays** and **Fridays**. Any earrings must be removed for all PE lessons.

This term in PE we will be mainly focussing on gymnastics and ball skills. Through this we will be developing our core strength, balance, throwing, catching, jumping and landing skills as well as learning to move in a variety of ways and learning to challenge our bodies.

## **Wow Wall**

Thank you for all the wonderful contributions to our Wow Wall. If your child makes or does something at home that they would like to share please send it into school for our display. The children enjoy sharing their work which is good for their self-esteem and inspires them and their peers to share some of their own learning. Anything your child has achieved at home (or a photograph of it) can go on this wall, e.g. – they have been learning to throw a ball at a target in the garden, they have cut out some pictures, they have completed a puzzle, they have been on a family day out or practised writing some letters and numbers. Wow moments and photographs are also welcome to be received by email – [eyfs@hatfieldheath.essex.sch.uk](mailto:eyfs@hatfieldheath.essex.sch.uk) which the children enjoy seeing on the classroom computer and then printing out.

## **Activity afternoon**

This term, our ‘Activity afternoon’ will take place on **Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> March** from 2.15 – 3.15pm. Each child will need to have just one adult to work with as you enjoy some activities together. We kindly ask that younger siblings do not attend if possible.

## **Afternoon snack**

As you know, we provide a healthy and varied afternoon snack for the children at the cost of a voluntary 15p per day. The children find this an enjoyable part of the day, when friendships are created and social skills developed as they chat together whilst sharing a tasty snack. The cost for this half-term is **£4.20**. As the snacks need to be bought in advance, it would be appreciated if you could send this money into school as soon as possible, in a named envelope.

## **Donations wanted - can you help us?**

If you are having a New Year declutter, we are currently looking for donations of the following:

- Skateboards
- Dulux paint swatches
- Figures (small Troll, Barbies, characters from films – old characters are fine!)
- Farm animals
- Dinosaurs
- Car garage

If you have any questions about the areas mentioned above or any other aspects of EYFS/Reception, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Claire Atherton