



11th September 2019

Dear Parents/Carers,

As the academic year begins, I wanted to take this opportunity to say hello formally and provide you with some information which I hope will prove useful as your child(ren) settle down to life in Class 2, some for the first time and some for the second year.

Firstly, for those who don't know, I have worked at Castle Carrock School as a teaching assistant since 2012, (when my daughter was in Class 2), so I have the advantage of already knowing both the school and your children really well.

I finished my teacher training, (in Early Years and KS1), and qualified to be a teacher in the summer and am delighted to have secured my first full teaching job in Class 2 with such a lovely group of children. I can assure you that I will try my very best for each and every one of the children to ensure their educational journey is purposeful, memorable and fun.

Our daily routine in Class 2 will see us start with a reading session where the children will have the chance to look at/read books independently, explore the library, play phonics games. They will read with an adult on a one-to-one basis, at least once a week, more if time allows.

Reading is so important and we strongly encourage parents to be actively involved in developing this crucial skill by sharing books together and listening to their child read as often as possible, making a quick note in their reading diary. In this busy world, it can be tricky to find time but just a few minutes each day will make a huge difference to your child's learning and development and will better equip them to meet the requirements of a curriculum that is both rich and demanding.

Phonics, maths and literacy are also timetabled in each morning. The afternoons are more flexible and we will cover science, history, geography, art and design, RE and PHSE, (personal, health, social and emotional), through a mixture of topic work and play. Our topic this term is The Great Fire of London and The Gunpowder Plot. There will also be free choice time where your child will be able to play and socialise with their peers.

Homework will be set each week on a Wednesday and I would ask that it is returned to school the following Monday morning to be marked. I will give the children their own homework book. For Year 1s, they are required to draw a picture and write a few short sentences about something they have enjoyed doing out of school. Later in the year, there will be spellings too. For the Year 2s, homework will consist of spellings and a short piece of maths.

With this age group, we try and keep maths as practical as possible and we encourage the children to think about maths in the wider world, for instance, recognising numbers on road signs/houses, counting in 2s as they go upstairs, handling small amounts of money to buy treats, weighing objects in the kitchen, and

talking about the time (hour, half past, quarter past and to) and how it links to their routines at home.

Our PE sessions will take place twice weekly, on Tuesday and Friday afternoons, and we would ask that ALL PE kit, including trainers or pumps are named. In the colder months a pair of jogging bottoms and a zip up hoodie in the PE bag are usually a good idea as we do try to get outside as much as possible.

A quick word about snacks. Class 2 children are entitled to a piece of fruit each day which we have with a story before bedtime. Most children bring in a healthy snack or a small amount of tuck shop money each day so they can have a bite to eat at morning break. Named water bottles (containing water only please) are encouraged.

And, for the Year 2 parents who are familiar with Ruby, we felt it was time the poor rabbit went in to retirement. She has been replaced with a teddy (Poppy) and a ragdoll (Isabel) - names chosen in a class vote! Two children from either year group will be chosen each Friday to take them home for the weekend as a reward for excellent effort and behaviour.

I am very fortunate to have Mrs McNeil as the class teaching assistant this year. Mrs McNeil has many years' experience and will do her utmost to support the children in their learning.

In Class 2, children are encouraged to become more independent and take responsibility for their own things. We understand that for the Year 1s, the transition to KS1 can be a big step up, while for the Year 2s, the focus is about getting them ready for moving into KS2 the following year. If you have any concerns about your child/children, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Details of our termly planning can be found on the Castle Carrock School website and I can provide you with any additional information next week at the 'meet the teacher' session, after school on Wednesday, if you are able to attend.

Finally, I would ask that you let me or school know of any changes that might arise at home over the course of this year that could impact your child so that we can best support them in school.

Mrs McNeil and I are really looking forward to providing all the children with a stimulating and enjoyable year and thank you for your support.

Regards,

Jane Helliwell

Class 2