

Dear Parents and Carers

I wanted to update you of changes to the curriculum that we are implementing across this year, to improve the provision within the school curriculum to improve learning outcomes for all children. I apologise that some of these changes have not been communicated to you sooner, but with a change of computer systems we have had a few technical challenges.

Academisation Update

Things continue to progress with the academisation of the school. All being well, conversion should take place on the 1st November. I will update you in due course when more information about this is available.

Accelerated Reader

As a school we have always used accelerated reader books to develop children's ability to read. This year we are placing a greater emphasis on using this across the school to track reading progress and ensure that children are making progress with their reading ability. After completing a star reading test, the children will be assigned an ZPD range, which will suggest which books your child should be reading which will provide them challenge and allow them to access independently.

Also this year we are going to track the number of words read by children when they complete and pass a reading test on each book, this will be the basis of our reading incentive scheme for this year. We will also track the number of time that children read, but will base most rewards around the number of words read in each book. This is based upon the completion of each quiz on the book.

Sharing Library

We are opening our own sharing library for both children and families. Within the entrance area we have a selection of books which are available for swap. These can be swapped for a book that has been read for a new book, which can be taken home to be read. When you have read it and want to change it, bring it back and get another.

Access to the sharing library will be available at the start and end of the day each day, and if appropriate at break and lunch time.

There is a small selection of books for adults, which we are hoping to grow, if any parents/carers etc are looking for something to read as well.

The Sharing Library will be open from Monday 25th September.

VIPERS

We have a new approach to the teaching of reading across the school. All children will be taught using the vipers approach. This is used in many schools and means that the children will be taught a range of skills used within reading. Each week the children will cover a different area of the VIPERS learning.

Week 1 – Vocabulary

Week 2 – Inference

Week 3 – Prediction

Week 4 – Explanation

Week 5 – Retrieval

Week 6 – Summarising.

This will be repeated across each term. As a parent, you will be able to support children with their development in reading skills, knowing what specific area they are looking at within class each week.

Spelling

We have also developed our approach to spelling. All children across the school are taught a new set of spellings each week. Spellings are introduced in class and taught, along with understanding the meaning of each word that they are learning. Spellings will be part of homework each week and the focus will change on the spelling pattern covered. We want all children to be successful spellers and use this within their writing in all subjects.

English teaching

To ensure that the children have the opportunity to write at length and for a variety of purposes, we have developed our approach to the teaching of English, which means that each term is linked to a key text, which the children will base all of their writing around for that term. The children will have time to explore and develop their understanding of each book and they cover a range of genres and writing styles.

Maths

The approach to Maths teaching will remain the same as last year. All children should have access and a log in for TTRockstars which will help them to improve their confidence and ability with multiplication use.

Children will complete a range of tasks across the week, which encompasses fluency questions along with reasoning and problem solving questions.

Other Curriculum subjects

Within all subject areas we have linked all learning to clear milestones. Milestone 2, covers year 3 and 4 and Milestone 3, covers year 5 and 6. As children work within this milestone, children cover the same learning areas twice to allow children to have a deepened understanding of the subject matter and to allow them to build on their prior knowledge to ensure that they are able to use it to solve problems. Further information about each subject area is available on the website, and information about what is being covered is shared within each year groups newsletter.

Arbor

As a school we are no longer using parent mail or school cloud. We will be using Arbor as our communication and information sharing platform for all information and for signing up for clubs, events, trips etc.

Running one system is far more efficient and means that all the information can be collated and kept in one place. It also presents better value for money for the school allowing us to allocate money elsewhere.

I have included information from the Arbor support page below, but there is an app that you can download, for both apple and android, which means that all information is accessible to you.

Say goodbye to paper slips and emails - the Parent Portal and Arbor App let parents register their child for a club or trip, book parents evening slots, and manage payments all from their phone or computer. Parents can also check in on their child's attendance, behaviour and progress.

Plus, your school can communicate with parents for free using our In-App Messaging feature.

How can the Parent Portal and Arbor App help you?

- *Compile all your apps into one place*
- *Stay in touch with parents easily*
- *Share important updates*
- *Have parents get in contact with you quickly*
- *Manage payments*
- *The Arbor App is the mobile version of our Parent Portal, for use on mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets. Parents can download the Arbor App for free from either the Play store for Android phones or the App Store for IOS.*
- *Parents and Guardians have the same login and account details to the Arbor App and the Parent Portal.*

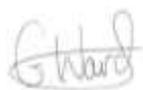
If you have any questions please make contact with the office who will be able to help you and support you. Please remember that this is a new system to us as well, but it is something that will have a real impact on communication and information sharing.

I appreciate that there is a lot of information included within this letter, but hopefully it keeps everyone up to speed on the changes that are happening to ensure that Ditton Junior children and families have the best learning experience.

We have further strategies to implement across the year, which again will impact on learning positively which we will notify you about in due course.

Many thanks for your continued support.

Kind regards



Graham Ward

Headteacher

