



Cedar and Beech Classes – Years 3 & 4

Newsletter Autumn 2024

Welcome to Year 3/4,

We hope that you all have had a restful summer break. We are excited to welcome you all back to school for the start of a brilliant new school year. As usual, we will use Seesaw to share the children's learning with you.

English

This term, we shall be exploring the English curriculum via inspirational books and literature. Cross-curricular links will be made to enable children to further explore these texts and make connections across all areas of the curriculum. Explicit grammar, punctuation and spelling skills will be taught in context in order to be applied purposefully. Children will develop their reading and comprehension skills through whole-class guided reading sessions alongside their independent reading. Children are expected to read daily to a parent for at least ten minutes. It is really important that children, even once they have reached fluency, continue to read aloud and discuss texts in order to improve their understanding and comprehension.

This term, our focus will be on developing sentence structure and deepening the children's understanding of colour semantics. We will build on prior learning by exploring how to use conjunctions effectively and applying these skills in different writing outcomes.

We will begin the term by writing diary entries and creating a survival guide linked to our History topic, *The Stone Age*, inspired by the story *Stone Age Boy*. After half term, our learning will move on to *Flat Stanley Goes to New York*, which ties in with our Geography topic on megacities. From this text, the children will write a postcard and a non-chronological report.

Throughout the term, the children will study high-quality example texts (WAGOLLS), learn key SPaG skills linked to each writing outcome, and be given time to plan, write, and edit their own work.

Mathematics

Each day will start with Early Bird Maths; this is an independent activity that is completed between 8.40 and 9.00am, so it is important for the children to be in school promptly. Early Bird Maths includes revision. Maths will be taught daily, primarily following the White Rose Maths programme, and will include a blend of practical activities and regular practice of basic skills. This combination of activities is designed to refine skills, support individual needs and build up a wealth of understanding, confidence, independence and competence through a stepped approach using concrete, pictorial and abstract processes. The emphasis will, as usual, be principally on number skills, but the children will also practise using and applying their mathematical knowledge. In year three, children will be covering place value, addition and subtraction, multiplication and division this term. Year 4 will be taught place value, addition, subtraction, multiplication and division and measurement.

Later this year, the Year 4 children will take an external test to assess their knowledge of times table and related division facts, so we will be practising these regularly. The Times Tables Rock Stars (TTRS) online learning platform replicates much of the external test set up, so it is important for the children to use this resource regularly.

Science

This term, pupils will be developing their scientific understanding through a range of engaging topics and enquiries. They will explore the structure and functions of flowering plants, investigating what plants need to grow, how water is transported, and the role of flowers in pollination, seed formation, and dispersal. Pupils will also learn how living things can be classified in different ways, use classification keys to group and identify organisms, and consider how environments can change, sometimes posing risks to wildlife. Alongside this, children will build key scientific enquiry skills by asking questions, setting up fair tests, making careful observations, and using equipment to gather accurate

measurements. They will record and present data using a variety of methods. Finally, pupils will be encouraged to draw conclusions, make predictions, suggest improvements, and use evidence to support their ideas, developing both their knowledge and confidence as young scientists.

History / Geography

In the first part of the Autumn Term, our focus will be on History as we explore life in the Stone Age. The children will investigate the key question: *"How did the lives of ancient Britons change during the Stone Age?"* Through this topic, they will discover how people found food, created tools, built homes, and developed ways of surviving. We will also compare the lives of Stone Age people to our own, helping children to understand just how much life has changed over thousands of years.

In the second half of the term, our learning will shift to Geography. Here, we will be studying urbanisation, settlements, and megacities, guided by the key question: *"Why do so many people live in megacities?"* The children will explore how and why cities grow, the challenges and opportunities of living in such large places, and will make links to real-life examples, including looking at the largest city in the world, Tokyo.

French

This first half term in French, pupils will begin by learning to locate France and a Francophone country on a map, use key greetings, ask and answer simple questions, count to 10, and recognise 10 colours. In the second half term, they will expand their vocabulary to include 10 animals with the correct articles, develop an understanding of French determiners, and begin using the high-frequency verb *je suis* (I am) to build simple sentences.

Computing

This first half term, children will begin by exploring how digital devices work, focusing on inputs, processes, and outputs, and comparing them with non-digital devices. They will then learn about computer networks, the devices that make them up, and the benefits of being connected. After half term, the focus will shift to desktop publishing, where pupils will use text, images, and emojis to communicate messages and experiment with fonts, colours, and layouts. They will be introduced to templates, orientation, and placeholders to design their own magazine front covers, adding text and images while considering purpose and real-world applications of desktop publishing.

Art

This term, children will begin by exploring texture, shape, and form through a creative project inspired by the ancient 'Lion Man' sculpture, experimenting with materials such as clay, wire, and tissue, and developing their ideas through drawing, painting, and sculpture. Using sketchbooks, they will make preliminary studies with pencils and watercolours before creating paper models to practise scale and proportion, leading to their own clay animal sculptures. In the second half term, the focus will shift to digital media as pupils learn about stop motion animation. They will plan ideas using storyboards, explore how Aardman animations are created, and work collaboratively to design and film their own animations. Using models and props, such as cardboard buildings, they will produce short animated sequences, with opportunities to add titles and captions, before sharing their finished projects with the class.

PE and Games

This term, PE will take place on **Wednesday mornings** and **Thursday afternoons**. During the first half of the term, the children will focus on fundamentals and handball, developing their understanding of invasion games. They will learn the key rules, practise the skills needed to play effectively, and continue to build balance, coordination, footwork, and hand-eye coordination. After half term, the focus will shift to fitness and hockey.

Year 4 will also attend swimming sessions at Blandford Leisure Centre on Wednesday mornings across the term. As not all children will swim at the same time, they will be split into groups; further details will be provided in a letter.

As the weather turns colder, please ensure your child has the correct outdoor PE kit. To avoid lost property, we ask that all kit and uniform items are clearly labelled. We recommend that PE kits are brought to school on a Monday and taken home on a Friday to be washed.

Finally, if your child is unable to remove and replace their earrings independently, please ensure they are removed before school. Alternatively, surgical tape must be provided from home.

PSHE

This half term, our JIGSAW focus is "Being Me in My World," where pupils will be reflecting on their identities, roles, and responsibilities within our school community. They've explored the importance of self-awareness, understanding their emotions, and recognising how they can contribute positively to the world around them.

After half term, our new topic is "Celebrating Difference," where students will delve into the richness of diversity. They'll learn about embracing and respecting differences, recognising that our unique qualities make our community stronger. We're excited to see how these themes will help our students grow in empathy, understanding, and kindness as they continue their personal and social development.

R.E.

In the first half of the Autumn Term, the children will be learning about **Sikhism**, with a particular focus on the *Amrit Ceremony and the Khalsa*. They will explore the key question: "*Does joining the Khalsa make a person a better Sikh?*" This will help them to understand how commitment and belonging are expressed within the Sikh faith.

After half term, our studies will turn to **Christianity**, where we will consider the meaning of *Christmas*. The children will reflect on the question: "*Has Christmas lost its true meaning?*" and explore different perspectives on how the festival is celebrated in modern times.

Homework

Homework will be set every Friday and should be returned the following Friday. Each child will be given a homework book to keep all their tasks in one place.

Each week, the children will be set:

- Spellings (to be practised daily if possible)
- Reading comprehension
- English and Maths tasks (linked to revision of class learning)

Homework is designed to reinforce classroom learning and should take no more than 30 minutes per task—many will take less. If your child has worked for 30 minutes and has not finished, please encourage them to stop at that point. If children find any of the work challenging, they are encouraged to bring their homework book into school and ask their class teacher for support. Spelling tests will take place every Friday.

Please do not hesitate to contact us, in person or through the school office, if you have any questions or concerns regarding your child. We look forward to an exciting year of learning!

Lower Key Stage Two Team