July August Update 2015

Dear Parents and Caregivers

Welcome to an update of some of the interesting activities in Year 2, in Room 13.2. What a lot of progress learners have been achieving over the last 2 terms, particularly as they are building their knowledge of how to use genre in their writing skills. This means they are able to remember what secrets writers use when they are writing genres such as narrative, procedure, recount and persuasion. This term we will continue to work on report writing. This, with its scientific connection, seems to be a favourite for many learners.

**English Curriculum**

In the English curriculum you may be interested to know how broad the curriculum is for learners in Year 2, where the focus on English learning involves growing understandings in listening, reading, viewing, speaking, writing and creating. This means the English curriculum involves growing the skills of careful listening as well as learning to view visual texts, where conversations to grow skills to analyse character development, plot and story line. This term we are also using arts media to learn to analyse visual texts, to see how creators of these works, try to manipulate us as consumers.

**Comprehension, Publishing and Critical literacy skills**

This term we are working in the computer room to publish written texts which the children have created themselves. This time, by working in the computer room, we not only support the children to learn to edit their written texts, but also build their computer literacy skills, by learning to use word documents for publishing.

This term we are also working on learners’ critical literacy skills, which are high-order thinking skills in the English and Arts Curriculum. Since we are all in no doubt that we currently live in what is known as the ‘information age’, students have unprecedented access. Indeed we could say we live in a media saturated era. Critical literacy helps learners to develop the skills to analyse how advertisers pitch to consumers, especially children, to sell their products. Critical literacy involves teaching learners to be able to see through the visual images and printed text of advertisers, that they encounter every day. This term we are constructing toy boxes, with a view to decode the tricks of advertisers to position children as must-have consumers of toys. We will need you to help us with ample supply of boxes for this purpose; we are also studying junk mail catalogues, with a view to understand how advertisers pitch to children in the consumer landscape.

We continue to work with learners to develop their comprehension skills. Explicitly teaching and developing a broad collection of comprehension skills such as activating prior knowledge, self-monitoring, predicting, questioning, making connections, inferring (critical literacy) and being able to summarise. Thank you for your support of comprehension through questioning your child when you listen to reading at home.

Some of the questions which might be a help.

1. In your own words tell me what happened in the story?
2. Who do you think is the main character in the story and what do you think of them?
3. What is the problem in the story and how is it resolved?
4. Where is the story set?
5. Do you like the story and if so why?

Just one of these questions following a reading session helps learners think more deeply about what they are reading.

**Mathematics**

In the Year 2 mathematics curriculum we continue to work on increasing mathematical fluency, problem solving and reasoning skills, while always talking about what mathematical strategies we are using to do our mathematical learning.

In Year 2 we work on continued fluency in working with numbers up to 1000. We count backwards and forwards in 2s, 3s, 5s and 10s.

During this term we will look at addition, subtraction and simple multiplication, along with working on our knowledge and skills with place value. We will also be covering measurement, in particular length, area, volume, mass and capacity.

**Social skills**

In Year 2 we are always supporting learners to develop socially and emotionally, which is sometimes achieved through the PE and Health curriculum, where learners grow their skills of being a good sport and learning to collaborate. Great effort and energy is put into support learners to be ‘big brained problem solvers’, where they are always organising our room to function so successfully. Learners in 13.2 gain enormous benefit by having Sammy with us, who they look after, befriend, care for and support with his learning. This requires the rest of the class to not only think about Sammy and his needs, but do so unselfishly. It means that learners, grow their understandings of how to collaborate with learners with differences, and also to do so with a generous heart. This is powerful social and emotional development for seven-year-old learners, where being able to work and learn with learners from diverse backgrounds is asked across all curriculum areas.

**Science**

This term we are studying gravity in the science curriculum. We will be looking at the way gravity is a force pulling us towards earth. We are studying the work of Galileo, a famous astronomer, physicist, engineer, philosopher and mathematician as we learn about gravity and physics.

**History and Geography**

In Geography, we will explore, analyse and discover characteristics that make up our world. We will focus on how people are connected to places, with particular focus on our personal connections. This connects well with and supports our History topic: The Past in the Present.

Please find included a weekly agenda of classroom commitments in 13.2, which might be a help to you in organising your child.

The weekly agenda of learners in 13.2.

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**Kindest regards**

Margie and Emma