



January 2016

Dear Parents/Carers,

Welcome back to school - we hope that you have had a happy and relaxing Christmas. We have a lot to fit into what is a very short half term. Our topic is "Exciting Explorers" - a subject that we hope will excite and engage the children. We will start with rainforests; thinking about what a rainforest looks like and what animals live there. The children will be conducting research in groups using the internet and non - fiction books and will be making their own books about the rainforest. We will be looking closely at habitats and will be making our own. We will then move onto looking at dinosaurs- when did they exist and what did they look like? We will be thinking about how the dinosaurs adapted to their environment and we will be inventing and making our own dinosaur.

In Maths we will be learning about number and place value, problem solving, reasoning and algebra, mental addition and subtraction, multiplication and division, measurement and the properties of shapes. Please help us by practising numbers 0-20 with your children -can they recognise all of them and put them in order and say what is one more or one less than each number? We will continue with Monster Maths, please let one of us know if you need the next challenge.

In Literacy we will be looking at fiction and non-fiction texts relating to our topic, including *Monkey Puzzle* by Julia Donaldson, *Rumble in the Jungle* by Giles Andreae and *Harry and the bucketful of Dinosaurs* by Ian Whybrow. We will be

thinking about how to write our own sentences-making sure that they have a capital letter, finger spaces and a full stop. Please encourage your child to write at home we love to see their writing!

In phonics some children will be learning phase 2 sounds, whilst others will be reviewing phase 1 sounds to ensure that they are really secure with these. We will continue to practise blending daily with the children. Your support is invaluable in helping the children to practise their sounds and with their reading. Thank you for reading with your children please read the bookmark words at the front of the reading records (including the tricky words) and tick them when your child is confident in reading each word. Books will continue to be changed on a Monday and Friday.

In the morning the children will be writing their name in their own writing books. This is to encourage them to write smaller letters and on a line. These books must stay in their drawer. We will no longer be registering on the board; instead the children will be reading 'Superhero Sentences' each morning. These are three sentences that increase in difficulty that the children can attempt to read. Please allow your child to read these independently. The two children that impress us the most each week with their reading (not necessarily the best readers but also those that try very hard) will wear a superhero cape all day on Friday!

This term we want to encourage the children to be more independent. You can support us with this by allowing the children to put their own coats on their pegs, putting their book bags in their drawers on their own and by encouraging them to come into the classroom without you. Please encourage the children to get dressed/ undressed at home independently.

Thank you for your continued help and support,

The Foundation Stage Team.