

Foundation

For our last week of home learning, we learnt about Greta Thunberg and her idea to fight climate change. We have been busy thinking about how we can contribute to saving the planet by reusing, reducing, recycling and repairing. The children in school have been busy 'sorting' rubbish into different materials for recycling. In Maths, we have been adding and subtracting single digit numbers.

We are so excited to welcome the children back next week. Just a reminder, the children will need to bring in their book bags with their red topic book, any reading books they had at home and a water bottle on Monday. They will also need to wear their sports kit (black joggers with shorts underneath) on Mondays and Tuesdays as before (starting on the 8th). They should also have wellies, plimsols and a spare set of clothes and pants which will be left in school. They will also need their coats.

We have been so impressed by the beautiful cursive script the children have adopted this year and to further develop their handwriting we will start handwriting lessons. The letter formations are grouped in a particular order to best support the children's handwriting development, with animal characters as visual reminders to the groups, as you have may have seen from our live teaching. The letters are introduced according to their shape for example the letters 'l, t, h, b, k and f' all belong to the 'Harriet the Cow' family and are formed in the same way by starting on the grass line, going straight up, up to the cloud line before coming back down. The children will receive a handwriting book and will complete a letter formation page in school every Tuesday and Thursday. These books will then be sent home, where the remainder of the letter formation can be completed using a writing pencil, before being returned to school ready for next lesson. Please only complete the letter that has been introduced and practised at school. We will start this on Tuesday 9th March.

The table below outlines the homework your child will receive each day starting on Monday 8th.

Monday	Reading book or Blending words and word wall
Tuesday	Handwriting book (to be returned by Thursday morning)
Wednesday	Reading book and word wall
Thursday	Handwriting book (to be returned by Monday morning)
Friday	Reading book and Maths based activity (as described in the weekly Foundation newsletter)

As always, if you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to get in touch with us.

Last week we wrote about the Characteristics of Effective Learning (CoEL). Another area of CoEL is all about creating and thinking critically, and is associated with the need for children to make sense of experiences and develop thoughts over time. The interactions children have with others, their environment, and their experiences allow them to actively think about what they are doing. This is done through perceiving patterns, inventing ideas,

making connections, and developing concepts, which in turn allow children to develop knowledge about when and how to use particular strategies for learning or problem solving.

Much of our thinking is automatic, for example, getting dressed in the morning uses a series of well-known steps, however, solving problems outside our experience involves controlling our thinking. For example, when constructing models children often need to think critically and decide on an approach that is most likely to succeed and then probably rethink and try another! Language is a vital element of these higher level thinking skills. As adults, we usually think silently, however, children should be encouraged to verbalise their ideas. Role play is a rich opportunity for allowing children to make sense of things they already know and will help to further develop their thinking and ideas. We encourage children to notice patterns within their experiences. For example a child might think that anything large and heavy would sink rather than float due to their previous experiences. However, we would challenge their thinking by providing larger wooden objects that float, leading to deeper understanding. We also provide children with the opportunity to plan how to tackle things, talk about how they went, and to reflect on the possible challenges and how they overcame them. In previous newsletters we have written about valuing the process not the product. It doesn't have to be the "perfect" drawing/painting/model/story/number sentence/first attempt at climbing the tree but what is important is that children are motivated to have a go, put in effort and energy and then in turn think about what might be different next time.

Here are some ideas to support your child with this area:

- Help your child find new ways to solve problems.
- To make a plan, either verbally or written, before they start making a model.
- To make links and patterns, eg discuss books that have a similar plot/setting/baddie as the story you are reading.
- Encourage your child to make predictions.
- Help your child review how well their approach to tasks are going.
- If your child is finding things hard help them to try a new approach.
- Support children to develop a range of strategies through open questions or comments such as:

I wonder how you made that.

Do you think there is another way of doing it?

You really tried something different that time.

I can see you really worked hard

Next week, we will be looking at the International Space Station to show what a great idea collaboration is!

The Foundation Team