

ST. JAMES' C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL, COLDWALTHAM

with Chuckleberries Pre School



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Enabling every child to thrive and succeed

18th September 2023

Dear Parents/Carers,

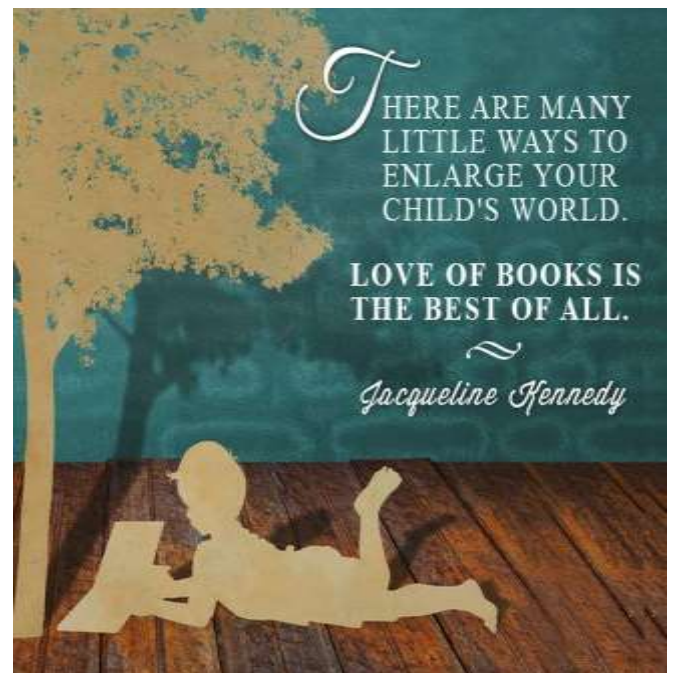
The new academic year has started positively and it has been wonderful to see the children settle in so well after the summer holidays. The new Reception starters have been fantastic and they already feel part of the school family. Thank you for all the support from you as parents/carers to get the new year off to a flying start!

Promoting a Love of Reading and Inspiring a Reading Culture

Learning is underway at a pace and we are looking forward to seeing the children progress and achieve well across the whole curriculum. A particular focus, though, for both schools in the AVF this year is to raise the profile and standard of reading with all children.

To be able to read is the one of the greatest gifts that can be given to a child – it not only enables them to be able to function in society, it opens up new experiences where children can learn about different cultures, activities and opportunities as well as transport them to imaginary, alternative worlds and exciting adventures! Alongside this, in order for children to be able to access the full curriculum, they need to be able to read – '*Learn to read; read to learn*' is a popular mantra in education – and we are keen that we, as a Federation, give children the best reading foundation to work from.

We seek, at all times, to implement learning that has true, measurable impact on the children's education and this includes homework that is set. For the first term of this academic year, as part of the drive to support children with reading, we have made a decision that **daily reading will be the only homework that the children will be expected to do.**



Homework has been extensively researched and studies from across the Western world tell us that, within primary school, daily reading is the single most effective way to have the most impact on children's learning and academic achievement. In keeping with this, the expectation will be that children read at home **five times a week.** For younger children, we would expect reading to be done with an adult whilst older children should combine reading independently as well as with an adult. Children will have a Reading Record to support the recording of reading:



- **For EYFS and Key Stage 1 children** – a parent/carer will need to record the reading that has taken place.
- **For Key Stage 2 children** – either a parent/carer or the children themselves will need to record the reading that has taken place. We would ask Key Stage 2 parents/carers to read with their child **once a week, at least, and sign the Reading Record.**

Reading Records will be collected **once a week** for teachers to be able to check and write a comment. Your child's class teacher will advise you at the 'Meet the Teacher' session the day that they will do this – it may be different for each class, dependent on teachers' commitments.

We will start this homework provision this week and will review its impact at the end of the Autumn Term. In focusing homework on reading, we hope that it will not only have a significant impact on the children's reading progress but that it will also foster a love of reading.

For those of you who have concerns that spelling and maths will not be focused on as homework tasks, please be reassured that learning of spellings, times tables and mathematical facts will continue to be taught as usual in class. If your child would like to continue to use activities for their own benefit (such as TT Rockstars, etc.), please encourage them to do so; however, there will be no expectation set by the schools for this to be done.

Parents/Carers – We Need You!

To further support the schools with our focus on reading, we would love to invite parents/carers into school to be Reading Volunteers to read with children across all the year groups. You would be subject to a DBS check to fulfil our safeguarding responsibilities but, other than that, there are no other qualifying criteria – just time and a love of reading!

If you would be interested in being a Reading Volunteer, please contact the School Office who will pass your details on to Mrs Westwood at Amberley and Mrs Douse at St. James – they will contact you to further discuss this with you.



We very much appreciate your support with the focus on reading and trust that these arrangements will enable your child to flourish and progress!

Kindest regards,

L. Martin

Executive Headteacher, Arun Villages Federation, Amberley CE Primary School and St. James' CE Primary School, Coldwaltham