



## Birch Class: Spring Term 1 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

We hope you managed to enjoy Christmas and New Year in spite of all of the restrictions. It was so lovely to see the class together again even if it was only for one day! Hopefully all the children will be back at school after February half term break.

Our new topic is called '*Peasants, Princes and Pestilence*'

"Flee your fields, close your doors and pull up the drawbridge. The dreaded and deadly Great Pestilence is here. Mount your steed and gallop through the dark and deadly world of 14th century Britain, sword and shield at the ready, pledging your allegiance to king and country. Rouse your troops with promises of bloody battle and violent jousts. Read and write historical accounts, poems and tales and discover the grotesque effects of bugs and bacteria on the human body. And if you smell a rat, my friend, get out of there. " It looks like a gruesome topic which we are confident the class will love!



As usual we will be sending out a sheet of homework for the children to choose from in addition to the weekly topic online lessons we will be setting. We would like the children to choose at least two activities from the sheet. Please email your child's homework into school, or post on Seesaw, by Monday 8<sup>th</sup> February so that we can celebrate and share it with the class.

### Learning areas this half term

<b>Lead topic subject:</b> <b>History</b>	The children will learn about the Black Death – its origins, causes and symptoms. They will explore how different life was for Kings and peasants and will find out about the life of a Knight.
<b>Other foundation subjects</b>	In <b>science</b> , we will investigate how bacteria and germs spread and will look at remedies. We will develop our understanding of life cycles by looking at those of rats and fleas. In <b>art and design</b> , we will design knight's shields and helmets and learn about the history of printing in this period, creating and using our own printing stamps. At school, we will finish our topic with a medieval banquet – we hope you will be able to join in at home too.
<b>English</b>	In English, we will be writing narratives using personification, journals, poetry, persuasive speeches and letters. The children will continue to have weekly spellings to practise which link to the National Curriculum expectations for Year 5/6. Please do look out for these on Seesaw, as the spellings are tested on a Friday. Children will shortly be sent a log-in for full access to Spelling Frame games. Remember that you can use this website to practise spellings from previous years too.

<b>Maths</b>	Our focus this half term Monday to Wednesday is written multiplication and division. On Thursday and Fridays, we will be looking at the properties of shapes and angles. Times tables and fluency in arithmetic skills will be ongoing through TTRockstars and Fluent in Five tasks.
<b>RE</b>	Our RE unit this half term will be, 'What spiritual pathways to Moksha are written about in Hindu scriptures?'
<b>P.E</b>	For key worker children, P.E is still taught regularly on Tuesdays and Fridays. Tuesday might be outdoor PE so please ensure your child is wearing suitable clothing and footwear. We are also having yoga on a Wednesday afternoon so PE kits will need to be worn then too. West Sussex Schools Sports Partnership will again be offering virtual challenges for home and school. Details will be uploaded on Seesaw.

### Home Learning

As far as possible, we intend to set the same work for home on Seesaw as we are doing at school, although some of the tasks may differ for practical reasons between school and home. The Government guidance this time is that children should spend 3 hours a day on their learning.

### Reading

Reading continues to be a really important part of your child's home learning and we would encourage you to read with them daily. This can be them reading to you or you sharing a book with them. All children have a log in for Read Theory which focuses on comprehension of short texts. If you need the log-in resending, please let us know. Also, the Oxford Owl website has a range of free ebooks which suit all ages and abilities, so please do have a look, if you haven't already. We intend to continue with our guided reading tasks where possible at home and at school.

### Maths at home

Along with the daily maths lessons, the children still need to become proficient at mental maths skills: we hope they continue to use TTRockstars to practise their times tables and to play games to develop efficient methods to calculate mentally. All the children also have a log in for Prodigy which can be accessed from laptops, iPads and smart phones.

At school, we welcome into Birch Class, Miss Hannah Richards who is a final year B.Ed (Hons) student.

We understand what a challenging time this is for you all and can't wait to get all the children back to school again. In the meantime, if you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us on:

[jseton@chidham.w-sussex.sch.uk](mailto:jseton@chidham.w-sussex.sch.uk) and [kparkin@chidham.w-sussex.sch.uk](mailto:kparkin@chidham.w-sussex.sch.uk)

Kind regards

Mrs Jo Seton and Mrs Katie Parkin (the Year 5 team)