



# Hollybrook Infant School



Seagarth Close, Southampton, SO16 6RN

Telephone: 023 8077 1528

**Headteacher: Mrs J Wood, NPQH**

**Deputy Headteacher: Mrs C Clifford**

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Dear Parents/Carers,

As you may be aware there have been many changes in Education recently with the introduction of a New National Curriculum in 2014 and more recent changes in assessment for Key Stage One children (Year One and Two). These changes do not affect Year R who still continue to follow the Early Years Curriculum and are assessed against the Early Learning Goals. This letter aims to update you on these changes and what this means for your child.

## **The New National Curriculum**

From September 2014, the Government introduced a new national curriculum which has become statutory for all maintained schools. Although Academies are free to follow their own curriculum we believe that it is in the best interests of our children to follow the National Curriculum. Children in Year 1 and Year 2 have been following the statutory curriculum for the past two years.

The main aim is to raise standards through giving children more time to develop skills in depth rather than racing through levels. The current government recently reviewed the previous curriculum and found that it did not contain sufficient levels of challenge and that higher expectations should be placed on children from their early stages of education. The Government believes that the new National Curriculum has been designed to produce productive, creative and well-educated students.

## **How Schools are expected to implement this**

Schools are free to choose how they organise their school day, as long as the content of the National Curriculum programmes of study is taught to all pupils. By the end of each key stage, pupils are expected to know, apply and understand the matters, skills and processes specified in the relevant programmes of study. For literacy and numeracy, these skills are broken down into year group expectations which you may see referred to as age related expectations (ARE). The new National Curriculum identifies what to teach, but not how to teach. It is essential to distinguish between the statutory National Curriculum and the whole school curriculum. All schools must provide a curriculum that is broad, balanced and meets the needs of all pupils.



## **The Curriculum at Our School**

At Hollybrook Infant School we have fully embraced the changes to the National Curriculum.

We have designed our school curriculum with enthusiasm and pride, ensuring that the children have the best opportunities to meet the requirements of the new National Curriculum, through engaging and exciting topics and by maintaining high expectations and levels of challenge for all of our amazing children. The school curriculum is broad and balanced and we are dedicated to ensure that all our children are able to maximise their true potential during their valuable time at our school.

### **Some of the National Curriculum changes to be aware of when supporting your child at home with their learning**

#### *Year One*

- To use suffixes correctly e.g. -ed and -ing ending e.g. played and playing
- Plural endings 's' and 'es' where the root word does not change e.g. foxes
- Using the prefix 'un-' such as unhappy
- Using the vocabulary evergreen and deciduous when talking about trees
- Being aware and talking about the different seasons and weather associated with them
- Reading and spelling days of the week and numbers 1-20 in words
- Number bonds to 20
- Spelling Year 1 common exception words

#### *Year Two*

- Using suffixes and the spelling patterns correctly such as -ment (treatment), -less (hopeless), -ness (happiness), -ly (lovely) and -ful (colourful)
- Spelling the common exception words
- Contractions e.g. I'm, didn't
- Counting in 2,3,5, and 10s
- Writing numbers in words up to 100 e.g. eighty four

(A list of the common exception words can be found on our website)

### **Assessment & Reporting to Parents**

Previously parents/carers would have been informed of their child's attainment using levels. These levels have now been scrapped and this year an 'Interim Assessment Framework' will be used to make judgements at the end of Key Stage One. Year One will be assessed against their Year Group expectations and the same terminology for achievement will be used as in Year Two.

Phonics testing will remain in Year 1 and children who do not achieve the pass mark will be retested in Year 2. These results will be reported to parents as before.

The children in Year Two will have to sit two reading tests, two maths tests with the focus on Arithmetic and then Reasoning and a Spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPAG) test. These along with teacher assessment for reading, writing and maths will inform the judgements for the end of Key Stage One. Tests for Year 2 are marked internally.

Judgements will be made for reading, writing and maths using the following wording:

- **Working towards the expected standard**
- **Working at the expected standard**
- **Working at greater depth within the expected standard**

For parents of Year 1 children, you will now be informed of how secure your child is in their achievement of the end of year group expectations, which are outlined in the National Curriculum 2014. We will inform you of one of the following levels of achievement using the same wording as above. These judgements will only be made towards the end of the Summer term.

We would expect the majority of children to achieve 'working at' in relation to meeting the end of year group expectations in each area of learning. Some children may exceed this and will be awarded the level of 'working in greater depth'.

If a child is 'working towards' achieving the end of year group expectations we will discuss with you how we can work in partnership to enable your child to accelerate their progress. Whichever of these levels your child has been awarded, we will be reporting to you to share and celebrate their achievements and set appropriate next steps in their learning, which are recorded on target sheets and discussed at parents evenings. It is through working together that we can enable your child to progress, achieve and maximise their potential.

### **Supporting your child at home**

We appreciate the support and time so many of you give to encourage your children to learn and discover! We very much believe we are working together, as parents and school, to provide the very best start for the children at Hollybrook Infant School.

Here are some ways you can continue to support your child with your learning at home:

- Hear your child read and discuss the story/ book with your child
- Practise reading and spelling high frequency words and the newer common exception words
- Practise mental maths with your child- this will differ depending on year groups so speak to the class teacher if unsure
- Correct your child when they speak: grammatical errors ("Can I toilet?" "I runned outside.") and pronunciation errors ("I fink I've got it.")
- Use the correct terminology where possible e.g. noun, conjunction, adjective

We hope that this letter is useful for helping you feel more informed about the recent changes. As always if you have any queries, or need any support please do ask.

Yours sincerely



Jane Wood