

# Miss Katie's class - Feb/March newsletter



## General news:

- Welcome to Mrs Sara! She is a British-trained teacher with experience across all of the different grades and age ranges. She will be working in various teaching roles throughout the school, including working with some of the children in our class, and we are very happy that she has joined the team.
- On February 5<sup>th</sup>, there is an inter-schools soccer tournament. There is an Under 7s match and we will be asking some of the children from our class to represent the school in this category. Miss Nichola's class and my class are practising their ball and soccer skills once a week at the moment, with Miss Lara, for their Tuesday's PE lesson.
- The last Friday of February will also be an optional "dress down day" to raise funds for additional school supplies. If your child would like to wear their own clothes to school that day, we ask that they bring 1 dollar. Thank you.
- Sports day will be on March 17<sup>th</sup>, starting at 9am in the Graceway indoor sports hall. We will finish there around 11am, after which time we are hoping to offer refreshments back at school. We also invite you to join your child(ren) for lunch. This will be a fun-packed morning for the children and adults alike! More details nearer the time.
- The mid-term break is on 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> February and the term ends for the 2-week Spring/Easter break on March 18<sup>th</sup>.

## Thank you to....

... all those children, their families and friends who came to the ballpark last week to play soccer, watch the games and support local Tsunami fund-raising efforts. You may already know that the organisers have reported funds of over \$20,000 from that evening, so thank you to everyone for their support!

... Sakina Buoy (Zantore and Xavier's mum) for offering some of her valuable time on a Thursday morning to support our library efforts. If any of you can also spare an hour or two a week, please let me know. We always have things that we could use an extra help with!

... those of you who sent in fabrics and other craft materials, for our collage work. You should see the results very soon!

... those of you who attended last Wednesday's PTA meeting. Your support and ideas are very important to us.

## Birthdays

In March, we celebrate the birthdays of Zantore, Mēgan and Piterson, on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> respectively. Many happy returns to them all!



## Reading update and activity ideas

All of the children are continuing to make excellent progress with their reading. However, as we know, reading the words is only a small part of what reading stories are all about and I would like to make a few suggestions. Some of the children are taking 2 books home at a time, at their own request in many cases, and changing them every other day or every 3 days.

From now on, I will be encouraging them to take one book only, to read it to me and change it 2 or 3 times a week as appropriate but to do some activities based on their reading book in between. They will learn more about the overall concepts in stories, how they are written, about characters and speech, if you could do any of the following with your child. During time you may otherwise have spent on reading another book with your child, you could get him/her to:

- Write about and describe each of the characters. What they are like, what kind of people or animals they are, what clues are there in the book and how do they feel at certain points in story.
- Re-write or retell the story in their own words. Draw pictures to support their ideas.
- Look at the pictures in a book first and predict what the story will be about.
- Write a sequel to the story.
- Read the book again with certain words covered up - predict what kind of word they could be and what the actual word could be.
- Read the first few pages and predict what will happen next.
- Experiment with taking out the punctuation so the sentences merge together and demonstrate how difficult it would be to find the real meaning. Put the punctuation back in again.
- Act out the story with you and perhaps other members of your family - having a narrator and the characters speaking. Discuss the use of speech marks.
- Compare the book with other stories they have read or heard - discuss similarities, differences and why they liked or disliked it.
- Describe, verbally and/or in writing, the setting for a story and how it compares to other settings (where the story takes place).

Focusing on these, rather than just moving quickly through the reading scheme, will have a much greater impact on your child's literary ability.

## Spellings

Since the start of last term, the children have been given sets of common sight words each week to learn how to spell. These words are not necessarily phonetic - that is, they cannot all be spelt by sounding out the word alone. It is really important that they can read and spell these words but at the same time, it is just as important, of course, that they learn common spelling patterns for other words that they encounter often.

We cover spelling patterns everyday as part of our literacy lessons and to support this, I will now start sending your child home with sets of words which reinforce what we have covered in class that week. Some of these words may seem easier for your child than the sight words but the purpose is to give them a solid understanding of how to represent those sounds in a wide range of words. They will still continue with some sight words each week as well. Please continue to use the strategy for learning spellings of sight words, as suggested in the front of their red spelling books, as it really does work for most children.