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Cleves Cross Primary and
Nursery School
Ferryhill
County Durham
DL17 8QY



Dear Parents/Carers,

Welcome back! We hope you have had a wonderful, relaxing holiday and we wish you all a happy and healthy 2014.

Our topic this half term is 'The Big Freeze'. Within this topic we will explore and investigate winter, the properties of water, how we use water and polar landscapes. We will also take part in events such as Internet Safety Day and mark Chinese New Year.

As part of the topic we will also focus on the following:

Personal and Social Education

- Going for Goals (linked to new year's resolutions)
- Health and hygiene- linked to how we use water and supported by visits from the dentist and nurse
- Water shortages around the world. We will share a story called 'Fatou Fetch the Water' and discuss children's right to clean water and how we can respect this right
- Recycling linked to plastic pollution in the oceans

Literacy:

We will continue our phonics, reading and writing programmes, but some opportunities link to our topic:

- Reading and writing about the following books: One Snowy Night (as well as other Percy the Park Keeper stories), Lost and Found, a range of non-fiction books linked to polar animals and Dirty Bertie
- If your child cannot already write their name, this is something that they will now begin to practise on a daily basis. Support with this at home will be very beneficial but please remember to practice forming the letters correctly (before Christmas we sent out a pack of resources that included our Little Wandle formation rhymes).

Maths

Our maths this term covers:

- Introducing zero
- Deepening understanding of numbers to 5
- Mass and Capacity
- Numbers 6, 7, 8.

Understanding the World

- Exploring and experiencing winter
- Investigating water- freezing and melting
- Investigating other things that melt
- Polar landscapes- location in the world on globe and map, simple comparisons to our lives, animals and how we can protect our oceans and their homes by recycling
- Birds- penguins linked to polar landscape topic and British Birds linked to Big School Bird watch
- Sorting materials- recycling
- Floating and sinking
- We will enjoy stories about polar explorers e.g. Ernest Shackleton and Captain Scott

Expressive Arts and Design

- Constructing with a purpose in mind
- Designing and making a boat that will float
- Firework- colour mixing
- Valentines and Chinese New Year inspired arts and crafts
- Exploring instruments and learning rhymes
- Woodwork- Introducing tools and techniques





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Physical Development

As well as following our P.E. programme and taking part in a daily movement programme, we will:

- Develop fine motor skills, pencil grip and scissor skills
- Develop Gross motor skills
- Using a knife and fork at dinnertime.
- Please encourage children to dress and undress themselves at home. Challenge them to zip up their own coat, fasten, and unfasten buttons. These activities are excellent for developing hand strength and independence.



In the Foundation Stage we follow children's interests, so it may be that some of these activities do not get completed and we follow the lead of the children into a different aspect of the topic.

As part of our curriculum, we will take part in a **P.E. lesson on a Monday**. This half term a coach will lead it. Kits must be in school on a Monday and they will be sent home for washing at the end of the half term. For safety purposes, please ensure earrings are removed on P.E. days. Please remember to check that you label your child's P.E. kit.

Reading books have been coming home for a while now and the children seem to be responding very well to them- thank you for your fantastic support. Please continue to read with your child at home- both their chosen library book and their reading practice book. The children benefit enormously from the opportunity to put phonics into practise and familiarise themselves with high frequency words as well as engage with story language. Just five minutes a night will make a huge difference to their learning across the whole curriculum. **Please remember to leave a simple comment and signature in your child's reading diary so we know that they have benefited from the chance to practise their two books at home.**

As the winter weather continues, please ensure your child comes to school in a warm coat and a hat (please label with their name). If your child has a spare pair of wellies, we would be grateful if you could send them in for them to access before going onto the grassed area of our provision. We do have some pairs available but it will help with your child's independence if they have their own pair.

Please continue to send in any photos of any experiences that the children have at home, achievements or any 'wow' moments that you have observed (something that your child has done that you haven't seen them do before) via Tapestry. This supports me to assess the community strand of our curriculum and also provides a fantastic opportunity for your child to share their experiences and learning. Photos are always lovely to share. They provide children with a focus, which supports their confidence and use of language.

We are also grateful of any junk materials for our Creative Area; old boxes, bottles, tubs, lids, ribbons, buttons, beer tops, beer mats, corks- anything that we can make something out of! We have a new outdoor shed which will eventually be opened as a wood workshop. **If anyone has any scraps of soft wood, dowel, corks or bottle tops we would be very grateful of them!** Thank you to everyone who collected resources over the Christmas period.

If you have any questions or concerns or you want to discuss any aspects of the curriculum further, please do not hesitate to get in touch. Our class email is reccelves@cclt.education

Thank you for your continuing support,

Mrs Richardson

