Dear Parents,

‘Inspiring lives, shaping futures, creating possibilities’

At Sitwell Junior School our aim is to promote a love of learning by providing rich, rewarding experiences through a creative curriculum. Through celebrating efforts and achievements, we aim to develop pride in the success of our pupils so that they are ready to face future challenges.

This letter is designed to give you an insight into the learning experience we will be providing your child during their time in Year 3. We value our effective communication and strong links between staff, parents, and children. Together, we can make a difference!

The Curriculum at Sitwell Junior School gives children opportunities to learn, build on, and develop new skills. Children are exposed to a range of subjects and activities that allow them to experience different topics and learning styles encompassing the Sitwell 7 Values.

Our Year 4 Topics

- Autumn 1/2 – I am Warrior
- Spring 1 – Traders and Raiders
- Spring 2 – Burps, Bottoms and Bile
- Summer 1 – Potions
- Summer 2 – Blue Abyss

To encourage a love of reading, we are going to study at least one key book per term, linked to the current topic. In Year 4 the books will be:

- I am Warrior – Escape from Pompeii by Christina Balit and The Firework Maker’s Daughter by Philip Pullman
- Traders and Raiders – How to Train your Dragon by Cressida Cowell
- Burps, Bottoms and Bile – The Demon Dentist by David Walliams
- Potions – Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone by J.K Rowling
- Blue Abyss – TBC

It would be greatly appreciated by the school if, wherever possible, you could supply your child with a copy of the above mentioned books, perhaps as a birthday, EID or Christmas present, as learning will be closely linked to this. However, if not, please do not worry as your child will still be able to access these books in school.

We have chosen these topics as they will allow the children to take part in creative activities during the course of the year. The children will also attend the following trips to support this further:

I am Warrior!
To engage the children, we will be visiting Clifton Park Museum, Rotherham, to experience the day as a Roman. On the day, the children will participate in two workshops in the morning and self-guided activities in the afternoon. The workshops will consist of:
- Roman Soldier Workshop: Participate in role-play and looking at Roman replica weapons and clothing.
Archaeologist Workshop: Learn about the work of an archaeologist, investigating real Roman artefacts found at Templeborough Fort (now the site of Magna).

**Traders and Raiders**
Year 4 children will get the chance to travel around the Viking-age city of Jorvik. Aboard the state of the art time capsules, they will encounter the old-Norse speaking citizens, see inside their houses and back yards, experience a blast of smoke from blacksmith’s furnace and enjoy the smell of home-cooked stew inside the home of our amber worker. They will also take part in a workshop entitled 'Viking Battle Tactics' where they will be put through their paces – it’s time to prepare for battle! Discover some of the causes of raiding and warfare in Viking times, see some of the weapons that were used; and then have a go at re-enacting Viking strategies for the battlefield.

**The Dig**
This begins with a guided tour and includes an introduction to archaeology, then the children get to experience digging in replica dig pits in four periods (Victorian, Medieval, Viking and Roman) and handle real Viking artefacts.

**Burps, Bottoms and Bile**
For this topic, children will be visiting the Thackray Museum in Leeds. The museum has been awarded the Sandford Award for Heritage Education for a number of years. This is an independently judged, quality assured assessment of education programmes at heritage sites, museums, archives and collections across the British Isles. Whilst here, children will enjoy the interactive learning experiences at the Thackray Medical Museum, including the surgery-related Fantastic Plastic gallery and our popular Life Zone, where they will find out how their bodies work and follow the journey of a pea through the digestive system.

**Potions**
To engage the children into the magical world of Potions, we will visit Grimm & Co, Rotherham. The children will arrive at the apothecary gift shop for magical beings where they will receive a tour and explanation in the form of a story, telling them how it all began and introducing a fictional character – Graham Grimm (and his sister Grizelda), founder of the apothecary in 1148. After trying out the ‘magic-o-meter’ and sniffing ‘grandma’s scabs’ you then go through a secret door to our imagination gym, where everyone will need to exercise their imagination before climbing the giant’s bookcase to the story centre and this is where the magic truly begins….in our story centre - the children create a story together and are hassled by a fictional character (Graham/Grizelda) who provides provocation and feedback.

**The Blue Abyss**
As part of their Blue Abyss topic, the children will take part in a 3-day residential to Whitby. During this visit, they will learn about Captain Cook and explorers in the 18th century. In addition, the children will visit RNLI to learn about the importance of water safety and the rescue work that they do. Further, a visit to Whitby Abbey will provide information about its history which will link to our two earlier topics. To end the visit, the children will be given time to explore the beach and the creatures that live there. More information will follow.

We really appreciate your support in helping us to provide these memorable experiences for our children, as they really help to bring our curriculum to life. Unfortunately, if we receive insufficient contributions towards the cost of any experience we will be unable to go ahead and will have to cancel.

**Our Home Learning Schedule**

**Times Tables Practice**
In Y4, all the children are expected to recall the multiplication and division facts for the multiplication tables to 12 x 12. This means that they need to practise counting in multiples and have a rapid recall of any of the above multiplication facts.
Reading
In Lower School, we aim to encourage children to acquire a love of reading. Part of this requires the children to be able to read fluently, so it is really important that you listen to your child read every day. This only needs to be for a short time each day, as little and often is the best approach when supporting your child with their reading. Your child will be asked to choose a book from the colour band appropriate to their ability (in terms of reading and understanding) and a non-fiction book from the library. Their home Reading Diary will be monitored by their class teacher on a regular basis and the children will be able to change their books once a week.

Whilst reading with your child, it is beneficial if you ask them questions about what they have been reading, for example: How is Charlie feeling? Can you explain why you think that? What does the word rampaging suggest about the character? Which word or phrase tells you that Charlie was happy? How do Charlie and Augustus differ? Which other story does this remind you of? Sum up what you have read in one sentence; 5 words and 1 word.

If reading non-fiction, ask your child to retrieve the key facts from the book; identify the key vocabulary and then discuss the layout of the pages, considering the effect on the reader.

Your child needs to make sure they have their reading book and reading diary in school every day, as there might be opportunities for them to read to an adult in school as well.

Children who read at home at least four times in a week will earn a smile.

Topic
We encourage independent learning in Year 4 and projects are published half termly. Children will come home with a list of ideas for a Project from their class teacher for you to help with, or you can come up with an idea of your own linked to the half term’s topic. More details will follow in September.
For more guidance, please see our ‘Learning at Home Policy’.

PE and Swimming
The Year 4 children will have two sessions of PE every week (one indoor and one outdoor). These sessions will take place on a Tuesday for all 3 classes and Wednesday (4JF), Thursday (4GO), Friday (4GT). Can you please ensure that your child has the correct PE kit in school on a Monday and that this is taken home on a Friday. This will ensure that the children have their PE kit in school every day, should any unavoidable changes to the timetable have to take place. PE kit is as follows: white t-shirt, black shorts/leggings, black pumps (indoor), black tracksuit, and trainers (outdoor). For further information, please see the separate PE Kit letter.

Swimming sessions will begin on Friday 15th December 2017 until Friday 13th April 2017 at Rotherham Leisure Centre. We will provide more details nearer the time.

We hope this information will enable you to support your child in their learning activities throughout the school year. We do hope that you will be able to offer your support to school in our endeavour to offer broad educational experiences to our children.

Thank you for your continued support

Miss J. French            Miss G. Ogden            Miss G. Tunstall

(The Year 4 Team)