

Dear Parents,

Happy New Year and welcome back. We hope you all had a lovely Christmas and are ready for another busy half term.

We are starting the new term with a mini topic linked to the books by author Julia Donaldson. This week we have focused on the story of Zog and the sequel Zog and the Flying Doctors with activities linked to both stories. The role play area has been transformed into a doctor's surgery with a long list of patients waiting to be seen on Tuesday morning. The children have really enjoyed taking appointments, writing prescriptions and more importantly bandaging each other better!



The children have also been making their own badges and medals, and have been exploring oil pastels whilst creating images of dragons.

In our busy book task we have been looking at labelling the parts of a dragon and then writing a sentence beginning 'He has ...' and in PE we had the big apparatus out and tried to get a little higher on the rope ladder, and a little bit further along the balance beam.

In phonics this week we have introduced an alternative spelling **ay** for the digraph 'ai'. Whilst looking at words with the two different spellings we found that words that have the 'ai' sound in the middle like **rain** often use the ai spelling, and words that have the sound at the end such as **play** are usually spelt ay. There are obvious exceptions to this rule as our English language is extremely complex. However, for the children to be beginning to grasp this main concept of alternative spellings at such a young age is an excellent skill in building on spelling rules and patterns as they progress through school. We have also introduced some more tricky words this week: **they, her, said, have, like**. We have studied what makes each word tricky as a way of trying to remember what they are and have been looking out for them in our reading books.

Our maths focus for this week has been weight. We began the week by looking at the vocabulary of weight, heavier/lighter and then used the balance scales to look at the term balanced. Using the scales the children were encouraged to compare and describe the weight of different objects using the vocabulary. Once this was embedded we began thinking about how we could find out how heavy different items were so that we could order them. We decided to use the small unifix cubes to balance the opposite side of the scales to weigh different objects. After finding the weight of different

objects we were then able to put them in order from heaviest to lightest. Some children were able to explain why they thought some objects would be heavy or lighter and made some great estimations.

Well done Reception a great start to the new term, enjoy the weekend.

Mrs McCarthy and Mrs Copeland

Reminders:

- Thank you for the home challenge books that have been completed so far, please could any remaining books be returned by next Friday (18th January).
- Just to let you know, Mrs Copeland is on a training course on Monday for the day and the class is going to be covered by Miss Dawson.