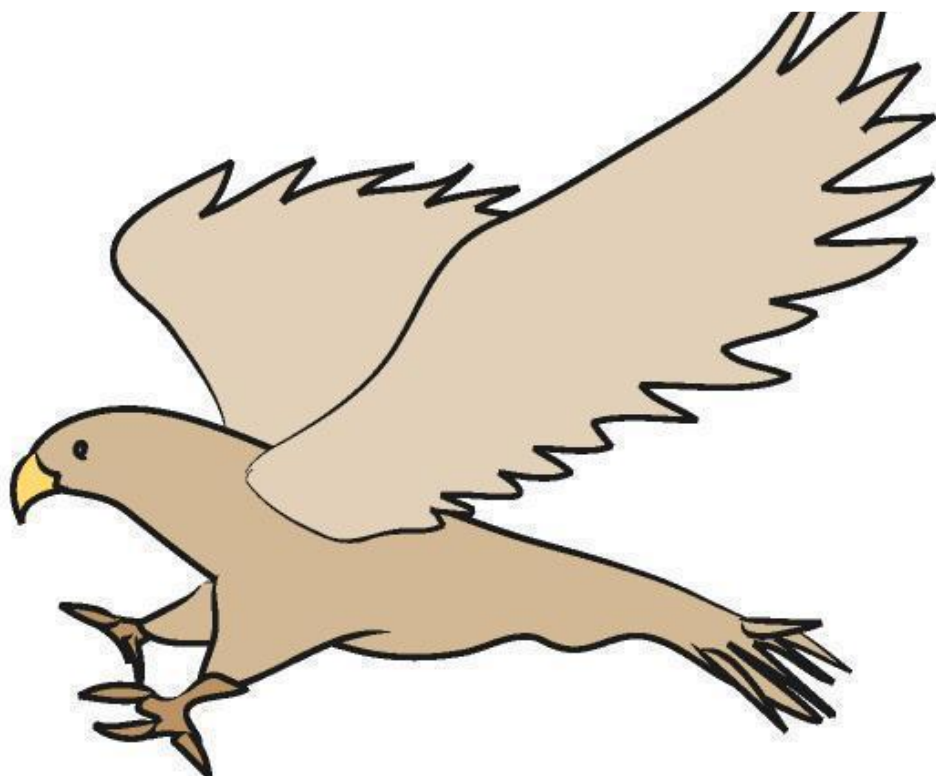




Houghton Conquest
Lower School
Growing together

Parent Handbook

Hawks Class 2025/26



Dear Parents/Carers,

Welcome to Hawks class!

We hope you find this booklet useful and it helps you to support your child's learning in Hawks class so your child can be the very best they can!

During the year there may be questions you would like to ask, you can contact us by informing the school office, writing a little note in the home school communication book, a telephone call or contact us via our class email address Hawks@hcschool.org.uk. You can also ask for an appointment if more time is needed and we will get back to you with a convenient time. Urgent messages could be delivered to the member of staff on gate duty.

There will be consultation evenings in the Autumn and Spring terms which will provide opportunities to discuss your child's progress and see their work. More information of dates will follow.

Thank you for your support.

Mr Birchall

Golden

Rules

We are respectful and polite

We are kind and helpful

We listen to everyone

We are always honest

We always work hard

We look after property

'Staying on Green but Going for Gold!'

HOUGHTON'S CORE VALUES ARE...



RESPECT

FOR OURSELVES, OTHERS AND OUR ENVIRONMENT

HONESTY

TO TELL THE TRUTH

RESILIENCE

TO BE DETERMINED, WORK HARD AND ALWAYS TRY OUR BEST

PRIDE

IN OUR WORK, OUR SUCCESSES AND OUR COMMUNITY

TEAMWORK

TO BE FRIENDLY AND WORK TOGETHER TOWARDS OUR GOALS



Contents

Page 5-6: **Learning at Home in Year Three**

Page 7: **How can I help my child with spelling?**

Page 8: **Learning Logs**

Page 9: **Our Reading Scheme Explained**

Page10: **Our Reading Scheme Colours**

Page 11: **Reading Strategies**

Page 12: **Reading Questions**

Page 13-14: **How can I help my child with reading?**

Page 15: **Handwriting**

Page 16: **Maths mastery**

Page 17: **Hawks Class Visit Costs for 2025/2026**

Page 18: **Hawks Timetable - Autumn Term**

Learning at Home in Year Three

We expect children in Year Three to be completing 45 minutes of homework each week. Children in Hawks Class are expected to complete the following Learning at Home on a weekly basis:

- Reading at home: 3 times a week (5 minutes each time)
- Home Spelling book: 3 times a week (5 minutes each time)
- TTRockstars/Times tables: 3 times a week (5 minutes each time)
- Learning Log activities (optional)

Reading

Hawks should read at home three times a week for five minutes each time; please make a short note in your child's reading record to show they have read. Reading books will be changed when your child has completed their book twice (when applicable), this allows the child to fully understand and gain a further understanding of the book. Reading records will be checked every week and stickers will be awarded to those children who have read three or more times at home that week. Once six stickers are earned, the child will receive a Reading Reward for their efforts.

Please ask your child questions about their reading to help their progression. Suggested questions are included in this booklet and in your child's reading record.

If your child is reluctant to read or having difficulty, you could read a comic book or choose a new book together and read to your child. Your child will pick up and learn up to 15 new words per reading session from listening to an adult read.

Home Spelling book

Spelling is an essential skill for all learners and is a crucial part of the new National Curriculum for English. The New National Curriculum states that by the end of Year four children should be able to read and spell the following words:

accident	century	experiment	interest	particular	remember
accidentally	certain	extreme	island	peculiar	sentence
actual	circle	famous	knowledge	perhaps	separate
actually	complete	favourite	learn	popular	special
address	consider	February	length	position	straight
answer	continue	forward(s)	library	possess	strange
appear	decide	fruit	material	possession	strength
arrive	describe	grammar	medicine	possible	suppose
believe	different	group	mention	potatoes	surprise
bicycle	difficult	guard	minute	pressure	therefore
breath	disappear	guide	natural	probably	though
breathe	early	heard	naughty	promise	(although)
build	earth	heart	notice	purpose	thought
busy	eight	height	occasion	quarter	through
business	eighth	history	occasionally	question	various
calendar	enough	imagine	often	recent	weight
caught	exercise	increase	opposite	regular	woman
centre	experience	important	ordinary	reign	women

A list will be sent home each week in your child's Home Spelling Book for you to practise with your child at home. The list will contain 10 words containing a spelling rule/pattern. There will also be 5 bonus words that will be from the list above. They will be tested on these words each week; these will be completed in the back of their Home Spelling Book for you to see.

Home Spellings will be sent home on a Friday and children will be tested on them on the following Friday.

TTRockstars

Our school has signed up to TTRockstars. This can be played via a tablet or smartphone and downloaded from the app store or found online at <https://ttrackstars.com/>. Children have all been given login details (found at the back of their reading records). If you have lost this, please email me and I can find this for you. TTRockstars challenges children on their times tables but at a level appropriate to them. It also looks at division-based questions and children will earn coins to spend on designing their avatar/character.

Help your child with **spelling**

Different media

Provide different media for children to write and make marks with e.g. paint and paintbrushes, chunky markers on large paper, chalk on the pavement or patio, dry-wipe markers on the mirror or using fingers in shaving foam, or custard. You could also encourage children to explore making marks on a computer or tablet device.

Flashcards

Have flashcards, letter tiles or similar items around for children to use to spell out words.

Make a copy

Children could copy out the spelling list in alphabetical order or from shortest to longest.

Grab a dictionary

Have a dictionary to hand for looking up unfamiliar words

Narrow it down

Narrow down long lists and focus on 4 to 5 at a time.

Get moving

Use physical activity - for each letter of the word get children to do a star jump, walk up or down a step, touch their toes etc.

Games

Make the list into a game - try playing hangman, making word searches or coming up with crosswords.

Shout out

Encourage your child to spell words out loud on long car journeys or when walking to school.

Encourage your child to read.

Good readers are often good spellers!

Learning Logs

Learning Logs are one of the ways we promote learning at Home. We hope that your child will enjoy completing the activities and that they encourage you to work with them to complete the tasks.

How they work

Learning Logs are sent home every half term. Inside will be a number of optional activities, which you may wish to complete to support your child's learning at home. Complete the activity or activities you prefer - the choice is yours!

How can I do my work?

Writing
Drawing
Diagrams
Photographs
Anyway you see fit - the more creative the better!



Learning Log Guidelines



When are they due?

Learning Logs are handed out during the term of each new topic and should normally be returned in the first week of the new term.

Presenting my learning

A double page should be used
Please only use grey pencil for writing
Coloured pencils for colouring - **not** felt tip pens
Use rulers to draw lines

Our Reading Scheme Explained

Our reading books are arranged into colour coded boxes which link to the National Curriculum. Last year the Friends of Houghton Conquest funded some wonderful new reading resources for your children to use at home.

We use a variety of 'reading schemes' in our school including Little Wandle and Oxford Reading Tree, to support independent reading. We have a clear reading progression system that runs through the school, and we regularly assess the pupil's progress against this to implement additional support and/or challenge. Teachers talk to the children regularly about their strengths and areas of development and communicate with parents via children's reading records. All reading books are colour-coded to indicate level of difficulty.

To promote a love of reading, we:

- Read aloud to children to introduce them to new authors and styles of writing.
- Encourage and model reading for pleasure and establish an appreciation and love of reading.
- Ensure that reading is made fun by teachers and other adults, providing excitement and inspiring the imagination.
- Establish and develop a varied range of texts in the classroom.
- Hold an annual World Book Day event.
- Work with parents and carers to ensure that reading is regularly shared at home, promoted by our reading reward scheme.
- Each class has its own dedicated 'Book Nook' reading space.
- Celebrate a range of authors and illustrators across varying genres.

Children move onto a different level according to the development of many skills, not just being able to read all the words. There are some reading questions in this booklet to help you discuss stories and books.

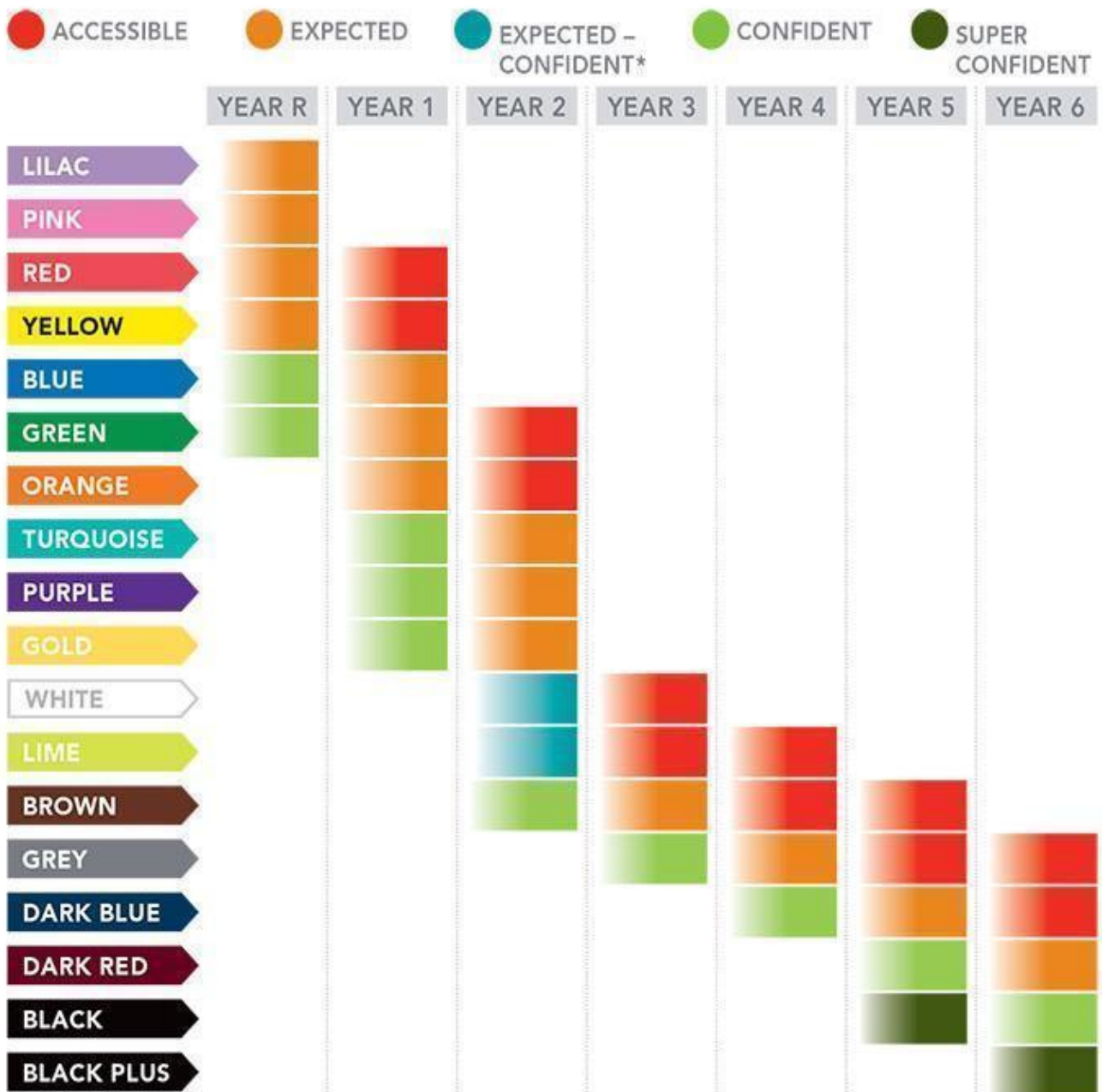
If your child brings home a book which they have read previously, use the opportunity to talk about it - why have they chosen it again, can they remember what happened? Remember, we all like to re-read a good book!

Please encourage your child to read lots of different books at home. The children need to discuss many different stories and texts so I would not recommend buying reading scheme books for home.

Hawks should read three times a week for about five minutes each time, making a short note in your child's reading record each time. Stamps/ticks will be awarded to those children who have read three or more times a week, checked every Monday. When the children have gained six stamps/ticks they will receive a Reading Reward for their efforts; these are given out during our Celebration Assembly.

Our Reading Scheme Colours

All children are different but as a general guide these are where your child is expected to be.



* adjustment made to keep in line with new expectations for reading

Reading Strategies

I use the pictures to help me.



“C-AR-P-E-T”

“CAR – PET”

“CARPET”

I sound out/blend words I don't know.

I look for smaller words inside words.



“tEACHer”

“en – joy – able”

“Enjoyable”

I can break words down into syllables.

I use punctuation to help me make sense of what I am reading.



I go back and read a word or sentence again if I don't understand it.

I read on to see if I can work out the meaning of a word I don't know.



I listen to what I am reading to see if it makes sense.

Reading Questions

Knowledge

Where is the story set?
When did the story take place?
Who are the main characters?
What does the character look like?
Where does the character live?

Comprehension

What is happening?
What happened at the end of the story?
Who is telling the story?
Which parts of the story do you like best?
Which parts describe the setting?
What problem does the character have?

Analysis

How do you feel about...?
Why did the author choose these words?
How has the author shown the character is afraid?

Application

Can you think of another story with a similar theme? With the same issues?
Can you think of another story character that acted this way?
What ideas would you borrow from this story if you were to write your own one?

Evaluation

What makes a successful story?
Which one is better? Why?
Could the story be improved? How?
Who would enjoy reading this story?

How can I help my child with reading?

As a parent you are probably helping your child with reading much more than you may realise. If your home contains books, magazines and catalogues that your child sees you reading, you are modelling skills they need to learn. If you read to your child and talk together about familiar stories, or if you use printed materials to find things out, then your child already has a head start in this area.

- Remember that **talking** about reading is very important, so if your child is sometimes reluctant to read aloud, discussing a book will also help to develop reading skills.
- Concentrate on **enjoyment** and grasping the meaning rather than absolute accuracy.
- Keep reading time **relaxed**, comfortable and pleasurable in a quiet corner, with the television turned off.
- Talk about the cover and read the title before rushing your child into the text, asking questions such as: what do you think it will be about; what sort of book is it; have you read one like this before?
- Look through the book, noticing interesting pictures and words, then read the opening together.
- Don't correct too quickly. If your child makes an error suggest having another go, searching the pictures for a clue, sounding out the first letter or reading on before you 'tell' the problem word. Try some of the reading strategies on Page 7 of this booklet.
- If your child is really struggling, take over the reading yourself so that it remains a fun activity and let me know.
- When your child brings home a book that has been read before ask for a summary before reading it again, then discuss the book at a deeper level than last time.
- As your child progresses, talk about authors, characters and plots or what new information has been learnt.
- Join your local library and use it regularly. Watch out for storytelling events, summer reads and reviews of new titles.
- Read to your child as often as possible, maybe even your favourite book! Children pick up 15 new words listening to someone else read!

Help your child with **reading**

I spy

Play 'I Spy' games.
Can you find words beginning with...? Can you find a picture of a ...? How many ... can you see?

Ask questions

Ask questions about the story as you read it e.g. What is the story about? Why do you think they made that choice? Was it a good choice? Why did that happen? What do you think will happen next? What was your favourite part of the story? Why?

Make it fun

Enjoy reading together. Give characters funny voices and engage with the pictures. Make a game out of finding words that rhyme or start with the same sound.

Be seen

Make sure you are seen reading. Keep books and magazines at easy reach.

Get out

Go to your public library regularly. Find the books you loved as a kid to read together.

Create

Use reading to inspire drawings or new stories.

Go online

Look online & in app stores for appropriate word & spelling games.

Make space

Have a special place or a certain time when you read together.

Read everything out loud.

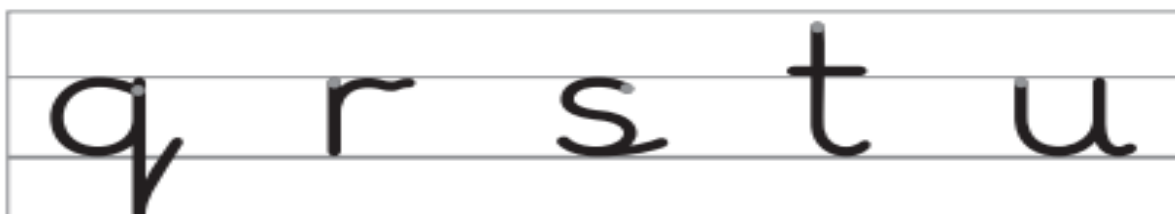
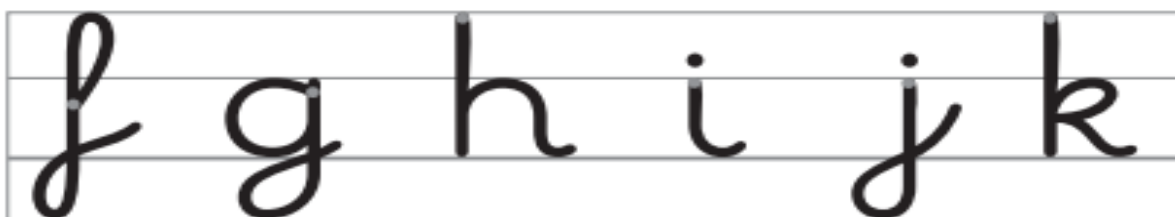
Books, poems, nursery rhymes, newspaper & magazine articles, food labels...
anything that is close to hand!

Handwriting

At Houghton Conquest Lower School we are very proud of our pupil's handwriting and we are working hard to implement our new cursive handwriting style "Houghton Handwriting".

We have recently adopted Letter-join's on-line handwriting resource and Lesson Planners as the basis of our handwriting policy as it covers all the requirements of the National Curriculum.

Using cursive handwriting also encourages children to slow down, take care in their letter formation and promotes pride in their work.



Maths Mastery

At Houghton Conquest Lower School, Maths Mastery has been developed to ensure that every child can achieve excellence in mathematics. It provides pupils with a deep understanding of the subject through concrete, pictorial and abstract approaches. This ensures pupils fully understand what they are learning.

Maths Mastery places emphasis on the cumulative mastery of essential knowledge and skills in mathematics. It embeds a deeper understanding of maths by utilising concrete, pictorial, abstract approaches so that pupils understand what they are doing, rather than learning to repeat routines they are given the opportunity to fully reason as well as develop fluency.

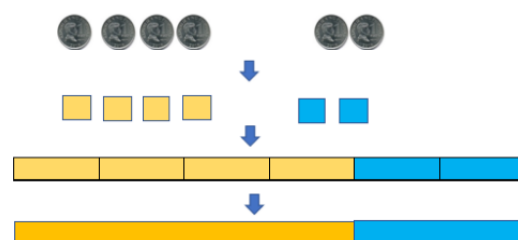
Concrete

Concrete is the '**doing**' stage where they use concrete objects as the model. This approach brings a mathematical concept into reality by allowing children to experience and use some physical resources to reason and solve problems.



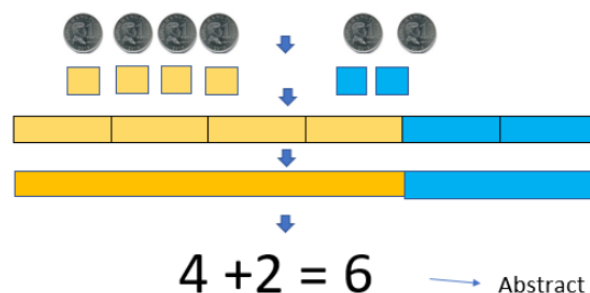
Pictorial:

The pictorial is the '**seeing**' stage where the children see the representations of the objects using varied templates, such as a part whole model or a bar model. It encourages children to see a mental connection between the physical objects and abstract concepts by looking at the pictures, circles, or any model that represents the objects. Building or drawing a model makes it easier for children to visualise the problem.



Abstract:

The abstract is the '**symbolic**' stage, where children can use abstract symbols to model problems. Once a child already has a solid understanding of 'Concrete' and 'Pictorial' then we can introduce the 'Abstract'. In this stage, problems are represented using the symbolic concepts, such as numbers and mathematical symbols, for example the four basic arithmetic operations (+, -, x, /).



Hawks Class Visits

Term/Topic	Details	Type of visit	Cost breakdown
Autumn Term Egyptians	<p>Learn who the Egyptians were and their way of life. Interactive workshop that introduces the children into the fascinating world of the Ancient Egyptians through the eyes of an Egyptologist.</p> <p>Children will learn about the mysteries of mummification, Egyptian board games, tomb building and decorating and pharaohs.</p> <p>This workshop is led through the company 'Portals of the Past' and has been involved with shows such as Horrible Histories.</p> <p>(subject to booking)</p>	School visit (full day)	Cost per child £15
Summer Term Romans	<p>Learn about the impact the Romans had on Britain. We would visit the Verulamium museum which has a collection of Roman artefacts and mosaics to view.</p> <p>We would be taking part in a Roman marketplace workshop where children will dress up as the Romans of Verulamium, and be tasked with going round the market, finding the Roman objects on their shopping lists. Students will handle replica items that reflect the artefacts discovered during excavations at Verulamium.</p> <p>(subject to booking)</p>	Trip out of school	Cost per child £28 (including coach journey)
<p>Costs are based on 2024-25 prices and may increase subject to supplier costs. Permission letters advising of the exact cost will be sent out near to the date of each visit.</p>			

	8.45	9 – 9.15	9:15-30	9.30 – 10.30	10.30-45	10.45 - 11	11 – 12:15	12:15 – 1:15	1:15 – 1:20	1:20 – 2:10	2:10 - 3	3:00– 3.15			
Monday	Re gi st er /m or ni ng ac ti vi ty	Spelling lesson		Literacy		As se m b l y	B r e a k	Mental Maths	Maths	L u n c h	Re gi st er /a ft er no o n a ct i v i t y	History/ Geography		French	DEAR Time
Tuesday		Handwriting	Guided Reading	Literacy				Mental Maths	Maths			Music/ Forest School	Computing/ Forest School	DEAR Time	
Wednes day		Handwriting (IM)	RE (IM)		PSHE (IM)			Mental Maths (IM)	Maths (IM)			Literacy	PE	DEAR Time	
Thursday		Handwriting	Guided Reading	Literacy				Mental Maths	Maths			PE	Art/DT	DEAR Time	
Friday		Spellings Homework check	Guided Reading	Literacy				Mental Maths	Maths			Science	Golden time	DEAR Time	