



Year 4 Curriculum Newsletter

September 2015

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Year 4! We are very pleased to welcome you and your children to NAIS, and we would like to send our greetings to all new pupils, as well as those of you returning for your second year. There are so many new developments for this year, including the long-awaited opening of our swimming pool! I know we are all excited about this, and many of the other new opportunities that are waiting.

We have had a fantastic start, and we hope that this continues for the rest of the year! We know you may have questions about the learning taking place in class, so this letter aims to provide an indication of the areas of the curriculum covered this half term in Year 4.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Children need to bring in a water bottle every day, to ensure they stay hydrated and in peak condition for learning. We would also like you to remind your child to bring in a cap to keep the sun off at break times, and a healthy snack to eat, perhaps fruit or some crackers.

The children have been given a reading record and plastic wallet, which they need to bring to school every day; this will be to record their daily reading, note any important information, and to keep letters or forms together and legible.

Children have received a lanyard for their bus cards, and hopefully by now your child's lunch routine has been set and they are getting used to either a school provided lunch or to bringing their own. We are a no nut school, so please no nuts in any snacks or lunch boxes. We do have children with nut allergies, so it is vital we keep the school free of any nut products.

On the days PE takes place, the children are expected to arrive in PE kit. You will also have received detailed information regarding what to do on swimming days, but to remind you; on those days the children arrive in their school uniform and change for the swim lesson. The class timetable should be with you by now, but please be aware that these may change from week to week depending on different activities and learning opportunities. The subjects that remained fixed on our timetable are PE, Mandarin, Music, Art and Drama, as specialist teachers teach these lessons.



The children are rewarded in different ways during the school day. House points are given out to individual pupils for pieces of good work and recognise academic excellence. These house points are collated and each week the house with the most points announced. The children will also receive certificates for reaching the milestone amounts of 25, 50, 100 and 200 house points, being celebrated in house assemblies.

Each week a child is nominated as a star of the week, for going that bit extra during the week, whether in their work or any other aspect of school life. The children receive a certificate and their achievement celebrated in assembly on a Friday in front of the whole school.

Finally in Year 4 marbles are given as a reward in class. They can be given for a number of different reasons, such as being helpful and cooperative, for thinking creatively, for excellent teamwork, for being kind and polite or for being considerate for others feelings. The children work together as a class to earn rewards for their good behaviour and social graces, which as a class they have chosen already – I can't wait for the 500 marble reward!

We will explain a little more about each of the curricular areas below, though if you have any questions of course in the first instance contact your class teacher. For more social issues, the class representatives will be appointed soon [please contact our PTA if you are interested and have not already done so], and they will be your liaison for birthday parties or other fun, out of school activities.

Finally, we have changed our website for communicating with you. We will now use the firefly website, <https://naishk.fireflycloud.asia> which again, you should have received information about by now. This will also act as a portal to view your class timetable, see important news and events, and keep up to date with photos from class. It may appear a little empty just now, but even as we speak, more content is being added, so do check regularly!

CURRICULUM INFORMATION

MATHS

Pupils will study place value, mental and written addition and subtraction, time [using both analogue and digital clocks], money, multiplication and division, handling data and problem solving.

As always, in addition to this regular times table practise at home is essential to ensure that children can apply this knowledge across the curriculum.



ENGLISH

Our English units this term are based around the notable author Ted Hughes, who wrote the story *The Iron Man* – not to be confused with Iron Man of Marvel Comics! We will use this text for an exploration of literary techniques and to act as a springboard from which to experience different forms of writing.

We will use and develop skills in; brainstorming, skimming and scanning, planning, researching, note taking, summarising, editing and publishing to produce work in a variety of styles such as character descriptions, newspaper reports, recounts and poetry.

We will further analyse the features of texts and the language used. Our grammar focus will look at the use of similes, of complex sentences and onomatopoeia. We will also create a range of different types of text, such as wanted posters and menus, whilst our speaking skills will be developed through debate and discussion.

As we continue to use our cross-curricular approach there will be plenty of opportunities to use our language skills in other areas of our learning. This continues to be supplemented throughout the term by our focus on Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar, (SPAG), regular reading comprehension and handwriting development.

Literacy Workshop & Phonics

In year 4, pupils take part in regular literacy workshops in which they practice several different literacy and wider English skills. Pupils practice and refine the following skills:

- Guided reading sessions with a teacher
- Cursive handwriting and neat presentation
- Reading comprehension and fluency
- Weekly spellings practice
- Grammar & Punctuation

In addition to these skills, pupils will also take part in Guided Reading sessions, led by either their class teacher or a Year 4 teaching and learning assistant. The emphasis for these sessions is not only to improve reading fluency and accuracy, but to also improve their level of understanding of a variety of texts.

Finally, all students in year 4 receive a daily 15- minute Phonics session where they consolidate their existing Phonics knowledge and apply it to different exercises and games.



THEME

Our entire theme curriculum this half term is linked to the Iron Man. This book and the ideas contained therein will be the link throughout which a lot of our learning will occur. We will focus on Geography, with elements of Design and Technology complementing our Science objectives.

In Geography we will:

- Find out what we already know about our home country.
- Locate the continents of the world; identify the equator and the different tropics.
- Identify human and physical features of a locality.
- Learn the points of a compass and identify countries on a map.
- Present a project based on our home country.

Design tasks will cover the following:

- Use research and develop design criteria to inform the design of our own Iron Man.
- Make our own Iron Man using recyclable materials.
- Evaluate our ideas and products against our own design criteria and consider the views of others to improve our work.
- Understand and use electrical systems in our Iron Man model.

ICT

In Year 4 we believe in integrating ICT into everyday lessons, and look to use technology wherever we can for the benefit of the children's learning. By using various apps, websites and media we enrich the learning experiences offered. We plan to create our own Iron Man animation using the I-Motion programme on the iPads, whilst we will further our understanding and ability to use electrical systems in our Iron Man model.

SCIENCE

Our science units will relate to Iron Man, and we will look at various aspects of electricity, including to;

- Identify common appliances that run on electricity.



- Construct a simple series electrical circuit, identifying and naming its basic parts, including cells, wires, bulbs, switches and buzzers.
- Recognise some common conductors and insulators and associate metals with being good conductors.

MANDARIN

In Year 4 pupils will continue to explore reading, writing, speaking and listening skills through songs, stories and texts. There will be a greater emphasis on sentence structure, grammar and reading comprehension.

Beginner pupils will be learning personal introductions, time, weather, colours and clothing. Pupils will be able to talk about their family members and describe their appearance.

Lower Intermediate pupils will extend vocabulary on family, describing a person, and clothing. An increasing focus will be placed on how to comprehend a Chinese passage and produce a short paragraph. Students will also have more opportunities to enhance their communication skills in Mandarin by speaking in front of the class.

Upper-intermediate pupils will learn to talk using past tense by describing an event that happened in the past. They will learn how to read and compose a letter. An increasing emphasis will be placed on composing complicated sentences.

Advanced pupils will be able to speak and write about themselves and their families. They will learn to describe and write about time and sequence by describing their routines. Children will learn to use pronouns to talk about their family life. An increasing emphasis will be placed on listening and gathering information. Pupils will study chapters including: 古诗二首、司马光、数星星的孩子. Through these chapters, they will learn how to predict a words meaning from the context of the article.

MUSIC

This term, year 4 will explore the dimensions of music through the topic of 'Iron Man'. Pupils will listen to a variety of music and compose and perform, experimenting with dynamics, texture, timbre, duration, silence, pitch and tempo. They will use a variety of musical notations. Pupils will use keyboard skills and play the ukulele throughout this unit, and will also learn one of a variety of instruments from violin, flute, saxophone or trumpet depending on which class they are in. They will learn a repertoire of well-known children's songs, linked to school themes.



DRAMA

Year Four Pupils will use physical theatre and dance performance techniques in order to create and perform a choreography based on the story of “The Iron Man”.

ART

Year 4 will begin their first project by investigating the painting ‘Peasant Woman’ by Vincent van Gogh. They will then go onto design and create a hat influenced by the woman in the painting. Pupils will collaborate their thoughts and ideas as they follow the design brief requirements. They will have the opportunity to explore a variety of materials as they start to think three dimensionally about the aesthetics of their design and its functionality.

PE

Pupils will be following a unit of speed/agility/quickness (SAQ) that will develop their fundamental sporting movements. Pupils will be able to make a connection between movements and major sporting activities.

You can contact the Year 4 team by sending an e-mail or by making an appointment with reception. All our email addresses are listed below. Please do contact us if you have any questions, comments or ideas; we really hope that you do, as we love to hear from you!

Kind regards,

The Year 4 Team

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