

## **A NOTE FOR PARENTS AT THE END OF YEAR 3**

This note has three main purposes:

1. to give some context to the End of Summer Term reports for your sons that you will be given access to very soon;
2. to give a brief explanation of how the boys have been grouped for the next academic year; and
3. to provide some guidance on how the boys can maintain their academic skills across the holidays.

### **END OF SUMMER TERM REPORTS**

Owing to the disruption to academic assessments caused by COVID-19, no marks or scores are appearing on the boys' End of Summer Term reports. Ordinarily in the Summer term, like in the Spring term, parents would be provided with their son's individual marks for Maths and for English, accompanied by year group median marks to compare against. In the absence of marks (which can often be a little misleading and certainly not tell the whole story with children of such a young age anyway), we hope that parents will still feel that the written comments from teachers, across all school subjects, offer a good amount of insight into attainment and progress.

### **GROUPING OF BOYS FOR THE NEXT ACADEMIC YEAR**

As with Year 3, in Year 4 there will be three parallel, mixed-ability groups. That goes to say that each class will have the full range of abilities in it. The view that this arrangement benefits all boys' learning still prevails at this age. Every child brings something positive to the group and our teachers have the ability to simultaneously challenge and support as necessary in order to maximise the progress of every pupil. The Year 4 tutors in 2020-21 are going to be Mr Maitland, Miss Oakley and Mr Lee. Mr Maitland also acts as pastoral Head of Year 4.

We believe it is good for the boys to have their classes mixed around as they move from Year 3 to Year 4. In order to achieve parallel mixed ability groups, we referred to data from underlying ability tests and attainment tests that we have administered (albeit that we have not done so much formal testing since the onset of COVID-19) and of course also called upon the judgement of the professional teachers who have worked with the boys, day-in, day-out, throughout the year and got to know them well. We also took into account any pertinent pastoral issues when grouping the boys.

### **MAINTAINING ACADEMIC SKILLS DURING THE HOLIDAYS**

The coming weeks are a holiday that follow a rigorous academic year. It is important that the boys relax, recharge and play. Therefore, we do not prescribe booklets or worksheets. However, it is important that certain skills are maintained.

#### **Reading**

Boys should be encouraged to read a variety of texts for pleasure. If boys can find authors and/or genres that appeal to them, then they will improve their comprehension and vocabulary (to pick out just two of the many benefits of reading) while actually enjoying themselves! You should refer to your son's most recent Accelerated Reader Reading Range (formally known as the "ATOS Book Level range") and use the [www.arbookfind.co.uk](http://www.arbookfind.co.uk)

website to find appropriate books. This Summer (which is not the norm), it is possible for boys to quiz on Accelerated Reader books from home (like it has been for the past term) and thereby accrue words towards becoming a reading Millionaire. There will not, however, be Reading Targets set for the boys to work towards over the holiday.

### **Writing**

Boys should be encouraged to write creatively and expressively on subjects of their choice. This could be in the form of postcards (which new tutors would be delighted to receive, posted to them at the school address), holiday diaries, mini-projects or stories.

### **Mental maths**

Boys should continue to practise times tables and number bonds (i.e. pairs of numbers that add up to 10/20/100 etc) to improve speed and accuracy of recall. There are lots of apps available for this and it is good for boys to find ones for themselves that really engage them. The TT Rockstars resource remains accessible to the boys throughout the holidays. Good old fashioned times table games over the dinner table as a family are also excellent. Failure to keep these skills fresh will lead to them deteriorating over the summer break and not hitting the ground running with Maths in Year 4.

### **Maths in general**

If you do wish to go over the content of what has been learned this year, please refer to the newsletters for each Busy Ants unit. These are available within the Mathematics section of the Firefly VLE (Virtual Learning Environment) in the Parents portal of the school website. Mrs Lee (Prep School Head of Maths) has also written a separate note elsewhere for parents about Maths.

### **CONCLUDING REMARKS**

Please note that any of the boys' exercise books from this year that are not sent home at the end of this term will be available for the boys to collect at the start of next term.

Thank you for your support this year and congratulations to your sons for everything that they have all achieved in their first year at Bedford School.

Have a lovely summer!