Dear Parent/Carer,

We would like to give you an outline of the exciting mathematics that your child will be learning at school this year. Mathematics is used every day in all sorts of ways and we hope this information will help you see mathematics at home as well as at school. Mathematics is about patterns and rules, skills and concepts, numbers and shapes – and we want your child to be confident and happy in the way they play with and use mathematics. Most importantly we want your child to have a deep understanding of the mathematics they are learning, as a sound foundation for later study and life.

We use *Hodder Cambridge Primary Mathematics*, a high quality textbook series, to support our teaching of the *Cambridge Primary Mathematics Curriculum Framework,* an internationally recognised curriculum. This series will help your child master key ideas through practical activities and careful practise. Your child will develop his/her mathematical language, build his/her skills and explore the mathematics practically to help him or her to solve problems. Your child will also be challenged to think mathematically to show their depth of understanding.

We believe that all learners can understand and do mathematics. We expect your child to work hard to master each skill or concept, but we also expect them to enjoy their learning and get excited when they talk about mathematics with you at home.

We have included an outline of the content and aims for each year and also some suggestions on how you can support your child with their learning.

Yours,

Mike Askew and Paul Broadbent

Series Editors

Appendix 1
Content and aims of each year's material

Appendix 2
Supporting your child with their learning

1. Be positive about mathematics and encourage your child to talk about the mathematics they are learning. They could have a go at teaching you any methods or skills they have recently learnt.
2. If possible, provide a quiet place for your child to do homework, away from TV/computer games. There should be somewhere for them to sit with plenty of light. Set a time and place each day for homework, to instil a sense of routine and importance in doing homework.
3. Help with homework tasks when your child asks for help, but avoid giving them the answers. It is the process in the homework task that is important. This matters more than the mark achieved.
4. When assisting with homework, treat your child as the expert. Ask them to explain the mathematics to you rather than the other way round. Tempting as it may be, teaching your child what you learned at school might be confusing as this may be different to what they are being taught. Once your child has shown you the method they are learning, say, perhaps, 'that's interesting. Would you like me to show you how I was taught that?' And accept 'no'!
5. Help your child to see being stuck as a good thing. Point out that being stuck means they are struggling to learn something, and learning is not always easy. And don't rush to help them get 'unstuck' too quickly. Better to take a break, than for anyone to get upset. Research now shows that the old saying of 'sleeping on it' really does help.
6. Support and encourage your child at all times, give praise for all efforts especially if a child is struggling with a topic or concept, or has a disappointing test result. Children in primary school need to acquire a positive attitude to learning and learn resilience and persistence in the learning process.
7. Praise your child in specific ways, rather than the generic 'good girl' or 'good boy' (that praise sends a message that getting something wrong or being stuck means you are a 'bad' girl or boy). Praise like 'Well done, you've stuck with that problem for ten minutes, let's take a break' or 'The way you did that calculation showed you are thinking about which method to choose, well done' are more likely to help your children develop persistence, and a belief in themselves as learners.
8. The word 'yet' is a powerful ally. If your child says 'I just don't get it' or 'I don't like maths' feed this back with 'yet' – 'You can't do this yet' or 'you don't like it yet'. Talk to you child about how when they were learning to walk if they had said 'I can't do this' they would still be crawling.
9. If your child is stuck or upset resist saying (whether true or not) – 'don't worry, I was never much good at maths' – phrases like this communicate to children that it is ok not to be good at maths. The approach the school is taking is based in brain research which shows that there is no such thing as a 'maths gene' that makes some people good or not at mathematics.
10. Be supportive. At primary school, children are learning the basics in maths and some concepts may be difficult for them to grasp. Course material is carefully graded to be age appropriate and the syllabus is cyclical, so concepts are visited more than once each year. Children can become upset and confused if they are overwhelmed with information they are not yet ready to process or are struggling to understand the basics.
11. Encourage your child to take a pride in their school and homework, and to keep their notebooks clean and their work neat. Younger children may need more help with this than older ones!
12. Look out for opportunities to talk naturally about maths during everyday activities. 'How much more flour needs to be put on the scale?' 'Which packet of cornflakes is the better buy?' 'How long to go before your favourite TV program starts?'
13. Display your child's work if space allows and be proud of your child's achievements, however modest they may seem.