

News and Information for Reception Parents at the end of our first 6 weeks.

Baseline Assessment.

During the first 6 weeks of school, we carry out a Baseline Assessment. This involves assessing each child's ability across all 7 areas of the EYFS. This gives us a great understanding of what each child can do, so that we are ready to move them onto their next steps for learning. We will discuss these next steps with you at parents evening.

Reading

One of the most important skills when reading, is to be able to talk about and understand a text. We have been spending lots of time reading books, poems and rhymes to the children, while also sharing books with them individually. Once they have brought their 'Book Box' book home and shared it with you, we then ask them questions about it. "What did you like? Was it funny? Was it sad? What do you remember? Who were the characters?" etc. This experience is so important for a child's further development and comprehension of texts.

We have already sent home a booklet of words which we call 'The Kipper Family' words. These are the words that we need your child to learn by sight before we can send them home a book with words in (this is very exciting!) During this time, we will be sending home Kipper family books which do not have words in. This supports your child in learning about the family. We will continue to give your child high frequency words to learn, alongside their reading books. Please try to practice, reading every day with your child. Remember to keep talking about what your child is reading by asking questions, making predictions and talking about likes and dislikes. It is also useful to use the pictures to encourage your child to read new words.

We will also be using the red reading records for sending home 'Phonics Homework'. Each week, we will put in a sticker of sounds and words for you to read with your child. Let your child tell you and 'teach' you about what they have learnt in phonics each week.

Please, please, please only use your child's bookbag for books and paper. We encourage children at school that books are 'precious'. Water bottles and bananas in bookbags can easily spoil our books. Also, it is a good idea to clear out your child's book bag regularly, as you need to check for letters, and take out any 'work' that they

Number

Alongside many varied mathematical activities in class, we teach 'Maths Meetings' each day. These are interactive sessions which introduce new ideas and concepts and consolidate those previously taught. These are fun, visual and busy lessons which are linked to the learning that is happening during the day. Your child may be singing counting songs, adding using beanbags, measuring trees outside, looking for shapes on the playground, using a range of equipment and resources etc. Once your child recognizes their numbers to 20, they will be given a 'Number Badge' from us and this is celebrated in class or assembly. We use 'Ten Town', an interactive learning resource, which supports our teaching of number.

PE Kits

We have been practicing taking off shoes and socks for PE. After half term, we would like children to bring in their PE bags with shorts and a T-shirts - all named please, including the bag! We are going to have PE in the hall, and the expectation is that children get themselves changed, so please help them to practice doing this during half term. After Christmas, they will need a pair of plimsols in their PE bag. These need to be 'lace free'. You may need to check your child's plimsols regularly, to check they fit.

Independence.

The children are encouraged to be independent in their daily routines from day one in Reception. They are taught to put their belongings away, wash their hands and take care of personal needs such as dressing as toileting. We understand how tempting it is to help your child in the morning when they are getting dressed, especially if you are trying to get off to work or are on a tight time schedule, but please try find another time in the day or at the weekend to teach them how to do these things. Children are generally very good at taking their uniforms/coats off but do not then know how to put them back on if they are turned inside-out! Items of clothing that fit snugly can also cause issues. We show the children how to turn coats, tights, jumpers, socks etc in the correct way, but it is important that they practice this regularly to aid their independence.

Phonics. Reading and Writing

Phonics is taught as a 15 minute interactive, pacy session. We teach 2,3 or 4 sounds per week, 1 per day. Each letter has a picture associated with it which encourages correct letter formation whilst learning the sound (not the name) of each letter. Once your child knows all of the 26 individual letter sounds, they will receive a 'Sounds Badge' from us and this is celebrated in class or in assembly. Once your child has started to learn some sounds, you will notice that they will begin to start blending them together to read and write words. We offer the children a range of activities throughout the day, which supports their learning of each sound. It is very important to consolidate their previous learning in phonics too, going back over sounds already learnt. Once the children know all of the individual sounds, they will begin to learn the digraphs - these are 2 letters together which make one sound. For example: ph, ch, ai, ea. The children will learn an action and a rhyme for each of these. Again, let them teach you!

Alongside learning Phonics, we also teach the children to read and write high frequency words. We say that the words we can sound out are **green words**, and the words we cannot sound out are **red words**.

Cat

Pig

The

Are

Once your child starts to write, you will notice that they are using a mixture of 'sounding out' using phonics and using some high frequency words. We encourage independence and a 'have a go' attitude, only correcting children once they are developing confidence.

In class, we keep a record of the children's work in their 'Learning Journey Books', and they have 'Explore and Learn Books', which we encourage them to write and draw in independently.

Name Writing.

We expect all of the children to be able to write their name, with the correct formation by the end of the year. We did send home a practice sheet at the start of the year. Many children have this in their book bag still. This is for YOU to do at home with your child. We have one in school that we do each day. Capital letters only for the start of their name and start on the green dot for the lower case letters. The following letters must be formed in an anti-clockwise directions - c, o, a, d, g, q. Please encourage your child to form the letter shape without taking their pen/pencil off of the paper with the exception of i, j (which are finished with the dot) and t, x (which require the pencil to leave the paper for the cross). Thank you.

Lunchtimes

Lunchtime is from 11.45-12.45 and the children all go into the hall to have their lunch with their Midday Meal Supervisor. The children sit with their class and all sit on a long table together. We encourage children to use a knife and fork independently, to try new foods and eat as much as they can. They have a choice of milk or water to drink. Once the children have finished eating they all go out onto the playground with their Midday Meal Supervisor. We then collect the children from the playground and bring them back to the classroom to do the register.

Reception Area

We are lucky to have a large area for Reception to use, which includes three classrooms, as well as a creative area (Pod) and two outside areas (Cabin Corner and Sensory Way). These areas cover the EYFS areas of learning and activities are regularly changed to ensure we cover the curriculum. Every morning we have 'Freeflow' time where the children may explore, learn and play wherever they choose. This enables the children to play and make friends with all of the children in Reception and to work with different teachers and teaching assistants. During the afternoons, we continue to use these different shared areas within our classes.

Understanding the World

The children learn about the natural world around them in Reception by exploring their environment throughout the different seasons. They have hands on experiences both inside and outside of the classroom. During these experiences, we encourage the children to describe what they see, feel, hear. We also use the sense of smell and taste during some of our topics. The children also learn about different People, Cultures and Communities through books and first hand experiences when possible. We talk about similarities and differences and encourage positive attitudes towards these. We explore Past and Present through the children's own lives as well as examples seen in books. We talk about family members, the children's own experiences as well as drawing on the lives of people in our community, such as people who help us. We look at where we live and compare it to other places in terms of different aspects of the natural world and the people who live and work there.

Behaviour Expectations.

Starting school is a big change for every 4 year old. We are so pleased with the way that all of the children are settling, developing independence, learning new rules and routines and learning to listen. Classroom and school rules are in place to keep children safe and to help with the organisation of a class of 30 children. There may be times when we need to talk to you about your child's behavior - we want to work together, with you, to support your child. It is very normal for children to challenge rules of behaviour as they settle, but the classroom must be a safe place for everyone.

Assembly

After half term, we will be taking the children into assembly three times a week. Once on a Monday for a Reception only assembly, once on a Thursday for Singing Assembly and on a Friday for Starbadge Assembly. In Starbadge assembly, 2 children from each class are chosen to be The Starbadges for the week, as a reward for great work or behaviour. These children are basically treated as royalty for the week!!

Classroom Helpers.

We love to have parents/grandparents/carers to help in class with reading, scissor skills, name writing etc. This has a massive impact on the progress of the children. If you would like to help, mention to your class teacher - you will need to complete a DBS with Denise in the office before you can come in,

We understand that this is a lot of information to take in - it will all make sense as we move through the year, so please don't worry. If you have any questions please talk to your class teacher - after school is always easier, as there is more time. A happy and effective Reception year happens when teachers and parents work together to encourage, support and teach the children.

Thank you for your ongoing support,

The Reception Teachers.