Reception Autumn 1 Newsletter 2026

02/09/26 – 18/09/26 – Settling In, Baseline Assessment and 'All About Me!'
21/09/26 – 23/10/26 – Animals

Class Teacher: Mrs Helen Sibbald HLTA: Miss Chelle Buchanan STA: Mrs Kate Durkin (Thurs PM & Friday)

Phonics and Early Reading

Phonics – Daily phonics sessions take place each morning and flashcards will be sent home each Friday to practise phoneme and grapheme correspondences (what each letter looks like and the sound we hear when it is spoken) Please practise these with your child. It would also be beneficial to practise oral blending with your child so you say the sounds and they blend them to make the word – e.g. I can see a c-a-t. What can I see? Then the child would blend c-a-t to say cat.

Reading – The children will begin by bringing home picture books with no words then after 3 full weeks of phonics teaching the children will bring home a reading book with words, linked to the phoneme/grapheme correspondences that they have learned and that they have practised in school and at home. They will have read the book 3 times in group sessions in school. First to decode the words, second to practise reading with fluency and expression and finally to comprehend what they have read. They will bring this reading book home each night to share with you and to practise lots of times over the weekend! Please ensure books are returned to school every day in your child's popper wallet along with their reading diary!

Early Years News – Once a week we will be looking at different news paper articles and pictures suitable to the children's age and development. Through this we will have the opportunity to develop the children's comprehension, communication and language skills and their understanding of current affairs, as well as using this as a stimulus for the children to see fundamental British Values in action.

We will be reading a variety of books for pleasure and enjoyment and in our literacy sessions we will read a variety of books to base our literacy and topic work around. Remember to look on Tapestry for new vocabulary we have been learning too.

The children will choose a school library book to bring home to share for pleasure each week on a Friday too.

P.E.

P.E. day will each Wednesday (starting 9th September) and the children need to come to school in their full outdoor P.E. kit. (white P.E. t-shirt, black joggers/shorts, grey school P.E. jumper and pumps or trainers)

Our PE coach will lead the P.E. sessions and the children will be doing 'multi-skills'. They will learn a range of fitness activities and techniques as well as games they can play with these. We will be focussing on listening and following instructions carefully too.

Writing

We will be working on lots of gross and fine motor activities to build up children's strength and power in their arms and hands to help them be ready to write.

Frequent 'finger time' sessions will carried out in class and we will be working on our 'Baby Shark nip and flip' pencil grip approach to teach and encourage children to use the correct tripod pencil grip whilst writing, drawing and mark making.

Please help your child by encouraging them to take part in lots of finger time activities to build strength and stamina in their shoulders, arms and hands – simple things like pegging washing, fastening their own buttons, hanging off the monkey bars at the park, threading, colouring etc…

We will be focussing on the children learning to write and practising forming letters learned in phonics (using the mnemonics) correctly then moving on to use these to segment words to write simple words and captions linked to our topic themed work.

We will also be having a focus on the children learning to write their names independently with the correct letter formation.

Homework

Homework will be given each Friday on Tapestry and is due in by the following Friday each week. We aim to send a variety of tasks that cover all areas of the curriculum. Please support your child with these but encourage them to complete tasks as independently as possible. PLEASE upload ALL home learning onto Tapestry. We love to see it! Each week's new phoneme/grapheme flash cards will be sent home each Friday to practise too. Please keep working on these with your child each week.

Please also remember to check Tapestry each day for our any new vocabulary we have introduced and discuss this with your child at home – see if they can remember the words and what they mean then encourage them to use them in conversations going forwards.

Reading books will be sent home each evening after 15th September – please share these with your child frequently and over the weekend and ensure they are returned to school EVERY DAY.

PLEASE return library books for pleasure on a THURSDAY, the children will then bring a new one home each Friday.

Maths

Children will:
- Identify when a set can be subitised and when counting is needed
- Subitise different arrangements, both unstructured and structured, including using the Hungarian number frame
- Make different arrangements of numbers within 5 and talk about what they can see, to develop their conceptual subitising skills
- Spot smaller numbers 'hiding' inside larger numbers connect quantities and numbers to finger patterns and explore different ways of representing numbers on their fingers
- Hear and join in with the counting sequence, and connect this to the 'staircase' pattern of the counting numbers, seeing that each number is made of one more than the previous number
- Develop counting skills and knowledge
- Compare sets of objects by matching • begin to develop the language of 'whole' when talking about objects which have parts

Ways to help at home:

Look at Tapestry frequently to see what they children have been doing in school and talk to them about their learning and encourage them to apply it at home too.

Listen to your child read when they bring their phonics book with home and write in their reading diary how they have got on.

Do the home learning tasks each week and upload them onto Tapestry so we can use these to help with our individual assessments of the children.

Share the library books for pleasure with your child each week.

Practise the phoneme/grapheme flashcards with your child as much as possible.

Play games together that have rules and that require turn taking.

Topic

Once our baseline assessment period is complete, our overarching topic theme until half term will be 'Animals'.

This will be kicked off with a Teddy Bear's Picnic! The children will be learning about different types of bears – black bears, brown bears, polar bears, panda bears, giant panda bears and sloth bears and which countries around the world that they are from. They will be bringing in their teddy bears from home and making jam sandwiches to share with them at a teddy bear's picnic – a very special snack! We will be learning and performing the Teddy Bear's Picnic song too!

The children will then be learning all about animals which can be kept as pets. We will be asking for photographs of the pets that the children have at home to be sent in for them to talk about and share with the class. We will be learning about the things we need to do to be a responsible pet owner – how and why we should care for them. We will then be creating artistic representations of our pets looking at our use of colour and texture. We will also be adding some pretend pets for the children to look after to our home corner!

To end the topic, we will be learning all about farm animals. We will be using the book, 'What the ladybird heard' as a stimulus and then learning all about the farm animals in the story. We will be drawing our own farm yard maps like in the story too!

We are very lucky and will also be having a visit from a veterinary nurse in October and she will tell us all about her job and the things she does and uses – we will then develop a Vet's Role Play Area in our outdoor provision for the children to put into practise what they have learned!

Other Information

14th September – Reading Meeting for Reception Parents @ 8.40am and 2.30pm
25th September – Macmillan Cancer Coffee Morning
28th September – Reception Teddy Bear's Picnic
28th September – School Photos
w/b 12th October – Veterinary Nurse Visit

23rd October – School closes at 3.10pm for half term

If you have any questions or queries at all please see me at home time, drop me an email or ring school and I'll get back to you. ☺

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