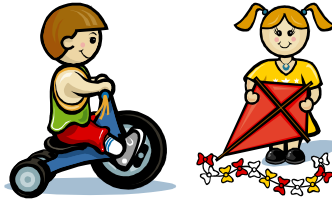


Early Years Newsletter - Spring Term 2012



Dear Parents/Carers

Happy New Year! We have heard lots about your Christmas holidays and hope you had a restful break. The children have returned to school full of energy and we have already got stuck into our new topic: Shelters, maps and journeys. We will explore this topic through the six areas of the Foundation Stage Curriculum.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

The children will continue to be encouraged to make new friends, work together in pairs and small groups, look after their belongings and to get changed quickly, and independently, for PE. We have been thinking about why we have rules at school and how we can take more care of the things in our classroom.

In our S.E.A.L. (Social, Emotional Aspects of Learning) we will be thinking about why each of us is special; things that we are good at; things that we would like to get better at and how we can achieve our goals.

Communication, Language and Literacy

We will continue with our daily phonics sessions, expanding and consolidating our knowledge of letter sounds, and tricky words, and beginning to learn about two and three letter phonemes e.g. sh/igh. We will use our phonic knowledge in our own reading and writing and will practise forming our letters correctly. We will continue sharing and talking about a wide range of books including both fiction (story), non-fiction (information) and those from other countries. We will continue to discuss front covers, authors, illustrators and even contents pages!

Problem Solving Reasoning and Numeracy

We will continue to do lots of counting, matching objects to numerals and writing number labels for groups of objects. We will order numbers, use ordinal numbers and do simple calculations using toys and other equipment to help. We will investigate the shapes around us and use shapes to make pictures and patterns. We will also talk about the position of things and describe how we might get from one place to another using words such as around, forward, over, under etc.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

We will talk about journeys, both ones we make and ones we read about in stories. We will learn about how we can make maps to help show a journey or find our way to a particular place. We will continue to visit the ICT suite and develop our skill in logging on and off and using a variety of programs. We will also use the 'beebots' (controllable bees) to investigate how we can make them move.

Physical Development

The children will continue to develop their hand-eye co-ordination by taking part in the activities on offer around the classroom e.g. the writing area, play dough, sand, water, workshop and small world. In PE, and in the outside play area, we will continue to practise balance and control by using the bikes, apparatus and play equipment.

Creative Development

We will explore how we can make different shelters using a variety of materials including the construction toys, crates and tarpaulin and mod-roc. We will use collage to create a display of a journey in a story and use clay to make bears that are found in the story 'We're going on a Bear Hunt'. The children will continue to enjoy both weekly Music and 'Singing' sessions and will have the opportunity to experiment with the percussion instruments.

Our Classrooms

Over the Christmas holidays we reorganised our classrooms and provision areas. Our 'little' room is now a teaching room. A new carpet has been put down and some shelves have been removed in order that our interactive whiteboard and projector can be relocated, and put at a more suitable level that the children can reach. Our 'big' room is now solely for our provision areas and our 'wet' area flooring has been extended along the whole length of the room against the windows. These changes were made in order that all areas are better suited for their purpose and so we have a better view of the children whilst they are doing their activities. The 'little' room is now closed if the outdoor area is open so that the children are supervised by two staff in two areas at any one time. We have more changes that we wish to make over the coming months so watch this space!

Mornings

The children are now secure and familiar with the morning routine in the classroom and we would like to start encouraging them to organise themselves more independently when they come into school each day. We would like you to start saying goodbye at the classroom door at some stage this term so that your child can get used to hanging their coat up, putting their book and snack in their tray, and self-registering on their own. We appreciate that some children will be more ready for this than others, and that it is nice for you to come into the classroom to see what we have been up to, so we suggest that you discuss this with your child and come to some arrangement with them about when the change to their routine might happen e.g. you will say goodbye at the door on Mondays and Tuesdays but still come in for the rest of the week. We would like all children to come into school on their own everyday by the Easter holidays and will then progress to lining up in the playground with the rest of school after the half term holiday in the Summer Term (June). We try to make changes gradually in order to prepare the children for the morning routine in Year 1. Thank you for your support with this.

General Reminders

- Children are welcome to enter the classroom between 8.45am and 8.55am each day. If you arrive after this time, and the classroom door is closed, please go to the main school office.
- Homework, letters and school dinner money should be left in the trays in our 'little room'. Please encourage your child to leave items in these trays independently.
- All children should bring a water bottle and a snack to school each morning – pieces of fruit or vegetables only please.
- Please make sure your child knows what they are doing for dinner when they arrive at school each day. Being unsure of what is happening causes children to worry unnecessarily and also makes our numbers wrong for the cook in our school kitchen.
- All children have their own reading book and planner which they need to bring to school with them everyday. Please write in your child's planner when you have heard them read, recording the title of the book, a general comment on how well they did and '**ready to change**' if they are ready for a new book. If you do not state that you would like to change, we will presume that you would like to keep the book a little longer. Children should be changing their book at least **twice** a week in order to maintain good progress. Please ensure that your child knows if they need to change or keep their reading book when they come to school each day as we are not always able to check all 30 planners on a daily basis. If your child thinks they may have read all the books in their book box they must tell a member of Early Years staff who will assess whether they are ready to move on to the next box.
- All children have half termly targets at the front of their planners. Please make yourself aware of these and help your child to practise their targets at home. Their Spring Term targets will be coming soon!
- PE days are Mondays and Wednesdays – please ensure your child has their full PE kit with them everyday in case they require a change of clothes.
- Please ensure all items belonging to your child are **clearly named** and also that you check your child's PE kit regularly to make sure that A) it still fits! B) it is complete and C) there are no extra bits that belong to someone else!
- Please ensure that you're child is dressed appropriately for the weather conditions each day as the children have access to our outside area for the majority of the day. During the cold/wet weather we do our best to keep track of all the children's wellies, gloves, scarves, hats etc. however with 90 children using the infant cloakroom area, this is no mean feat! Thank you for your understanding when items temporarily go astray and also for your patience at home-time when dressing and packing bags takes a little longer than usual!
- Our library day is Friday – children are able to choose a new book to share at home once their old one has been returned.
- Please check the notices on our classroom window regularly in order to keep up to date with what we are doing, to check homework activities and to see if the children need to bring anything in. We appreciate that many of you work, however we do ask that childminders/other family members also check these notices and also that you try to check them when picking your child/ren up from 'After School Club'. Weekly notices can also be found in the 'Learning at Home' section of our school website.

*Please note that Early Years will perform their Spring Term assembly on Thursday 15th March at 2.45pm.

Thank you for your continuing support. If you have any questions or queries, please come and speak to us.

Alison Gulliver

Rachel Carr

Debbie Graham

