

Reception Curricular Letter

Spring 1 2025

If you go down to the woods...

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome back! I hope you have all had a relaxing and enjoyable Christmas break, and may I wish you a very Happy New Year. After all the excitement of the Christmas activities, it is good to return to our familiar routines! I am sure everyone who watched the Christmas performance will agree that the children were little stars and a real credit to the school.

Both staff and children are looking forward to what promises to be a busy and exciting Spring half term. This curriculum newsletter will outline the units and areas of learning being covered during this time. All the children in Acorn Class will be learning the same topics, while working towards the specific year group expectations for Reception, Year 1 and Year 2. Our topic this half term is called *"If you go down to the woods"*, and many of our activities will be linked to this theme.

Reading books should be sent into school each day. Children will be given the opportunity to change their books regularly, and we aim to read with them several times a week. We strongly encourage children to read at home daily, as this has a significant impact on their progress and confidence.

Children are encouraged to bring a drinks bottle to school each day, **filled with water**. Please note that school policy is water only, in line with Change for Life initiatives.

Packed lunches should be brought in either a disposable carrier bag or a small lunch bag or box that can be easily cleaned.

All PE kits and items of school uniform must be clearly **labelled** so that any lost items can be returned to you promptly.

Thank you once again for your continued support. The relationship between school, parent and child has never been more important, and by continuing to work together we can ensure that every child has an exciting, enjoyable, and memorable half term. If you need any support, assistance, or guidance, please do not hesitate to send me a message via Class Dojo or come see me at the door.

Many thanks,
Siobhan Mackenzie

Days to Remember

Monday

Books changed
PE with CSSP

Tuesday

Wednesday

Miss Keeling
Teaching

PE with Mrs
Fenton

Thursday

Friday

Forest Friday

This half term our topic is 'If you go down to the woods...' fairy tales with a twist. As with the start of all our topics, we will discuss it with the children to find out what they already know about it and what they want to find out. This will form the basis of our weekly planning so that we can try to plan from the children's interests and adapt the continuous provision accordingly.

In History we will be learning about how clothes, toys and music have changed and comparing to our own. We will be mixing and exploring colours in Art. As scientists we will be investigating habitats and the different plants and animals that live there.

LITEARCY

This half term children will develop their speaking and listening skills through daily class discussions and weekly circle time sessions. Over the next few weeks, Reception children will be learning more digraphs (two letters which make one sound e.g. 'sh', 'ai' and 'oi') in our phonics lessons along with lots of opportunities to practise blending phonemes to read, and segmenting phonemes to spell simple words. We will continue to practise reading captions and 'tricky' words, as well as writing invitations, stories, lists, labels, captions and sentences. To encourage continued interest in books, a range of texts will be read during story time and in individual reading sessions, as well as looking at some non-fiction texts as part of our topic.

Phonic Books: These books give your child the opportunity to practice the sounds and skills they have been taught in phonics, so they are a really important and should be prioritised out the two. **These are books that the children should read independently to someone at home.**

Home Readers: These books are not decodable and do not match where the children are in phonics. Therefore, this is a book which an adult should read to the child for enjoyment and pleasure. **We strongly advise you to read these books with your child,** maybe discussing a page at a time or reading to each other. These books provide a great opportunity to develop comprehension skills and develop vocabulary

If you're struggling to find time to read both (Phonics and Home Reader), we would prefer you to read the phonics books first.

How you can help at home?

- When reading with your child at home, ask 'how' and 'why' questions to prompt discussion.
- Explain the meaning of new words your child comes across to help extend their vocabulary.
- Talk to your child about the phonemes and 'tricky' words that we have been learning at school.
- Read with your child at home on a regular basis, modelling how to sound out individual phonemes and blend them together.
- When writing independently, encourage your child to use their knowledge of phonics to make their own attempts at spelling whilst using a correct pencil grip.

Early writing activities:

- Copying over letter shapes
- Drawing letters in sand or shaving foam spread thinly on a table.
- Write with chalk, crayons, finger paints, pencils, pens etc.
- Recognition of letters through touch (stick letters, magnetic letters, fuzzy felt, sand paper letters).
- Drawing or writing with chalks on the ground or pavement.

MATHS

During the half term, we will continue to build on children's knowledge of numbers up to 10 using resources from Lancashire Red Rose Maths. We will be practising reciting, recognising, ordering, comparing, subitising and writing numbers. We will recap how to find 'one more' and 'one less' and continue through practical activities, learn how to add and subtract.

How can you help at home?

- Help your child to recognise and order the numbers 0 to 10 and spot numbers when you are out and about.
- Support your child's understanding of early addition by encouraging them to find the total number of objects in 2 groups.
- Practise finding one more and one less than any number from 1-10 using practical objects.
- Practise reciting days of the week and months of the year.

Homework

Following your feedback, we have made some changes to the homework menu to make it simpler to follow, with fewer tasks overall and a balance of online and practical activities.

The 'Main Course' is to be completed weekly and includes:

- Reading three times a week
- Completing the spelling sheet
- Learning spelling words for the weekly test

Practising times tables on Times Table Rockstars (Oak Class) or Numbots (Acorn Class)

In addition, children should choose at least one activity from the 'Starter' and one from the 'Dessert', to be completed by the homework hand-in date.

Homework can be uploaded to Seesaw, completed in the homework book, or a combination of both — whichever works best for you and your child.

The children have been introduced to the new menu and understand how it works, as well as the expectations. While homework is not statutory for primary-aged children and no consequences will be issued if it is not completed, we do strongly encourage participation. Homework helps to reinforce learning, build independence and responsibility, and develop positive habits that support progress in the classroom.

To celebrate effort, raffle tickets will be issued for each piece of homework completed, with prizes drawn regularly as a reward for engagement and perseverance.

Thank you again for your ongoing support. Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions.

Monday, 9th February

Many parents ask if they can help with activities and projects such as this and the answer is most definitely a resounding 'yes'! There is nothing more motivating for a child than an interested adult. The Homework menu has been sent home.