

## Nursery Newsletter Summer Term 1 2018

Welcome back! We hope you had a fantastic Easter. This term we have four new children starting in Busy Bee class. A very warm welcome to: Edward, Ella, Holly and Oscar. Our established children have been very excited about our new friends starting school, with many already requesting to 'be a buddy' to help our new starters settle in. We will be running our buddy system, which promotes personal and social skills for all those involved. We will also be delivering circle times based on emotional wellbeing and friendship skills, with an underlying 'getting to know you' theme. We ask kindly for your patience at drop off times, as we work to support our new starters and reassure our established children- who equally need time to settle back in after a long break.

Our theme for this half term is:

### Enabling Environments!

Please remember this is a 'loose' theme, most of our planning happens one day for the next, or in the moment! We support and extend children's development using what they are interested in and what is meaningful to them. Our weekly news slip always details what has been pre-planned by Mrs Wall and what the children have been focused on in their own initiated work. It is usually in the child initiated work that we see the deepest learning take place, so it's always interesting to see what has taken their fascination during the week. The following details the specific learning objectives of the Foundation Stage Curriculum that our planning will focus on. The children also take part time in circle time, phonics, rhyme time and interactive story telling every day!

#### Communication and Language

As always with our rhyme time, the underpinning learning is repeating a beat and understanding patterns in spoken language. These are both skills needed for spelling and reading.

There is a lot of educational research that concludes that the more rhymes a child knows 'off by heart', the greater their literacy skills are in later life. The areas of the brain responsible for processing language are strengthened by the repetitive nature of rhymes. Children are unknowingly absorbing information related to reading and writing when we sing, for example the number of syllables in a word and word families (words that have the same sound in the same part of the word). We would love it if you could support your child with this at home. This half term we are learning the following rhymes to complement our topic work:



Round and Round The Garden  
Ring A Ring A Roses  
Mr Golden Sun  
Rain, Rain Go Away  
There's A Worm At The Bottom Of The Garden  
Five Green And Speckled Frogs

**Please don't forget our Show and Tell session on a Friday! This supports some fundamental listening and attention skills. It also assists other areas of communication needed to converse, for example answering an open-ended question and expressing a personal opinion!**



### **Literacy**

The children will be involved in shared reading and storytelling every day. All the stories are based on our theme. We started doing an approach called Interactive Story Telling last term. The children are in small story groups and are read the same story three days in a row. Each time the story is read, a

different aspect of the story is focused on. Sometimes this could be a language focus, for example words that describe objects. Sometimes we might focus on the plot, for example can the children think of alternative ending or continue the story from where it ends. This approach also allows to explore feeling of the characters in greater depth, or to re-tell the same story but from a different perspective. This method was very successful last term, the children are showing knowledge of the story at a much greater depth, which will support them becoming good readers and writers in the long term. This term we are introducing a 'Word of the Week' that is related to our story. Adults working with the children will be using the chosen word when and where appropriate during our interactions. This is another way to strengthen children's vocabulary and increase their descriptive language. Below is a list of stories that we will be covering in class. The word in bold is our 'Word of the Week'. You might enjoy sharing these stories with your children at home. If you hear your child using one of our focus words, we would really like it if you could record this on SeeSaw or with a Wow Moment. Observations of such things are very useful for our assessments and help us build a picture of how the children are applying their new knowledge.

Jack and the Beanstalk  
Jaspers Beanstalk by Nick Butterworth  
In Wibbly's Garden by Mick Inkpen  
Eat Your Peas by Nick Sharratt  
The Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carle  
Mad About Minibeasts by Giles Andreae

**Gigantic**  
**Enormous**  
**Expand**  
**Sphere**  
**Transformed**  
**Miniscale**

### **Phonics- for children who will become Reception in September 2018**

This half term we will be focusing on initial sounds in words. It is expected that by the end of this half term children will be able to generate their own alliterative string of words, for example: duck, dog, dish and dinosaur. They will also be learning to recognise these sounds as written letters (**graphemes**). We teach the letter sounds in developmental order (the order in which children learn to pronounce them clearly). The order is: D B H M P F G C/K A T S F J L R. Some of our PACT tasks this term focus on areas that children commonly find difficult, for example identifying the end sound when it could be a D or G, or identifying the first sound when it could be a C or T. Children often struggle with this because it is the same part of the mouth that makes both sounds. We can't stress enough how important this is for children to develop into confident readers and writers. Letter recognition is great- but is only a very small part of being a 'good' reader or writer!

There will also be a focus on being able to **segment** (sound out) CVC words (**consonant, vowel, consonant**) into their **phonemes** (sounds). For example, the children will be asked to, 'segment the word cat into its phonemes', the answer being c-a-t. We use the proper **terminology** and other vocabulary side by side. This prepares the children for Reception when only the proper terminology will be used. The children will be counting the phonemes using their fingers or 'robot hands', then focusing on the first, medial and end sound. This is the beginning of spelling, and therefore writing (which will be our focus in Summer 2). Quite often children find the medial sound difficult to hear and can need quite a bit of support with this. As always, all our direct teaching is done in a fun and practical way! If you would like to support your child at home, we highly recommend the following websites:

Phonics Bloom - Select Phonics Games- Phase 1

Teach Your Monster To Read - Select First Steps- Phonic Songs

Topmarks- Select English- Letters and Sounds- 3 to 5 year olds

Phonics Play - Select Phase 1 or 2

### **Phonics- for children who remain Nursery in September 2018**

These children will continue or start to work on Phase 1 phonics. This phase is all about developing listening, attention and speaking skills. Phase 1 is divided into seven aspects. Each aspect contains three strands: Tuning in to sounds (auditory discrimination), Listening and remembering sounds (auditory memory and sequencing) and Talking about sounds (developing vocabulary and language comprehension). The three of the seven aspects we will be concentrating on are:

#### **Aspect 1 - General sound discrimination - environmental**

The aim of this aspect is to raise children's awareness of the sounds around them and to develop their listening skills. Activities suggested in the guidance include going on a listening walk, drumming on different items outside and comparing the sounds, playing a sounds lotto game and making shakers.

#### **Aspect 2 - General sound discrimination - instrumental sounds**

This aspect aims to develop children's awareness of sounds made by various instruments and noise makers. Activities include comparing and matching sound makers, playing instruments alongside a story and making loud and quiet sounds.

### **Aspect 3 - General sound discrimination - body percussion**

The aim of this aspect is to develop children's awareness of sounds and rhythms.

Activities include singing songs and action rhymes, listening to music and developing a sounds vocabulary



## **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

This term, a lot of our adult initiated work in this area of learning will be on the transition to Reception for our established children. This can often be quite a challenge for children, even those who appear and act confident can find this time an anxious one. In Summer 2 we will be treating this very much as a celebration, a celebration of everything they have achieved and will achieve as their journey through school continues. In this half term we are planting the seed of transition. Some of our circle times will be focusing on this, but we will also be proactive in activities. Small groups of children will be visiting the Reception classroom when the class is empty for PE, so that the children can get used to their new environment- we will simply be playing in there. There will also be an increase in the number of 'Busy Bee Tasks' that we ask children to do. Currently, they do one or two a week depending on how many sessions they do. This will increase to one each session. These will remain practical and play based, the amount and length are increasing. Mrs Burrell, the Reception teacher, will also be popping in to meet the children, to start forming a relationship with them.



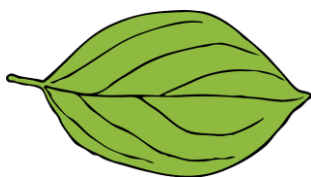
## **Physical Development**

As the weather becomes more reliable and warmer, we will be increasing the learning opportunities outside. We will be introducing a dance and movement area outside, something which we have always promoted inside- but that can be problematic due to space. We will be placing matts, musical instruments, music players and material outside, inviting the children to get creative with their moves! Last term the children were initiating a lot of work to do with balancing and designing their own obstacle courses. They showed great team work skills, as well as setting themselves a challenge and developing their resilience. We have invested in some new resources to further support them with this work.

## Mathematics



This term one of our areas of focus is measuring using 'non-standard' units, for example finding out how many big blocks tall our beanstalk is- then comparing this to how many small plastic bricks tall it is. This work encompasses prediction, evaluation and theory making- as well as applying their knowledge of shape and space. In line with this we will also be concentrating on ordering number, underpinned by number recognition. By the end of their Reception year it is expected that children will recognise numbers 0- 20 and can put these in numerical order. Our teaching in Busy Bees will reflect where the children are currently with this, and their next steps.



## Understanding the World

As we start our term with the stories Jack and the Beanstalk, then Jasper's Beanstalk- we will be growing beanstalks. We will be teaching about 'Enabling Environments': what plants need to grow; how different parts of the plant ensure this happens and how they change over time. Equally, we will be doing experiments that will show what happens when conditions for growth aren't right. As the term progresses we will be looking at minibeasts and the environment they need to thrive. We are planning some changes to outside for this and will be kindly asking for help with this, so please keep an eye on book bags for a letter about this in the coming weeks!

## What can I do to help/enhance my child's learning this term?

### **Play, Learn and Children Together Books (PACT Books)**

These books are for home and school communication. Mrs Wall will include a PACT task each week for the children to complete at home. This will be related to what the children are learning about in class. There will also be a news slip, so you are always informed of our teaching and learning at school. The books are given out on a Monday and collected in on a Friday. Please feel free to include any information from home that you would like to share with us in these books. This could be something your child is enjoying doing at home or information about a new achievement. The more we know about your child, the better we can provide for them!

As always, if there is anything you think we need to know about your child please come and speak to us. Our door is always open! We appreciate that drop and pick up times can be quite hectic. Mrs Wall is in school from 7.30am each day and would happily take a phone call or an early visit into the classroom. She is available after school on a Monday, Wednesday or Thursday.

Thank you for your continued support,

Mrs Wall, Mrs Bowen and Mrs Wilson.