

# Nursery Newsletter Spring Term 1 2019

Happy New Year! We hope that you had a brilliant break. We are sure that the children have been keeping you very busy at home! We can't wait to have our busy bees back in class! This term we welcome Amelia, Charlotte, Lottie, Mikayla and Nelly to Nursery. Our established children will be helping our new starters settle in using our Buddy regime- something they love to do! To aid 'settling back in' after the break and further support our new starters, our circle times for this first week will focus on the skills we need to be a Super Friend! We will also be really highlighting our Proud Clouds, as we reinforce what good learning behaviour is in the classroom.

Our theme for this half term is:

## I wonder why?

Our adult initiated tasks and activities will be based around Winter, we will also be incorporating elements of Space- as some of our children started to show an interest in this before we broke up. 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 story each day!

### Communication and Language

As always with our rhyme time, the underpinning learning is repeating a beat and understanding patterns in spoken language (rhyme). We are combining this with our Mathematics focus, which is subtraction. Our younger children will be learning to count forwards and backwards. Our older children will be learning to give one less, then two less. Here are two of the rhymes we will be learning:



#### 5 Little Men in a Flying Saucer

"Five little men in a flying saucer-  
flew round the world one day,  
They looked left and right,  
But they didn't like the sight,  
So one man flew away"

Repeat with numbers 4- 1.

### 10 Flying Rockets (10 Green Bottles)

"Ten space rockets standing in a row,  
Ten space rockets- standing in a row,  
Then one space rocket- decides it's time to go,  
That would leave 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9  
Nine space rockets standing in a row".

Repeat with numbers 8- 0.



### **Literacy**

The children will be involved in shared reading and storytelling every day. All the stories are based on our theme. Below is a list of stories you can find on YouTube that we will be covering in class. You might enjoy sharing these with your children at home.

Whatever Next by Jill Murphy

Zoom, Rocket, Zoom by Margaret Mayo

Penguin by Polly Dunbar

Polar Bear, Polar Bear, What Do You Hear? by Bill Martin

### **Phonics-** for children who will become Reception in September 2019

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 1). 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 2019

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.

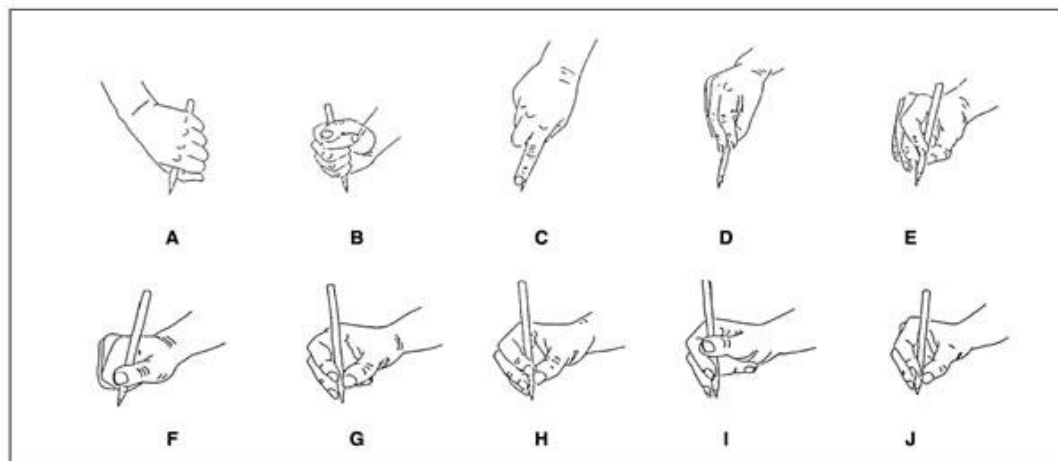
**Aspect 3** - General sound discrimination - body percussion

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

## **Physical Development**

Our big push this half term is physical skills needed for writing. Pencil grip is directly related to muscle strength in the fingers and the shoulder pivot (pick up a pen in the correct grip for writing and you will notice that you must hold your shoulder in a certain position- so that your hand can hold and manipulate the pen correctly). To build up muscle strength in the fingers, children need a lot of exposure to intricate work, for example; large sewing, threading, scissor work, fastening buttons etc... The diagram below shows the different stages of fine motor development and pencil grip. If your child is due to be Reception in September, developmentally they should be within G- J. Younger children should be within B - E. If you are concerned about this, the only way to support your child is to give them many fine motor opportunities. We know that many parents can feel anxious about letting their children use scissors, but there really isn't a better way to support finger muscle strength! The children use them all the time in the classroom- we assure you they can use them in a safe way! If you want to support your

child at home, we highly recommend working with: scissors, duplo/lego and anything they can bend/ stretch (playdough, pipecleaners).



A = radial cross palmar grasp; B = palmar supinate grasp; C = digital pronate grasp, only index finger extended; D = brush grasp, E = grasp with extended fingers; F = cross thumb grasp; G = static tripod grasp; H = four fingers grasp; I = lateral tripod grasp; J = dynamic tripod grasp.

**Figure 2 - Pencil grip postures<sup>16</sup>**

For children to hold pens and pencils correctly, the strength in their fingers must be well developed. To allow for this to happen, children need lots of opportunities to work with smaller resources. This includes: building a marshmallow snowman using tooth picks, threading doilies and making snowflakes from lolly and match sticks.

We have many more activities planned, please read our weekly news slip for details.

### 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 Thursday. 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, Tuesday and Wednesday.

Thank you for your continued support,

Mrs Wall, Mrs Bowen and Miss Wood.