

Date: January 2010

**Reception: This half term our topic will be
"The Weather and Cold Places"**

Language and Literacy

This half term the children will be focusing on decoding text. That is using lots of different clues to work out words they don't know. The clues we use are the pictures, the sounds and of course, most importantly, thinking carefully about what makes sense. All the children must bring their reading folders and diaries to school every day.

During our phonic work we will be assessing the children's knowledge, revising all letter sounds and helping the children to use their knowledge to work out words when both reading and writing. Children who are ready will begin to learn phonic blends. Please ask if you would like a copy of these to revise at home. We will be encouraging all children to have a go at writing independently.

Writing skills will include; story beginnings and endings, lists, directions, labels and letters, cards and the use of simple punctuation.

Mathematics

Each week the children will focus on a different aspect of counting skills to include ordering numbers to 10 and 20, looking at the 100 square, ordering random numbers according to size, estimating groups of objects, ordinal numbers, and counting in 2's.

Each week there will also be a general topic which will include Problem solving, weighing, measures, addition, subtraction, money, and reasoning. The children may occasionally bring home an optional piece of homework to extend their learning. Please ask your child to tell you about their work if they bring any home. An important part of children's mathematical development is the ability to talk about their thinking, reasoning and understanding.

Creative Development

Creative work is a hugely important part of the foundation stage curriculum and the children have access to creative activities everyday. Some of these are guided by an adult but the most important pieces of work are the ones that your child has made all by them selves. Please value these works of art (I know you do because I hear your cries of delight at home time) These creations are the result of independent work, imagination, decision making, complicated thought processes, negotiation and problem solving to name just a few of the processes that take place. Creativity is where genius begins!
Our activities will include
Painting
Printing
3D junk models (hooray I hear you say!)
Observational drawings
Chalk and charcoal pictures
Wax resist and more.....

What you can do to help your child

Happy new year everyone. Welcome to the new children and families who join us this term.

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Here are the important things for you to do. Read with your child every day. Practice letter sounds and keywords. Encourage your child to do any optional homework. Love the work that they bring home.

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This term we will start our home borrow boxes. This contains fun activities to do at home with your child and supports the school curriculum. A separate letter will be sent home to explain how to use them in more detail.

We are looking for helpers to support us in the afternoons – it isn't hard – honest. Please sign up if you can spare an hour to come and play.

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This term we will be asking for another contribution to our class creative / cookery fund. This valuable fund is used to buy sundry items for the classroom such as tissues, food colouring, flour for play dough, handy art items like cotton wool, treasures found in pound saver and charity shops as well as purchasing the ingredients for our Thursday cooking. These things are not budgeted for anywhere else and are extras that make a huge difference to our day to day life.

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We will be taking the children outside every day no matter what the weather, so please ensure that they have suitable clothing at school. If it rains the children with waterproof coats and boots are even allowed a short time to splash in the puddles while the rest of us watch from the covered area. Lunch playtime is very long and can be cold so mittens and a hat are essential.

Thank you.

Classteachers: *Emma Steadman
Claire Keith*

Headteacher:

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

For our topic this term we will be taking advantage of the seasonal variety outdoors and be learning about the weather. As part of this we will also be looking at how weather has been depicted in famous art work.

We will be observing the changes that take part in our environment and experimenting with water, heat and cold to find out how and why things happen. We will be finding out about weather reports and what is suitable clothing to wear on particular days. The children will be making simple observations and recording their work.

Physical Development

Developing strong fine motor skills help the children to be successful in their daily lives and especially with reading and writing skills. The children build up these skills through such activities as threading, construction, playdough, tracing, painting, cutting, colouring, puzzles and using computers. These activities and more are available to the children at school every day and are also be encouraged at home too.

This term we will be doing large apparatus during our Friday PE sessions. This will mean that the children will be expected to take off their outer clothing and wear just their last layer which can be vest (or T shirt) and pants for this session. Please make sure that the clothes they are wearing are suitable on this day. We humbly request that tights and lace up shoes be kept to a minimum.

Personal and Social Development

This area of the foundation stage curriculum is in strong competition with all the others in being declared the most important of all. This first year of school is one where your child will grow up significantly, form friendships and become more aware of themselves, their abilities and how they fit into the school community around them. It is hugely important to be as positive with the children as possible and develop their self esteem at every opportunity. This has long lasting benefits as I am sure you can think back to being very young and remembering words of praise and encouragement and how those words made you feel. The children are also encouraged to praise and support each other, using our friends names when we say "Well done."
An important catch phrase is "It doesn't matter if you make a mistake, just have a go."
Our circle time and class ethos reflect the themes of encouraging the children to value themselves and each other, to help and support their friends, to play fairly and safely and to use good manners.