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FC NEWSLETTER

We hope you have all had a wonderful summer break and that you and your children are excited about starting this new adventure with us. This class letter aims to explain a little more about what we'll be getting up to this term and to help you to understand the different things we do in FC. The initial weeks will focus on supporting your child to settle into school, helping them to become familiar with the environment and to enable the staff to develop an understanding of where each child is at. These observations will be uploaded to Tapestry as 'Baseline'.

CHILD INITIATED LEARNING (PLAY): A significant part of our day is dedicated to child-initiated learning (Play). Children at this stage in their development learn best through active, self-initiated activities. They learn in the here and now. It is in these moments of curiosity, effort or interest – the 'teachable' moment – that the adult makes a difference. The adults are always alert to individual children (observation), always thinking about what it tells us about the child's thinking (assessment), and always ready to respond by using appropriate strategies at the right moment to support children's wellbeing and learning (planning for the next moment). There will be three Focus Children each week. These children are given an additional focus for these 1:1 'In the Moment' teaching opportunities. At the end of the week a record of all these learning opportunities will be uploaded to Tapestry alongside the associated photos and videos. 'Wow' moments of learning throughout the week for all children will be recorded on Tapestry alongside this approach.

PHONICS & READING We will be following the Read Write Inc scheme for phonics teaching. This term we will be learning the Set 1 sounds and beginning to blend these sounds to read words. The children will bring home a small book with the sounds we are learning to enable you to practise them at home. Reading and developing an enjoyment of books at home is incredibly important. Once the children have settled into school and have begun their phonics work, we will begin to send home our reading books with those children who are ready. This will begin with an exceptionally important phase of encouraging storytelling and discussions about the texts. These are wordless picture books. This will then progress to Sound books which include short words using the sounds we have learnt to begin to develop their blending skills (knowing c-a-t is 'cat'). We then move onto the 'Ditties'. It is important to support your children to regularly explore these books. Please use the reading record books we provide to record when they read, how much they read and how they got on. These reading records and books should be brought into school every day to enable in class reading and book changes. Within the RWI scheme the timing of book changes is very clear and the books should be read at least 3 times at home to develop fluency and understanding as well as the mechanics of deciphering the words. We will ensure we set up school systems for managing book changes to minimise any potential transmission risks.

MATHS We follow the White Rose Maths scheme. The children will have a daily maths lesson. We will be using Numberblocks to support our mathematical understanding. This term we will be focusing on exploring matching, sorting and comparing. We will investigate size, mass and capacity and explore patterns. We will then deepen our understanding of 0-5, one more and one less. Alongside our whole class teaching there is the continual opportunity for children to develop these skills during their own play.

HELICOPTER STORIES Children are natural storytellers. In FC we encourage the children to 'tell' us their stories. These are scribed by the adult into our special storybook. The children are encouraged to write their names, draw a picture from their story and sometimes they are even encouraged to write some letters and words within their story, but the focus remains on their oral storytelling. The stories are scribed exactly as the children tell them. We will then sit as a class and the children are able to act out their stories alongside other children taking on other roles in their story. This develops a huge variety of skills including communication, literacy and confidence. Photographs of your child's story will be uploaded to Tapestry for you to be able to read.

MESSAGE CENTRE This approach has been developed to sprinkle joy, excitement and a love of messaging into their play. This begins with secret symbols then moves to letters and words and the children hide and find these messages around our classroom and in their play. It aims to give children the confidence to have a go at mark-making/writing; it allows them to be creative and use their imagination and discover real purposes to writing. We have a message centre area in the classroom. Perhaps your child will begin hiding secret messages at home too!

DRAWING CLUB These sessions explore the magic of stories through drawings. It aims to develop language skills, vocabulary, mark-making, mathematics and their imaginative skills. This term some of the stories we will be using are Supertato, The Night Pirates, The Gruffalo and There's a Bear on my Chair.

RE and PSHE In RE we will be exploring the idea of "What makes people special?". We will develop our mindfulness strategies through our PSHE and our unit this term will be "Being Me in My World".

WOODLANDS On Monday afternoons we will explore our on-site woodland. We aim to develop an enjoyment and curiosity of nature. This term our focus will be 'Autumn'. We have all-in-one waterproofs and wellies for the children to use but you are welcome to provide your own wellies if you prefer (please ensure they are named clearly and in a bag). Your children need to have coats, hats (sunhats or winter hats) and gloves as necessary for the weather. We have developed a nature area of the classroom and aim to develop these fascinations and curiosities throughout the week beyond the woodland visits.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- As part of the 'Focus Child' approach, we will send home an information sheet for you to contribute to when it is your child's week. Please complete and return these to school as requested.
- All families should have received their Tapestry links to activate their accounts. If you are having any difficulties with this then please let us know so we can help you. You are able to use the internet version or download the app. Observations will be uploaded to enable you to see what your child has been doing at school. You are able to 'like' and 'comment' on these observations. You are also able to upload observations at home of things they have done. You are looking for the moments which make you think 'wow'. Working collaboratively between home and school is the most effective way for us all to support your child and develop their learning.
- Please ensure all belongings brought to school (uniform, lunch bags, coats, gloves, hats, water bottles, PE kit etc) are named clearly. This helps us to get stray items back to the correct owner quickly!
- Please remember to bring in a named water bottle each day.
- A fruit snack is provided for the children to access freely during the morning. Milk is also available via the Cool Milk scheme.
- For this first half term we will not be having a designated PE lesson time. Our physical development education will be addressed throughout our independent play, yoga sessions and dance. It would be helpful to ensure the children bring in their PE kits as we often require changes of clothes.
- We will be sending home a 'name' sheet to support their name writing. We will have a school copy to use in school. It has their name typed out, their name using the Read Write Inc images (each letter has a 'saying' to help the children remember how to write it) and space to practise.
- We will be undertaking local area walks to explore shapes and numbers in our village and to investigate the signs of Autumn.
- We will be available at the end of the school day if there are any questions you have or anything we can help with. Alternatively, please email the school office and they can forward messages to us and we will get back to you as soon as possible.