

All About Me



Foundation Stage
Autumn Terms 2017

Nursery Rhymes



Welcome to a new school year in Foundation Stage. We hope that the children will be very happy and enjoy their time with us. They have already told us about their summer holidays and tried out many of the activities available in the class. The children are settling in well and are working hard to follow the new routines and make new friends.

The children's learning will be based on the principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum and will be taught through a theme based approach. The seven areas of learning (see below) and RE will be covered through a mixture of adult led and self-initiated activities. Children will work individually, in groups, as families and as a class. Learning through play and exploration rather than more formal methods enables new concepts to be put into context. Learning is very practical and, as much as possible, builds on the children's experiences and interests. Our theme for Term 1 is "All about me" it will focus on 'Ourselves' moving onto 'Families'. We will then talk about what we eat to keep us healthy which links to Harvest and then the changes we see in our environment as autumn comes. Term 2 has a "Nursery Rhyme" theme, the nursery rhymes will be chosen after discussions with the children at the end of term 1 about what they would like to learn more about.

Communication and Language / Literacy

Much emphasis will be placed on developing the children's speaking and listening skills. We will share a wide range of rhymes, stories, poems, songs and information books with the children. During the first two terms, time will be spent teaching and reinforcing the children's knowledge of phonics. Our scheme of work uses aspects of the government's "Letters and Sounds" programme together with parts of the "Jolly Phonics" scheme. As each letter shape and sound is introduced, the children learn an accompanying action to support and reinforce their learning. When six new sounds have been learnt the children will bring home flashcards they can use to play games to practise. When children have been introduced to tricky words (words that cannot be completely decoded phonetically) they will also be given these as flashcards to practise reading at home, you will be provided with ideas of games you can play with the flashcards. It should be a fun and engaging experiences for your child to build a love of reading.

We encourage a love of books. In the early years 'reading' involves

- Knowing that you start at the front cover.
- Understanding which way up a book goes and that the picture on the front cover gives a clue about the contents.
- Telling stories from the pictures.
- Being able to express preferences e.g. favourite part of story, which characters they like or dislike, why they found the story funny/exciting/boring, identifying what happened first/next/last.
- Discussing characters e.g. are they good or bad, how do they feel?
- Predicting what will happen next.
- Understanding that when somebody is reading they are interpreting those squiggles on the pages.
- That text is read from left to right.
- Knowing that there are different kinds of books (stories, nursery rhymes, poems, non-fiction).

Reading is one of the most enjoyable and valuable ways to help your child's development. Books should be shared daily; if possible, try to make story time a special, calm, cosy time. Picture books can be borrowed from the class reading area to share at home – just make a note of the book's title in the record book provided. When out and about you could look at and talk about printed language in the environment – road signs, food packets, labels, text messages etc.

Writing is another aspect of communication which will develop over the year. It is really important that the children have good gross motor skills, the children can build the strength in their upper arms for this with climbing, carrying, pulling and pushing, mark making with large paintbrushes. Picking up small objects with a thumb and first finger, small construction, and malleable resources such as play dough can all help towards building fine motor strength which helps children to write letters. The children's interest in mark making with smaller tools will develop during the year. They will begin by putting 'marks' on paper these may be lines or circles, or 'squiggles'. All mark making is valuable and the children are usually keen to explain what they have 'written'. As phonic knowledge and fine motor skills develop, children begin to form recognisable letters. We will be teaching a cursive style of handwriting, we teach the children to write using cursive but we not insist that they use cursive at this stage. There is substantial evidence that this style enables children to develop good, fluent, legible joined handwriting by Key Stage 2.

Mathematics

During terms one and two we will concentrate on counting, knowing the last number they counted is the size of the group. They will learn that as long as no more objects are added or taken the total will remain the same. The children will also learn language related to shape, size, and position. Children will learn through practical activities, stories, songs, games and imaginative play. These skills can be re-enforced at home by counting toys/ stairs/ sweets, pointing out numbers on houses/ cars/ television, comparing quantities e.g. who is taller/shorter, which container hold more/less?

Understanding the World / Expressive Arts and Design

These parts of the Early Years curriculum cover aspects of Science, History, Geography, Art, Music and ICT. Our themes will give opportunities to find out about our families, paint a self-portrait, learn about keeping healthy and look at changes that happen during Autumn/Winter.

The children will all have the opportunity to explore their new recorders and use them for a variety of different musical opportunities. Our main focus will be playing the instrument with a good tone.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

The school follows the SEALs programme. We will start with the theme 'New beginnings' moving onto 'Getting on and falling out'. We explore these themes through Circle time sessions, special times when we come together as a class and get to know each other, our feelings, behavioural expectations, making good/bad choices.

Physical Development

Children will be offered a wide range of physical activities to develop their gross and fine motor skills. Outside they may use the climbing frame, bikes, stilts, bats, balls, etc. Indoors we provide scissors, malleable materials, threading, peg boards and different media to write with such as brushes, chalks and whiteboard pens. Structured P.E. sessions are timetabled for a Tuesday morning and Thursday morning and will include dance and movement, games and gymnastics. Please make sure that your child's P.E. kit remains in school during the week as occasionally timetable changes may occur. The children are encouraged to change into their P.E. kit with minimal help from an adult. It is a great help if children have been taught to try buttons, zips etc independently. Please label all P.E. kit as this reduces the anxiety children can experience when something gets lost - and helps the adults to find support your child to find the missing item.

R.E.

During terms 1 and 2 the children will learn about the Good Samaritan. We will also talk about different celebrations, including Harvest, Christmas and Divali

Outdoor Learning

We use the outdoor environment everyday in all weathers as it is part of our classroom. Please ensure your child comes to school with appropriate clothing; a waterproof coat and wellies in wet weather / hat and gloves when it is cold.

Snack

Please ensure that your child brings a named water bottle to school every day. A piece of fruit is provided in school for each child. If you would like your child to have milk in school please ensure you have filled in the form requesting milk from the county.

Morning Routine

The children are settling well into the morning routine, please begin to say 'goodbye' to your child in the playground as soon as possible. Children soon learn where to put their book bags, lunch boxes and coats and become impressively independent.

Going Home

Please notify us, ideally in writing, if a different adult is collecting your child at the end of the day. We have a notebook to record these changes in arrangements to ensure home time runs smoothly and safely. Please check book bags daily for any notes, letters, pictures etc.

Medicine

Please make sure that any medicines or inhalers are given to a member of staff to store safely. All medicines need to be labelled clearly with the child's name and administering instructions. Please note that the school is not responsible for noting the expiry date of medicines.

Absences

If your child is absent from school for any reason, please let the school office know as soon as possible. When your child returns to school, please send a note explaining the absence.

Finally

Attending school full time can be very tiring to begin with, especially if you're only four years old and all the children will need plenty of sleep every night to recharge their batteries and enjoy school to the full. Children all develop skills at their own rate so do not worry if your child seems unable to do some things yet. Children tend to be more relaxed about these things than parents/carers, and happy children make the best learners!

Please do come in and talk to us if you have any concerns at any time. We look forward to getting to know you and your child.

Miss Zimmerman, Mrs Bowden, Mrs Conway and Mrs Mathews