

10.9.19

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Oak Class! A new class and a new Key Stage. We are delighted to be teaching your child again and would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for the kind words, cards and gifts at the end of last term.

The children have settled quickly and are working really well on our settling in and assessment activities. In the early weeks the aim is to build on the positive experiences of Chestnut Class and continue to provide an age appropriate play based learning environment. More structured sessions across the curriculum build gradually as the term progresses.

The normal pattern for the Oak Class team will be Mrs Herbert (Monday and Tuesday), Mrs Holden (Wednesday, Thursday, Friday) Miss Collins will join us as Teaching Assistant for specific sessions.

Curriculum

Learning Challenge Curriculum

Our topic this term centres around 'Percy's Park'. We will also focus on seasonal celebrations around Autumn, Harvest, Bonfire Night and Christmas. We will be also be enjoying History Week and planning a Christmas production. I hope the Curriculum Overview attached is useful and helps you to understand our learning pathway this term.

Educational Visit

We are in the process of planning a December trip to link with this term's learning and aim to keep costs as low as possible. We will give as much notice as we can of dates and costs.

Reading

Children will be involved in daily group reading activities including structured guided reading sessions with their teacher and may also read to other adults in the room. Children will continue to bring a colour banded reading book home. We assess carefully and build on individual benchmarking assessments to ensure children have books at the correct level. Guided texts read in school tend to be more challenging and the books we send home will be aimed at promoting confidence and independence so may be at a slightly less challenging level in order to consolidate skills. Books will be changed by a teacher once a week, we usually send two texts each week. Some books will have been worked on as a guided reading activity, others will be books at an appropriate level that children have selected themselves. We aim for a range of texts to include stories and non-fiction books. We will also work towards allowing children to select a library book on a weekly basis. Mrs Herbert will change books for Badgers and Hedgehogs, Mrs Holden will change books with Squirrels and Mice.

Children will shortly bring home a reading diary. Please ensure your child brings this along with their reading books to school **every day** as key words to read, phonics activities, spellings and other homework will be added as appropriate. Please do comment in the diary when your child reads at home. Children will not always read or be given new words on a set day so it is **essential** that their book bag is always in school. We also encourage children not to keep water bottles and books in the same pocket as books seldom recover from a run in with a leaky bottle!

Spelling

It will be a while before spelling homework is set for Year 1. Once children are ready, weekly spellings will be stuck into their reading diary.

Phonics

Phonics is high profile in Year One and we continue to progress through the 'phases' of Letters and Sounds. You may be aware that there is a National Phonics Screening test in the Summer Term for all Year 1 children and we will provide plenty of information to help you support your child's learning in this area.

Mathematics

Children will be working with numbers to 20 and concentrating on "teen" numbers. They will be adding, subtracting and counting in ones and tens. We will also be looking at shape, measurement and time. Detailed assessment takes place initially to ensure learning is at an appropriate level.

PE

Our PE sessions will usually be Tuesday and Friday but as these sessions are flexible children will need PE kit (shorts, top and trainers) in school **every day**.

Morning Routine

We are keen that children develop independence and encourage all children to come into school independently as soon as possible. Most of Year 1 are coping really well with the new morning routine. If you have a message for the class teacher there is an adult to meet and greet at the door and our admin team in the office will always pass on important information. Some children are struggling to settle if they are waiting for parents to wave at the window so we are encouraging a quick goodbye at the gate so that children can come in to their welcome activities.

Snack and Drinks

Free fruit is available every morning but there is not usually a choice so if your child only likes a specific item then sending their own snack is a good plan to avoid disappointment. Children are welcome to bring their own fruit or vegetable snack if they prefer. Toast continues to be an option. **Plain water** in a clearly named bottle is essential each day. We encourage children to drink regularly throughout the day but as we have already had a few spills it would be really helpful if they could have a 'sports cap' bottle rather than a pouring cap. *Please name these clearly as we have several bottle 'doubles'.*

Belongings

Many thanks to all those parents who have named belongings clearly. We do try to return things to you, but can only do so if we can see a name. With all the fabulous new shoes and PE trainers everyone is sporting this term names really are essential because when there are 42 shoes on the carpet one Clarks size 10 looks very much like another!

Please **discourage** children from bringing toys and other items to school unless specifically requested as part of our topic work. Children get very upset when toys are lost or damaged.

Collecting Children

At the end of the day safety is our priority. It is important for you to inform us of any changes in terms of who will be collecting your child. We are very careful to ensure children do not leave the room until we have sight of the appropriate adult. My apologies if this slows the end of day routine down in the early days whilst we get to know new adults. It is helpful if you can be easily visible from our doorway.

We also need to have up to date contact details including mobile numbers. If children regularly attend an after school club it would be helpful if you could let us know. If you are held up at the end of the day please do call school, so that we can ensure your child is aware of the situation and remains happily with staff rather than worrying.

I am aware that by encouraging increasing independence by the children at the beginning of the day, parents tend not to be in the classroom each morning. Please do feel that you are always welcome, your child may wish to show you their work on the wall at the end of a day and we pop out most afternoons to share information with you where appropriate. We look forward to working as partners with you in your child's education and value any comments you wish to share with us about their learning. We are usually available for a brief chat at the end of the day but for a confidential or lengthier discussion please do make an appointment at a mutually convenient time.

Here's to an excellent term.

Yours sincerely,

Julia Herbert and Catherine Holden