



# Foundation Stage Newsletter Autumn 2017

Dear Reception Parents and Carers,

A warm welcome to you all! It was a pleasure to meet most of you at our 'New Parents Evening' and drop in sessions. We are beginning to get to know your children and we do hope they're feeling happy, secure and excited to come into school. Starting school is a very precious time for them (and you!) and we are sure that the foundations we begin to build over the coming weeks will stay with them throughout their time in school. This newsletter aims to give you some useful general information regarding general routines at school and an overview of the work we will be doing over this first term.

Our topic is called 'From great oaks little acorns grow'.

Play is an important part of our curriculum. Well planned play is a key way in which children learn in the Foundation Stage which is both fun and challenging. Our learning takes place both inside the classroom and in our outdoor area throughout the year, so hats, gloves, boots and scarves are required in winter!

There are 7 areas of learning in the Foundation Stage and throughout the course of the year the children will be assessed in each of these. We will observe them playing and interacting with each other, take notes, record which numbers or letters they are able to recognise, take photographs of things they have created and keep pieces of work they have done in a special book. Children are unaware they are being assessed and you will get ongoing feedback about your child's progress.

Communication and Language development

Much of our first term will focus on developing each child's confidence in using language. There will be lots of opportunities to express themselves and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

Literacy development

Literacy work will involve listening to and learning well known stories, poems and songs. We will also be learning to read and write our names.

We use the 'Letters and Sounds' document to teach phonics. We also use the Jolly Phonics programme of teaching phonemes (letter sounds) through mnemonics.

#### Mathematical development

Our Numeracy work involves counting to 10 and above. Children will be representing numbers using fingers, pictures and objects. We will also be studying the shapes within our environment and trying our hand at making simple patterns. In addition to this we will be learning new number songs and rhymes.

#### Understanding the world

Over the half term children will be given lots of different experiences that will help them to learn more about their bodies and their senses. We will consider ways in which we change, as we grow older, and consider ways in which we can keep safe and healthy. Autumn is a time full of opportunities, sitting in the middle of a huge pile of leaves - how better to feel, crunch, smell and observe the colour of autumn leaves, sorting leaves into shade and hues, making shakers with acorn, conkers, and fir cones. They will be given opportunities to make pictures with twigs, moss, fallen leaves and berries.

#### Creative development

The creative table will, I'm sure, be well used this half term as we experiment with different media. We will be producing artwork using different textured materials and explore colour mixing. Our junk modelling materials will give us lots of opportunity for making 3D creations. In music we will be learning songs about our bodies and may even have a go at making our own musical instruments.

#### Physical development

In addition to learning about our bodies, we will be working hard to keep them fit and healthy. Our outside classroom will give us lots of opportunities to improve our motor skills through play. Children will be able to use the Pirate Ship, Trim Trail and other large equipment such as bikes, skipping ropes and balls.

### Personal Social and Emotional Development

Children will have a number of opportunities to appreciate and celebrate differences and to understand how it feels, and how important it is to belong to a group. They will consider how everybody can be helped to feel safe and happy in the class and to understand the routines and expectations there.

They will have opportunities to develop the social skills needed to function in a group setting. They will explore the core feelings of happiness, excitement, sadness and fearfulness, and learn ways to identify and label these feelings. They will know how our actions can affect people's feelings, and that all feelings are OK but not all actions are! They will have the opportunities to learn to calm themselves down and to learn some basic strategies for managing fears and upsets.

### The Garden

The children will look at the flowers and vegetables that the previous class planted in the garden, we will talk about all the different types of flowers and vegetables they know of and harvest our pumpkins to make soup which we will sell at the Harvest Fayre. The children will learn about the main features of the Christian harvest festival and understand that this festival is a thanksgiving to God and is a time of sharing with those in need.

### **Forest School**

Over the year U.K. and Austria class will take part in outdoor learning sessions. Together we will make campfires, build shelters, make mud-pies and use natural materials and tools to create crafts and mini-beast homes. The children will be asked to wear old clothes and boots each week - our first session starts on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> **September**.

### General Reminders

#### Book bags

Book bags need to be brought into school every day. Children will be choosing books from the class book box and a reading scheme book. Would you please spare a few minutes every day to hear your child read and make an appropriate comment in their reading log. Please note these books are for sharing; we are not expecting your child to read them to you, just find a nice quiet time to relax and enjoy the book together.

An exciting aspect of our work in the Foundation Stage is that we work from the children's interests. This means we are flexible in our planning and the children have an opportunity to choose the direction a theme takes. It also offers them flexibility on how long we spend on each theme. As the children are directly involved in our planning they get so much more out of their time at school so we thank you in advance for supporting our strange topics and requests!

The most important person in your child's life is you! Parents have a fundamental role to play in education too. If any of you would like to come in to school at any time to help in class by reading to the children, cooking or doing art and craft activities you would be most welcome. Please let us know if you are interested.

If you simply have a question or any information you would like to share with us, do come in. We are sure that together we can make this year a huge success for your child.

## Dates for your diary;



Friday 15<sup>th</sup> September - Please come and join us for a cup of tea and a biscuit to meet new friends at 2pm in our Early Years Garden.

Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> September - School Photographs

Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> September - Pulborough Harvest Fayre

Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> September - Meet the Teacher 7pm, find out more about class routines

and expectations.

Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> October - Coffee Morning/Information for New Starters

Half Term Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> October - Friday 27<sup>th</sup> October

INSET Monday 30<sup>th</sup> October

Early Years Christmas Nativity Monday 11<sup>th</sup> December 1.30pm and 6pm

Led by a Star Friday 15<sup>th</sup> December 6pm

Last day of term Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> December

Lee Callender and Emma Huntley-Hart