

St Michael's Church of England Primary School

Learn – Care – Enjoy

Reception Class Newsletter – Term 3 2022

Dear Parents/Carers,

Firstly, thank you so very much for our wonderful Christmas cards and gifts. It has been great to see all of the children coming back to school happy and ready to learn.

Our topic this term is “Frozen Planet”. We will be looking at the season of Winter and its effects before moving on to read stories with a Wintery theme. We will then be looking at Antarctica and the South Pole to see what life is like there- particularly for its animal inhabitants. We will be conducting some fun science experiments looking at freezing and melting.

Phonics and Literacy

Last term we completed Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the Jolly Phonics programme and had just started phase 3 before Christmas. The children have really enjoyed learning these new sounds in a fun and interactive way. Thank you all for practising the new sounds and key words at home. This term we will be continuing Phase 3 and will be blending sounds together to create words. Please continue to go through the Jolly Phonics songs and actions at home with your child. The digraphs (two letters, one sound) are very tricky so those will be our focus. We will consolidate single sounds and tricky words in the first week of term before moving onto digraphs such as “ch” and “sh” in week two. The new Early Learning Goal for reading requires all children to be able to read ten digraphs or more so we will be working really hard to consolidate this for all. As digraphs are tricky, we will just learn two per week- both the reading and writing of the sound.

The importance of reading at home

We ask that you continue to please read the “Biff and Chip” scheme books with your child as often as possible and **please write in their reading record when they have done so**. It is so important that your child reads

regularly at home (5 minutes daily is all that is needed) as it is a skill that needs regular practice. A good time is just before bed so that it becomes part of your routine. We ask for a minimum of 4 comments from home per week please. Many children have seven comments per week which is brilliant- thank you!

It really does show when a child is reading regularly as their progress through the scheme is rapid! It is no surprise that the most fluent readers are those that read the most regularly. At this first stage the children are building up their “sight vocabulary” so regular exposure to the same words is vital. Please repeat the same book several times before it is changed. Whilst we would love to hear everyone read every day, at school we are only able to hear your child read 1:1 once a week and this is not enough. Learning to read has to be a partnership between school and home please.

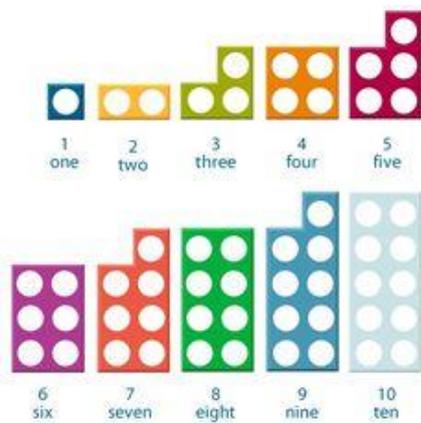
Writing

We will have a big push on writing skills this term; our target is to have all of the children writing at least their name and basic CVC (consonant, vowel consonant) words such as cat or dog by half term. Most children can write their name now and a good few can write a CVC word such as cat or pin with little or no help. We will be doing lots of funky finger activities, letter formation and segmenting for spelling simple words. The children are learning how to turn their spoken language into words on a page. Please encourage your child to pick up a pen and just write at home- about anything- even if it appears to be just nonsense. Please also let them see you writing at home so that they can see that it is a purposeful activity. Shopping lists are great to get your child involved with.

Mathematics

In our Mathematics sessions we shall continue to develop our number recognition and counting skills, starting to develop our understanding of numbers to 20. Please continue to show your child the yellow number flashcards 1-20. (Please make sure numbers 1-10 are secure before moving on to 11-20). If they are secure, they could try putting their number cards in order from 1-20. We will still continue to work on the formation of numbers, and we will also begin to use mathematical language to describe size and capacity and explore this through child led experiments.

One of the mathematical tools that we use in school to help support their understanding of number is 'Numicon.' Each number is represented pictorially as shown below. It really does help the children if they can "see" the number as numbers can be an abstract concept in the early years.



Knowledge and Understanding of the World

The children will follow topics that are linked to their interests and as such, we do not plan topics too far ahead.

Later this term, we will be focusing on culture and celebrations in particular Chinese New Year.

We will also be focusing our work on weather and seasons, commenting on the changes and differences between Winter and Spring. We hope to plant some

vegetables and watch our spring bulbs come up later this term.

We will continue to develop our computer skills, encouraging the children to develop their inquisitive minds and ask questions about what they see and how things work.

Physical Development- fine and gross motor skills

We continue to have daily funky fingers activities in the classroom that encourage the children to develop their fine motor skills and gain control over pencils and scissors. The children are thoroughly enjoying their PE sessions so far. This term we will be learning basic gymnastic skills on a Thursday in the hall. We will cover balancing, control, simple technique, travelling and jumping over and under large and small apparatus.

Expressive Arts and Design

In Art we will be exploring paint using a variety of thick and thin brushes and creating sculptures from junk modelling sessions. We use many items that would normally be thrown away, please can you keep small boxes, rolls etc.

The role-play area will continue to change over the term and offer daily access for the children to develop their speaking and listening skills.

Speaking and Listening.

There is now a huge emphasis on speaking (Oracy) in Reception as the Government have noted a declining standard in speech on Entry to Reception nationally. The baseline assessment helped us to highlight a few children with areas of difficulty who have already been screened by our link speech and language therapist. Some children will be taking part in a speech and language intervention called "NELI" starting this term- we will contact the relevant parents for permission once we have conducted further assessment.

As a whole class, we will continue to learn songs and nursery rhymes by heart as well as giving the children lots of opportunity to talk to each other and to us

through their play. Please do chat to your child about anything and everything at home, making sure you correct any speech or language inconsistencies should they arise. Show and tell sessions provide a great opportunity for the children to talk at length about a photo from home. Please do remember to send in a photo from home each week as we really value these sessions. You could even ask your child to practise what they are going to say. Can they say where they have been? What they did there? Whom did they go with? What was their favourite part? How did they travel there? Etc. Photos of visits etc. provide more opportunity for quality talk than a photo of a toy for example.

Wow slips

The 'Wow' slips make a valuable contribution to their learning journeys. The children love to receive a round of applause for their achievements. Please send them in so that we can celebrate the children's achievements.

Cold Weather

Please ensure your child is dressed appropriately for the weather, they definitely need a coat every day and need several layers on as we are working with the doors open all day due to Covid.

Water bottles

Please ensure the children have a named water bottle in school – so they may access water throughout the day independently.

Book bags

Please make sure that your child brings their book bag to school every day with all their books inside. Please can we ask that you check your child's bag regularly for letters and clean out any old things as some children's bags are stuffed full and this makes it tricky to find things!

Lateness

Please ensure that your child is in school by 8.50am at the latest as we start our handwriting session promptly then. The school gates are now going to be closed at 9am and late children will need to be signed in at the main office please.

Diary Dates

- 04/01/22- INSET
- 05/01/22- Children start back
- 14/01/22- Toy and book sale for Water Aid
- 07/02/22- Virtual Book Fair starts
- 18/02/22- Last day of term
- 28/02/22 Term 4 begins

Please do make an appointment to come in and chat to us after school if you have any issues- we will always do our best to help. It can be tricky to chat at the start of the day when the children are all coming in.

Mrs Wilton and Mrs Ithier