



Information for Apple Class Parents and Carers

Welcome to Apple Class.

Please be aware that in these current times, there are additional routines such as hand washing and sanitising to help keep the children as healthy as possible which are not detailed here.

Our timetable is reviewed and tweaked as the needs of the children change. Below is an explanation of the different elements that make up our day.

In the morning, the children come in, hang their coats and big bags in the cloakroom and then bring their book bags into the classroom to put in their drawer. Next, they stick their name card onto their group's 'we are here' card. (self-registration)

'Busy Bee' is the time when the children choose their own activities inside and outside. Sometimes the 'Busy Bee' activities are planned by the children, with a little help from us! In this way we are able to respond to and reflect the interests of the children. This time also provides opportunities for the team to make valuable observations of the children at play. It is during these times that we often see the children practising and consolidating previously taught skills. We ensure that all seven areas of learning are covered through 'Busy Bee' activities.

English and Mathematics sessions. These sessions often start with a whole class introduction on the carpet with differentiated questions as appropriate. During the session, each Reception child will have a focus teaching session and some **'Busy Bee'** time, while Year 1 children have a longer focus group activity and an **English or Mathematics Challenge** time. English and Mathematics sessions finish with a plenary session on the carpet when we come together to review and share learning. Both English and Mathematics are taught through a topic approach and also in discrete sessions as appropriate.

English and Mathematics Challenge activities are independent to allow the Year 1 children to consolidate, revise and practise skills within that area of the curriculum. They may work on their own or with a friend, inside or outside.

'Free flow' snack time: the children are free to choose when they have their snack throughout the morning. They are encouraged to eat fruit, either from home or from the class tray, and drink milk (available to purchase through our school office) or water. We provide fruit such as bananas, apples, satsumas, oranges, tomatoes or pears.

Phonics is currently taught in sessions every day. We use the 'Read Write Inc' scheme to introduce single sounds and some 'double sounds' (digraphs) such as ch, sh, ou and oi. Read

Write Inc provides some catchy phrases which help the children remember the sounds. Please see additional information pack regarding this.

Handwriting-as you know, we use a cursive handwriting style right from the beginning and although it may take a little longer initially for the children to master, it means that they don't have to re-learn how to write in a joined up style later. We often have Reception children ready to join up before they complete their Reception Year. This method also helps them to learn letter strings in a multi-sensory way, and therefore supports their learning of spellings. We are very proud of the super handwriting in Apple Class.

The children **always** change their shoes for playtime and generally wear trainers. When the grass is very wet, the children have to wear their wellies when they play on the field, but trainers must be worn to play on the trim trail. Trainers will be sent home at the end of each term for you to check that they still fit!

KS1 Lunchtime takes place in the hall (or outside when warm enough) Currently, your child is able to have a Universal Free School Meal until the end of Year 2. After their lunch the children go outside for a playtime until 12.50pm.

Following afternoon registration, we usually have **Book Club**: this involves reading/word/handwriting/book activities, and, for some, a 'guided reading' session with a teacher. We teach reading skills during this time.

During the afternoon, we cover other curriculum areas such as Art, Design Technology, Computing, RE, History, Science and Geography, usually through a 'topic' approach.

Other information

Groups: every child in the school is in a House group: North, East, South or West. These houses have a colour associated with them and that will be the colour P.E. t-shirt your child has. In Apple Class, we also have mixed age, gender and ability groups: Foxes, Hedgehogs, Squirrels and Owls. We do 'Show and Tell' in these groups.

Physical Development takes place twice a week, currently on a Monday and a Friday. On a Friday, the Reception children will work in the classroom, or outside, completing a range of planned fine/gross motor activities, such as throwing bean bags, bikes, peg boards or play dough. Year 1 have a separate session, enabling us to target specific physical development needs for all children. We will send PE bags home at the end of each half term or if we think they need a wash! Please ensure any earrings are removed or covered on PE days: long hair should be tied up for school. (Small plain stud earrings are the only jewellery allowed.)

Targets. Each child in Year 1 has a Target Book. They have two targets: an English and a Mathematics target. The Target Books should be kept in your child's book bag, giving you

the opportunity to share in this process. The targets are 'bespoke' to each child, targeting something specific that they need to work on. We review these targets as often as we can, and always in the first week of a half term but, as I'm sure you can appreciate, it takes some considerable time to work one to one with each child. Please spend some time at home working on these. Reception children have a phonics and a maths pack in which will be a target and activities for you and your child to work on. **Please keep packs and target book in book bags as we will use them at school too.**

Working at home. We appreciate that home life is busy, but would encourage you to spend short periods of time on a regular basis working with your child on their target/s, reinforcing taught sounds and sharing books. 'Little and often' is best, and at a time that suits you....quite a few families find that the mornings work well for them.

Reading. The reading books in Apple Class are arranged in boxes. All of our Reception children are initially given a wordless book to share as we assess their level. These books provide the opportunity for children to demonstrate their storytelling skills, their ability to answer questions about the story and to develop vocabulary. We will be assessing their phonic skills and teaching them new skills, sounds and words. All children develop reading skills at different speeds and we will give your child a book with words when we feel they are ready.

As the children develop their reading skills, we will give them a book which suits that stage of development. We encourage the children to engage at a deep level with the text, discuss new vocabulary, discover the characters, predict what might happen next, and ensure they are reading for meaning. We aim to change books at least twice a week and hear your child read as often as possible. With a very full timetable, please understand if this is not always the case! We also teach and practise reading skills in many of our English sessions, phonic sessions, guided reading groups and in Book Club.

Library Books (LB) This is a book that your child chooses from the school library and will be changed once a week. This is **not** a book your child is expected to read independently but one to enjoy and share. Please feel free to keep this book at home and return it to school on the day that your child has their library visit: Yr1 children on Monday and Reception children on Friday.

We really value the partnership we have with you as parents and carers, and working together can make a significant impact on every aspect of your child's learning. Please feel free to chat to us about how you can support your child at home. Parents and carers will be given a '**note from home**' to complete as and when you notice something significant at home that you would like to share with us. It may be your child 'writing' a shopping list or spotting words or numbers around them. Please use your child's **reading diary** to ask any questions or let us know information, but be aware that we may not look in the diaries every day, so

anything urgent should be mentioned to one of the team or written in a separate note. Do let us know if someone different will be collecting your child.

Please make sure **everything** is clearly named.

We are sure your child will be very happy in Apple Class. Please do not hesitate to speak to any team member if you have any concerns or questions. We will always approach you if we feel there is an issue.

Updated: September 2020