## **Reception Newsletter**

## September 2014

Dear Parents/ Carers,

Once again, we wanted to take the opportunity to welcome you to the Shire Oak family! Thank you for all of your support with the starting school events. I hope we did everything we could to support you and your child through this anxious but exciting time. If there is anything else we can do then please do not hesitate to approach the reception class team. Just as a reminder, this includes: Chloe Grey, Sarah Coulter and Christine Bennett.

Whilst the children have settled in well, the transition into school life continues for much of this half term. We will be placing a large focus on routines and building a strong classroom community. The children will be learning about what happens in a school day and getting to know their classroom, teachers and peers. To support this, our first topic is ‘getting to know you’. More information about our learning this term is overleaf and on the reception class page on the website.

One area of the curriculum that is particularly important to us at Shire Oak is outdoor learning. As part of ‘the early years foundation stage *"providers must ensure that there is a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities, delivered through indoor and outdoor play."* Learning outdoors has many benefits for children’s health, wellbeing, learning and development. Due to this, we have free flow access outdoors and access to sand, water (including our new water wall) and a mud kitchen. As you can imagine this lends itself to wonderful messy learning! We do provide aprons and will be discussing their importance with the children this week. As the winter months set in we will also be asking the children to wear their coats and wellingtons if they have brought them to school. However, it is inevitable that the children will get muddy from time to time. As such, we understand that if we send the children home with mud on their uniform you may not have time to wash it for the next day. We also encourage the use of cheap and second hand uniform as mentioned at the new parents meeting.

During the normal school week there are a number of other activities in our timetable that you need to be aware of. We will visit the school library on Monday’s so that children can bring home a book in addition to their reading book. On Tuesday’s we have ‘show and tell’ in the afternoon. This isn’t compulsory every week but is aimed at objects that are especially interesting or have been made by the children (please do not bring valuable toys as we cannot guarantee their safe keeping). In addition, we have PE on Thursday afternoons so please make sure your child’s PE kit in school for this.

Finally, throughout the year we will be assessing your child’s progress through observation and recording these in their learning diaries. We welcome you to look at your child’s learning diary at any time and input observations of your child’s learning at home. The learning diaries are located above the children’s trays in the classroom, where there is more information about parent observations for you to have a look at.

We are really looking forward to the year ahead and are excited to get to know your families. We will continue to send you letters which will be put in your child’s book bag. Look out for information on stay and play and the phonics parents meeting this half term!

Kind regards,

Miss Grey and the Reception Team.

What we will learn during this half term:

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| **Personal, Social & Emotional Development** | **Understanding the World** |
| We will be using circle times to talk about our likes and dislikes, get to know each other better and become more comfortable talking in front of each other.  We will also be discussing how we need to behave when we are in school. This will focus on the Shire oak values and rules but also classroom practices like tidying up.  As part of our topic we will be looking at making friends  and what makes a good friend including things like sharing, taking turns and what to do if someone upsets you. | As part of our topic ‘getting to know you’ we will be finding out about the different nationalities that are a part of our new classroom community.  In addition to this, we will have opportunities to learn how to use our classroom computers, talking postcards and the interactive whiteboard.  We will also be exploring light and shadow using our light table and overhead projector. |
| **Communication and Language & Literacy** | **Expressive Arts and Design** |
| We will be listening to lots of stories and poems to  help build a large vocabulary. As well as speaking  about our interests in circle times and show and tell.  We will also begin with Phase 1 phonics.  This involves lots of listening and oral work including:   * Identifying sounds in the environment. * Hearing alliterations and rhyming in words. * Segmenting and blending orally   (e.g. get your c-oa-t). | Art activities will be linked to our topic. For example, will be doing line drawings of our families.  We will also experimenting with different materials including painting lanterns with water colour paints and using clay.  Our music activities will include signing lots of nursery rhymes and songs. We will also be exploring instruments in our outdoor area. |
| **Mathematics** | **Physical Development** |
| Initially we will look at numbers and counting. We will look at one or two numbers per week (depending on the children’s progress). This will involve:   * Counting that many objects. * Recognising the numicon. * Recognising the numeral.   We will also be singing counting songs and rhymes like 5 little ducks and 10 green bottles.  We may also look at positional language e.g. behind, next to etc. | We will have lots of opportunity to develop physically in our outdoor area.  We will climb, cycle, build and roll hoops and tyres.  Our fine motor skills will also develop by playing in the sand, play dough and using equipment in our mini-motor challenges!  In PE we will go into the hall and learn about keeping safe and the effects that exercise has on our bodies. |

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| How to help your child at home:  Continue to support your child’s language development through story and song, explaining words they may not know.  You can develop this by recognising when words begin with the same sound or rhyme with each other.  Continue counting with your child, helping them to recognise numerals in the environment  e.g. on food packets, busses, remote controls etc. so that they understand how important numbers are in our lives.  https://encrypted-tbn1.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcQlKvrbZMYFfIqjXyBrQ39-zE1gna1nHOB-SyL7toEZg4hjbsb5Encourage your child to practice recognising and writing their name using a tripod pencil grip. |