



## RECEPTION NEWSLETTER AUTUMN 1 2020

A big welcome to parents and children from the Reception staff at St Mary's! We are looking forward to a wonderful year.

We hope the Reception Handbook, and A-Z of Early Years documents in your induction pack will be helpful guides as queries arise. In addition we produce a class newsletter each half term, which fills you in on the learning going on each half term, and gives you important dates for your diary and ways in which you might be able to get involved if you wish to. The newsletter is available at the beginning of every half term on the website (class focus section) and is filled with important information - **it is really important to read and note the dates for your diary and information section - thank you in advance!**

### CURRICULUM

The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum covers a child's whole development across 7 areas: Communication and Language; Physical Development; Personal, Social and Emotional Development; Literacy; Mathematics; Expressive Art and Design; and Understanding the World.

Each half term we choose a theme for our learning across all areas of the curriculum. The theme for our learning this half term is Starting School and how to be a Reception Superhero! We are talking about the behaviour expectations in our new class, and also are being introduced to different Characteristics of Effective Learning 'superheroes' who will help us to be superhero learners! These include Miss Fantastic Focus (concentration), Keep it Up Captain (keep trying), and Have a Go Hero (have a go at something tricky). Children have individual superhero sticker charts, which they can fill up with stickers gained from Reception superhero behaviour!

#### Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)

Our main focus for this half term is to settle the children into their new school environment. The class will be learning each other's names and begin to make friends by playing lots of 'getting to know you' circle times. We will be thinking together about what kind of Reception class we want to have, and setting up a 'class charter' together, with our class expectations on it. Particularly following lockdown, we will be spending a good period of time thinking about different emotions, so that children are able to name, and manage, their own feelings and those of others. We are doing this through exploring picture books, in particular "The Colour Monster" by Anna Llenas, (which I would highly recommend) which equates a different colour with each emotion. We will then go onto "Ruby's Worry" by Tom Percival.

#### Physical Development (PD)

We will be working to develop the children's fine and gross motor skills, as they participate in a wide variety of games. Building their strength in their upper body, hands and fingers will develop their pencil control. They will be encouraged to use a tripod grip (see picture to the right) when mark making and writing. Please continue to encourage this at home as they make marks, paint, draw and write.



PE lessons will be taught by Miss de Souza on a Thursday. This half term we will focus on movement, including developing a range of movement patterns and responding to performing these on command. Due to COVID-19, children do not need to wear a PE kit for these sessions yet. Please send them in in trainers so they can move freely.

Health and self-care is a big part of your child's physical development. We are encouraging the children to be increasingly independent. Reinforcing how to put jumpers and coats on independently at home is a huge help.

### Communication and Language (C&L)

Children will be developing their listening, understanding and speaking skills. This is done across the school day, and through carpet sessions and circle times, where we encourage the class to increasingly interact with each other. Foci for this half term include encouraging children to express opinions, and ask appropriate questions of others, as well as using high quality picture books to develop children's comprehension, inference and retelling skills.

### Literacy

At St. Mary's we follow the **Jolly Phonics Synthetic Phonics Program**, which uses a multi-sensory approach to teaching phonics. The class will be learning four letter sounds (phonemes) per week. Your child will bring home 'sound books' with the four sounds covered in class each week. **These will come home on a Thursday. Please ensure your child's book is in school on this day. Please practise recognising, saying, hearing and writing the sound of the letter at home.** Your child's reading will be really impacted by short, regular practice at home together. As the children begin to blend and read, then word cards, tricky (sight) words, and books will begin to come home too. When this happens a separate letter/email will be sent home giving further details. Please don't worry if you haven't received books yet. We seek to ensure each child has a really secure foundation of various literacy skills before books go home, as moving onto books too early can hinder their overall progress.

It is really important that these letter sounds are said correctly by adults, and it is surprisingly hard! Sounds should be the sound, rather than the letter name, and they should usually be short. Please do take a look at these videos before you start practising with your child:

- This is a helpful guide to the sounds and Jolly Phonics - and particularly how to avoid the dreaded schwa! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yVvry9jpVjI>
- This has a rundown of the correct pronunciation. It starts with the vowels, but the consonants are more marked - stay tuned! [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BqhXUW\\_v-1s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BqhXUW_v-1s)

We will also be playing lots of sound discrimination games, both creating and hearing different sounds, as well as rhythm and rhyme, alliteration and oral blending/segmenting (Phase One of Letters and Sounds). These key skills form a firm foundation for reading.

### Mathematics

In our number work we will be exploring what number and counting really is, and mastering these concepts. We will be sorting, counting accurately with one-to-one correspondence, comparing groups of numbers, and looking at changes - one more and one less.

In our shape, space and measure work we will be sequencing daily events and naming the days of the week, and recognising and recreating repeating patterns.

### Understanding the World

The class will be getting to know each other, and talking about, and celebrating, similarities and differences between us. To help our learning here, **please send in a digital photo of you as a family**

to the class email address by Friday 25<sup>th</sup> September. Children can share details of their life with this as a starting point.

## RE

As a Church of England school we teach RE as a discrete subject. This term our weekly RE sessions will focus on "Who made this wonderful world?", as we learn more about the Bible, and what Christians believe about creation. They will be encouraged to think about the natural world around them.

## Expressive Art and Design

In addition to our class based activities the class will also have discrete music and art lessons with a specialist teacher every Tuesday.

*Art - Mrs Adams (will collect the children on Tuesday mornings):*

We will be developing our drawing skills this half term. This term Reception will be introduced to drawing people. Everyone will also have the opportunity to create the templates for Christmas cards and mugs in time for half term.

*Music - Mrs Le Prevost:*

We will be developing musical understanding and participation through a range of activities to link in with their topic, including playing musical games, listening and moving to a range of music, and playing musical instruments. They will be introduced to the concept of pitch by using their hands and body in actions songs they know, as well as new songs that we will learn.

## RECEPTION ROUTINES AND INFORMATION

### COMMUNICATION

**If there are important messages** e.g. a query for the Reception team, or letting us know about pick up arrangements **please email [class2020@st-marys-putney.wandsworth.sch.uk](mailto:class2020@st-marys-putney.wandsworth.sch.uk) before 9am: these will be checked once a day. A message after this should be phoned into the school office. If the child is going home with someone not known to the Nursery staff we must be notified in advance otherwise we cannot release your child until we have spoken to you.** More information is in the Reception Handbook.

We will also send important information back via the email address. Please make sure this email address is saved so it does not go into your junk folder, and **please note any messages each night, as it may be about school the next day!**

During COVID-19 please keep discussion with the class teacher on the gate to a minimum, and e-mail me to arrange a time to discuss anything further over the phone.

### CONTRIBUTING TO YOUR CHILD'S DIGITAL EARLY YEARS LEARNING JOURNEY

We document your child's progress using an online tracking and assessment tool called the Early Excellence Assessment Tracker (EExAT). It is designed to capture key moments of your child's learning and development. This system replaces paper scrapbooks. We ask you to also get involved by using EExAT to comment on photos and videos added by the Reception team, and upload photos and short videos or your child's learning and development from home via this online system. More details of how to set up your account, and how to add comments and photos will follow on email. Please ensure you have returned the EExAT form sent out via email previously, so we are able to share your child's information.

### WHAT YOUR CHILD/REN WILL NEED

Please ensure all your child's uniform is clearly **labelled!** We also spend lots of time outdoors, so please ensure your child is dressed appropriately for the weather!

**Children should not bring any toys, books or food with them - we have everything they need.**

On Thursdays your child/ren should also bring their book bag, so that the home learning (see Literacy section above) can go home with them. They will also be doing PE on this day, so please ensure your child comes to school in trainers on Thursdays. **Please make sure you check the book bags each week for letters and important information.**

### ADMIN

Please send in a digital photo of you as a family to the class email address by Friday 25<sup>th</sup> September. This will be used as a prompt to talk about our families and learn more about the people in our class.

Please also ensure you have returned the EExAT and FoSMs forms I sent out via email last week. Many thanks!

### COOKERY, CRAFT AND GARDENING DONATION

Children take part in cookery, craft and gardening sessions throughout the year. **In order to cover the cost of ingredients, which add up very quickly, we would like to ask for a donation of £40 for the year in a clearly labelled envelope.** If you would prefer to donate for each half term in advance, then please do speak to me. Thank you so much in advance.

### DONATIONS

If you are discarding any **old uniform** please consider donating them to the Early Years: we are very short on spare clothes!

We are really looking forward to a wonderful year in Reception, and to getting to know you and your child better. If you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to speak to us or to email me via the class email.

Best wishes,

Miss de Souza

Miss James

(Reception Class Teacher)

(Reception Teaching Assistant)