



St. Mary's Church of England Primary School, Putney

Vision: *Delivering excellence, allowing all to flourish*

Mission: *Creating a culture of wonder, guided by Christian faith*

Values: *Compassion • Endurance • Thankfulness*

Reception: Half-Termly Letter to Parents

Autumn 1, September 2023

Dear Parent(s) and Carer(s),

A big welcome to parents and children from the Reception staff at St Mary's! It was fantastic to be able to meet with you and your child before starting. 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 letter 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 letter 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!**

The Reception Team

Miss Kendal McEvoy

Mrs Joanne Lane-Wood

On Tuesdays the class will be taught by specialist staff: Mrs Adams for Art and Design, and Ms Fenner for Music. On Thursdays the class will be taught by PE coach: Mr Newman

Safeguarding

Safeguarding the children at St. Mary's is the responsibility of all staff, parents and professionals who come on site. If you have a safeguarding concern, our Designated Safeguarding Lead in school is Mrs Kerry Dunford. Her contact email is: kdunford.212@lgflmail.org.

If there are safeguarding concerns, which take place outside of school hours please contact the Wandsworth Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). Their contact details are: Telephone: 020 8871 6622 or e-mail: MASH@wandsworth.gov.uk.

The Curriculum

The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum covers a child's whole development across seven 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 are **Starting School** and **Bears**.

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 encourage children to be confident to talk to their peers and to adults about themselves, their home and their community, as we investigate our topic in circle times and small groups. We will be learning routine and thinking together about what kind of Reception class we want to have. We will be setting up a 'Class Charter' together, with

our class expectations on it. 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. One way we are doing this is through exploring picture books.

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. We will also build their fine motor skills through repeated and varied opportunities to explore and play with play dough, small construction, arts, crafts and using small tools. 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. We use pencils in school which support the children with this grip as the pencils have indents where their fingers should be. Please let me know if you would like to know about the type of pencil we use.



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 Fridays** (from 29th September). **The children will be given reading folders to store the sound books in. The reading folder should be brought into school each.** Please practise recognising, saying, hearing and writing the sound of the letters at home. **Your child's reading will be really impacted by short, regular practice at home together, and we really recommend finding a time that works for you as a family for daily reading practice, even before reading books themselves start to come home.** It is expected that children will read aloud and/or practice their letter sounds at home every day for at least 15 minutes. 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 do not read books as soon as the sound books come home. 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.

We will be hosting a workshop for parents on Monday 25th September at 17:00-18:00. I highly recommend all parents come to this as it will enable you to get a clear understanding of how we teach phonics and how you can support your child at home. It is very important that letter sounds are said correctly and corrected by adults, it is surprisingly difficult! We will go over this in the workshop.

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. 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. This half term we will be exploring the numbers to 5 deeply, understanding the composition of each number, building up one-to-one correspondence when counting, and developing subitising (recognising quantities without needing to count). We will compare quantities of objects, recognising when a quantity is greater than, less than or the same as another quantity. In our shape, space and measure work we will be sequencing exploring 3D and 2D shapes to develop spatial reasoning.

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 Tuesday 19th 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.

Music - Ms Renner:

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

PE Arrangements and What Your Child Will Need

This year your child's PE lessons will take place every **Tuesday** and **Thursday (every week from the week commencing 25th September)**. **Children should come into school on Tuesday and Thursday in their St Mary's PE kit, and suitable footwear.** Please ensure every item of 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!

Please send in some spare uniform with your child if you know that it might be needed.

Children should also bring their book bag, containing their reading folder (from the day they are given out), into school every day. Please make sure you check the book bags every time they come home in case there are letters and important information for you. We will add to the reading folders each Friday. Children should not bring any toys, books or food with them - we have everything they need.

Week overview

Monday: Normal Day

Tuesday: Children should come to school in their St Mary's PE kit, and suitable footwear.

Wednesday: Normal Day

Thursday: Children should come to school in their St Mary's PE kit, and suitable footwear. Home learning should be returned completed and uploaded onto Microsoft Teams (more information to follow when accounts are set up).

Friday: New home learning (from 29th September) will be set and placed in your child's book bag. These should be completed by the following Thursday and uploaded to Microsoft Teams.

Home Learning Arrangements

Over the year, Reception will build up their home learning. Children's book bags should be brought into school every day, including their reading folder when this is issued to you.

We will be starting daily phonics and reading from Monday 25th September - please see the Literacy section above for further details about how this works. It is expected that children will read aloud and/or practice their letter sounds every night for at least 15 minutes.

From then, the children will receive weekly handwriting sheets to complete at home.

Trips

We are in the process of organising trips. Due to ratios we do rely on parent support on our trips. If you feel you may be able to come on one trip or more please do attend the volunteer induction as you will need to obtain a DBS

through our school to support. If you have not attended the volunteer induction and don't have a DBS (obtained through us) unfortunately you won't be able to support us on trips.

Reception Baseline

You may already be aware that the government has introduced a start of school assessment to see how every child enters formal schooling, and will measure your child's progress from Reception to Year 6. This data is only used by the Department for Education, at the end of their time in Year 6, to provide a measure of, so you will be able to see how well their school has supported the year group over their time at primary school.

The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) is a short, interactive and practical assessment of your child's early literacy, communication, language and mathematics skills - it might sound scary, but in reality it isn't! Children will be just aware of doing two short games with the class teacher. It allows your teacher to spend quality 1:1 time with your child, getting to know them and seeing where each child is at allows us to plan our lessons to meet every child's needs. If you wish to read further about the RBA, you will find a useful parent booklet here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reception-baseline-assessment-information-for-parents>

Communication

If there are important messages e.g. a query for the Reception team, or letting us know about pick up arrangements **please email class2023@st-marys-putney.wandsworth.sch.uk before 8:45am: 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 Reception 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!**

Keep in the loop with social media

The school actively uses two social media platforms to communicate school news and events, so please check them out and follow us:

Twitter <https://twitter.com/PutneySMPS> Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/PutneySMPS/>

Admin

- Send in a **digital family photo** to the class email address (or paper if easier) by Friday 16th September.
- Cookery, craft, and gardening donation: Throughout the year, we will be cooking, gardening and crafting. **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.

Diary Dates

- 25th September - Phonics Workshop for Parents (17:00 - 18:00)
- 26th September 2023 at 14:00 - Volunteer Induction Meeting - please sign up in the office to attend
- 29th September - Harvest Festival (children Y1-Y6)
- 4th October - Black History Month Story Teller Workshop (only EYs and KS1 children)
- 17th October - School Open Evening
- 18th and 19th October - Progress in Learning Meetings (timings to follow)
- 20th October at 3.20pm - End of Autumn Term 1 and start of half term break
- 30th October at 8.45am - Start of Autumn Term 2

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 email us via the class email.

Best wishes,
Kendal McEvoy and Joanne Lane-Wood