

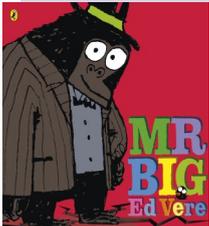
Dear Parents

We hope you had a lovely half term break.

As the children have begun to settle into their class and peer groups now, we are able to plan activities based on their particular interests. If you have noticed that your child has a new fascination, please share it with us in their reading diary so that we can use this to build upon their learning in school.

Mrs Littlewood & Mrs Garley  
Class Teachers

### Communication & Language



#### Literacy

This term, we are focusing on the story of *Mr Big* by Ed Vere. Mr Big is a big strong gorilla with a talent for playing the piano. He has just one small problem - because of his size, he frightens people away. Eventually, Mr Big is heard playing the piano beautifully and is invited to join a band where he enjoys the company of other musicians and admirers. This story humorously tackles the universal subject of inclusion, reminding the children that to get to know someone you need to look beyond their exterior.

The children will be told the story orally and will have the opportunity to follow our usual process of stepping, mapping and speaking an innovated version of the story themselves. This term, we will be encouraging the children to focus on description skills. This will be supported greatly by the fantastic illustrations in the book, which will be studied by the children. A bank of adjectives will be collected through discussion, which will enable the children to write interesting sentences.

The story is based on the importance of friendship and will therefore be linked with plenty of discussion about what it means to be a good friend.

This term, the children in Reception year will enjoy learning and inventing new versions of the following stories: *We're Going on a Bear Hunt*, *The Ginger Bread Man*, *Chocolate Cake* and *Little Rabbit Foo Foo*.

If you did not manage to come and see your child's literacy lesson last term, please come along and see their Talk for Writing lesson this term on either: **Wednesday 22 November** or **Thursday 23 November**. Both sessions run from 9.45 to 10.30am. Please let us know if you are able to attend.

#### Reading

Reception children are read to everyday. They also create their own improvised stories daily using props. They partake in a guided reading lesson where they share a book with a group and take it in turns to answer questions about what is happening on each of the pages. As the term progresses, your child will quickly start to decode and blend words which will enable them to read in these guided groups.

Every week, your child will be taught a new letter sound with a song and an action to go with it. They practise the letter formation using jumbo chinks outside, fingers on glitter or sand trays, pencils and white board pens.

Last term, the children learnt the sounds: **s, t, a, p, i, n** so can now read and write some three letter vowel, consonant, vowel words such as *sat, tap, pin* etc.

#### Spellings for Reception

Over the course of the year, your child will be given five words to learn per week, which can be found in the front envelope of their Busy Bee books.

These words are the 'Key Words'. They are the first 100 high frequency words in the English language and most of them cannot be taught using the phonics that the children learn in their first two years at school.

The Key Words are words such as: *the, my, he* and *said*. Learning to read/recognise them in the Reception year, will help the children make good progress with their reading and writing skills now *and* as they move through to Key Stage 1.

These words can be taught through games such as pairs, snap even by going on a word hunt around the house looking for particular words. Or more simply, by making play dough models and drawings to help the children link an image to the word. For instance, the word 'said' with a picture of a mouth next to it.

As the Talk for Writing approach endorses, creating pictures or actions to go with words helps to keep new learning in the long-term memory. As does leaving them for a day or two and revisiting them at a later date.

When children have learnt these five words, they will be moved to the back envelope of their Busy Bee books to show that they have learnt them.

We teach the spelling of these words throughout the school week so your input at home will serve to compound our efforts and result in good progress for your child.

To assist you we will be running a session on **Thursday 16 November** at 3.30pm. Please join us if you can.

## Writing

Reception children are given many writing and mark-making opportunities throughout the school day. Writing materials are provided in all areas of the indoor and outdoor learning environment and the children know that they are allowed to access these throughout the school day.

Each day, the children attempt to copy a short

sentence where they are encouraged to grip their pencil firmly, keep their letters sat on lines and use 'finger spaces'.

It is crucial for good hand control (therefore handwriting) that the children's fingers are strong so each day they will be doing something called 'Dough Disco' where they are given very large lumps of play dough to manipulate along with some upbeat music. They enjoy this a lot and it really helps to strengthen their hands. Please support us with this by doing fine motor skill activities at home with your child such as jigsaws, threading, and careful cutting with scissors and collage.



## Numeracy

This term, children will continue to follow the Numicon programme to help them with their understanding of number. We will be focusing on the following:

- To compare and order Numicon shapes by size
- To compare and order three or more objects of different sizes, including height
- To begin to explore relationships between number rods and to learn their colour names
- To recite and extend the count sequence and count collects of objects accurately (increasing in number towards 10)
- To build and recognise Numicon shape patterns, matching them to Numicon shapes

## Shape, Space and Measurement

This term children will be provided with opportunities to learn:

- Names for 3D shapes and some mathematical vocabulary to describe them
- Order items by length or height
- Order items by weight and capacity
- Measure short periods of time using sand timers
- Language and vocabulary related to money

The children will continue to experience daily planned activities, which will enable them to

access the three prime and four specific areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum.

This term children will be contributing to the weekly planning process and their interests will continue to be built upon to support their understanding across all areas of the curriculum.

## Understanding the world

### People and communities

This term, the children will continue to learn about special places in Christianity and enjoy: another trip to Maidwell Church, a mock Christening, observational drawings then paintings of the Church and they will also 'hear, map, step and speak' the Christmas story with role play to deepen their understanding.

## Technology

This term, Reception children will have the opportunity to learn to programme 'Bee-Bots' on the iPads and using our programmable toy Bee-Bots. They will draw pictures on large grid maps and help each other direct their Bee-Bots to particular points on the maps. This is a precursor to programming and teaching the children about clear, bug free algorithms.

As usual, the children have free access to educational programmes on the classroom computers throughout the course of the school day with programmes supporting all areas of the curriculum.



## The World

This term, the children will be learning about changes within living memory. The children will have the opportunity to interview Mrs Elliot and learn what schools and toys were like in the past and how they differ from today's experiences.

## Music

During assembly, the children will enjoy learning the songs for the Christmas performance of The Jungle Book.

With Mrs Enright, Class 1 will focus on sustaining rhythmic patterns and beats against other rhythmic matter. We will work on developing co-ordination, memory and rhythmic skills and start the concept of silence. This will lead on to the crotchet rest and recognising it in written rhythmic patterns.

Throughout the term, a variety of percussion instruments will be left out for the children to play with as they wish.

## Physical development

Children will continue to have Mr Gordon each week for PE and their usual swimming lessons.

The focus for Class 1's PE unit is **Social Skills**, with a physical focus on *Dynamic Balance to Agility* for the first three lessons and on *Static Balance: Seated* for the remaining three lessons.

The learning goals will be:

- I show patience and support others, listening well to them about our work. I am happy to show and tell them about my ideas
- I can help praise and encourage others in their learning
- I can work sensibly with others, taking turns and sharing

Children will continue to be encouraged to be as autonomous as possible with regards to self-care.

The Key Stage 1 children will be learning about animals and humans in science and these lessons will be linked to the EYFS so that the children can learn about the importance and significance of keeping themselves healthy along with the rest of the children in their class.

The gross motor opportunities will be as follows:

- Class parachute
- Bikes, cars and scooters
- Large rollers on large paper

Fine motor opportunities:

- Threading
- Writing and drawing
- Weaving
- Spraying with spray bottles
- Tweezers and sorting
- Light box drawing and handwriting

## Art

As usual, we will have many art experiences available to the children everyday including painting, collage, pastel, threading, printing, drawing, junk modelling and clay.

This term, the children will be making masks to represent the characters in the various stories and props so that they can act the stories out in the role-play area.

## PSHE

PSHE will continue with the school's Growth Mindset themes.

## Reception Stars

Just a little reminder: The stars which come home in your child's book bag are for you to write their at-home achievements on. These are celebrated with their friends in class. They can include anything from becoming more independent, being kind and helpful or even a new experience they may have had.



## Website Links

Below are links to some recommended website links that have games to support your child's maths and phonics skills at home;

- For counting objects up to 5 or 10:

<http://www.topmarks.co.uk/learning-to-count/underwater-counting>

- For blending sounds and deciphering between 'alien' and real words:

<http://www.phonicsplay.co.uk/PicnicOnPluto.html>

- For reading practice:

[http://www.literactive.com/Download/live.asp?swf=story\\_files/hanging\\_monkeys\\_US.swf](http://www.literactive.com/Download/live.asp?swf=story_files/hanging_monkeys_US.swf)

Please begin or continue to request your child's next list of key words to support them with this at home.

If you have any questions about your child at school or the expectations in any area, please don't hesitate to speak to either Mrs Littlewood or Mrs Garley.

