



St Barnabas Primary School • Hart Street • Oxford • OX2 6BN
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January 2022

Dear Parents/Carers,

Happy New Year to you all and I hope you had a happy and safe holiday time. This term, our first topic will be called I Wonder and will focus on developing questioning and enquiring skills. As a part of this we will be doing some investigations and experiments to test out our ideas. In the second part of the term the topic is called Wonderful Wildlife, which encourages observation skills and interest in the world around us. In this topic we will have a focus on both small and larger living things. This letter will focus on some general information about the class and curriculum and the Curriculum Overview grid will give you a little bit more information on some of the key areas of learning.

Drop-off/Pick up & Registers

We open the door at 8:45am every morning with a drop and go system and take the register promptly by 8:55am. At the end of the day we will open the Willow garden gate at 2.45 so parents and carers can come into the garden. We will bring the children out to the garden at 2.55/3pm so that parents can collect their children before the rest of school exit their classrooms.

Communication

Please do contact me with any queries or concerns. You can contact me through email. rpig7180@st-barnabas.oxon.sch.uk. I may not be able to answer immediately, but will get back to you. For anything urgent or for something that needs to be shared immediately, you can either call the office, speak to Mrs Donaghey on the gate, who will pass on the message or speak to me at the FSU entrance/exit when you drop off or collect your child. You can also make an appointment with us at a mutually convenient time, by calling or emailing me or the office.

School office email: office.3832@st-barnabas.oxon.sch.uk

School office number: 01865 557178

Absence

- Please let the office know in advance if your child has a medical or similar appointment and will need to be taken out of school or to arrive late. If your child is ill, please ring or email the office as soon as possible on each day of absence (unless you arrange with them otherwise).

Keeping Safe

- The children will remain in the larger bubbles this term with the Foundation Stage being part of the KS1/Lower School bubble. Within the bubbles the children do not have to socially distance from each other. The adults will practise safe distancing but will interact with and support the young children as needed whilst following appropriate safety measures. At the moment the reception children do not attend assemblies but when they do begin these will either be done remotely from

the classroom or in the hall with the rest of their Lower School bubble. The weekly assembly will be taken by Mrs Donaghey.

- Everyone will wash their hands frequently including: on arrival, before and after- eating, when coming inside from the garden, using the toilet and then again before going home. We also have hand gel which we are dispensing regularly as well.

Equipment and clothing

- Our main PE lesson is now on a Tuesday in the morning. Due to the current situation the school has suggested that children wear their sports clothes to school so they don't need to change for lessons. However, I know this is hard for many parents to remember so I suggest the children also have a kit in school so they can change into appropriate clothing if they need to. A suitable kit would include a t-shirt, trousers/leggings or shorts and some sports shoes. These are also useful so the children can use them if the shoes they are wearing get muddy which often happens at lunch playtimes at the moment. For safety reasons we ask that all jewellery like necklaces and bracelets are left at home. Stud earrings may be worn but should be removed for the PE lesson on Tuesdays. It's also helpful if children with long hair wear it tied back on our PE day.
- For daily activities the children should come to school in clothes that are suitable for outside tasks every day as we will be using our new outdoor space as much as possible, so layers of warm clothes are needed every day and can be left on their pegs if the children get too warm. Hats are particularly helpful as they help to keep the children warm without the extra bulk of too many layers.
- The covid guidance means we will be keeping windows and doors open as much as possible for ventilation, so warm clothes are essential.

Curriculum Information:

I will send out information when necessary through parent mail. Normally we would also have a class Rep who would set up a class group email or text and I would talk to them if I needed to send a reminder out or pass on information but unfortunately we don't have one at the moment. If you would be interested, then do please contact me.

Please make sure you are signed up on the Schools Gateway website to receive the Schools comm emails. I'm afraid my name sometimes comes up with my maiden name so if anything has the title Rebecca Piggott it is also me!

Maths We began using the maths scheme Big Maths last year. This is a teaching approach that makes progress in maths easy and fun. ... BIG Maths is a rigorous, systematic and structured approach that provides children with a fun and lively experience as they learn through jingles, songs, games and the BIG Maths characters. Each child continues to have a weekly challenge based on their ability and will get to do a Beat That challenge to try and beat their previous personal scores. So far the children have enjoyed doing them.

Communication and Literacy

Read Write Inc is going very well and we are going to move towards more targeted groups this term now we have completed all of the Set 1 sounds. Some children will be starting paired reading with Ditty books whilst others focus on blending and segmenting words. Big Talk will start this term. This is mainly a talking homework task which is shared in class the next day and leads to a writing task. I will send home further information about these in the next 2 weeks. At the moment I plan to do this on Thursdays so the talk homework will come home every Wednesday on a sticker or slip of paper.

Reading

We encourage a love of books and reading in the class and will encourage the children to take books home to share with you. Every day the children can choose a book from the class to borrow. We don't make a record of the titles borrowed but they are stamped with the school's name. We would encourage you to purchase a bookbag from the school office if you don't already have one so that your child can bring and store the books safely. I often collect the bookbags in once the children start reading with scheme books so I can read their diaries and see any follow-up sheets they have done for handwriting practise. It makes it much harder if books are left in backpacks as these are often forgotten so do please get a special bookbag. We ask that they come to school every day so books can be changed and the children have somewhere to carry pictures they make.

The main 'homework' for the reception children is to explore, listen to and then later practise reading each day at home. The children will choose the books themselves with guidance from myself or Mrs Aston. The children will also have a reading diary (once they have scheme books) and I will also check every week. Please ensure that you sign to say that your child has read daily, as it really does help develop their phonic ability, confidence, accuracy and fluency. I currently read individually with the children each week before the Pre-Ditty sheet goes home. This term this will may be individual again but may also be a part of the daily group lessons where children work with a partner and take turns to read aloud.

Homework: We ask that children spend about 10-15 minutes a day reading or sharing books with you at home every day. As previously mentioned whenever you read with your child please record it in their yellow reading diary. A short comment is all that is needed. It is really important that your child reads every day at home to encourage phonic and decoding skills, whole word recognition and their comprehension by discussing the book.

Forest School is a teaching and learning programme which promotes learning about nature and promotes child centred learning and self-made challenges. It takes place every Wednesday afternoon rain or shine within the school grounds. It is led by Miss Thompson our Forest school leader and myself. Last term many children borrowed waterproofs and wellies but it is better if they come from home. The children need waterproof trousers and a coat, wellies and hat and gloves for when the weather gets chilly! When we are able to, do let us know if you are interested in helping, as it is always much appreciated.

Staffing

As you know, I am the teacher for the Reception class but work alongside Mrs Ivey (Nursery Teacher) and Mrs Aston (Nursery Nurse). I have PPA (planning time) on a Friday morning and don't currently teach Friday afternoons. On that day Mrs Ivey and Mrs Aston will lead in the morning with Mrs Aston and Mrs Moundji in the afternoon. I'm still available on email Friday mornings if you need to contact me.

Water bottles

Please could every child bring a named water bottle to school so they can have regular drinks during the day. Ideally these bottles need to be taken home every night for a wash! We will remind the children each day. **Please name bottles so that their name is visible on the side of the bottle.** At the moment only one or 2 bottles are named and at lunch time the adults have to rely on the children to tell us who's bottle is who's. We would be much faster if they all had names on them!

Thank you in advance for all your support.

Finally, please do not hesitate to make an appointment to come in and see me or ask me to give you a phone call if you have any questions. I am happy to help!

Mrs Rebecca Tillotson

rpig7180@st-barnabas.oxon.sch.uk

Early Years Coordinator