

Alderman Pounder Infant and Nursery School

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Dear Parents and Carers,

We would like to wish all of you a warm welcome to the reception unit; we are delighted to report that the children who started in Cherry and Sycamore Classes this week have settled really well and have really impressed us by the way they have adapted to their new setting.

This may also be a good time to introduce the members of staff who will be working in the team to you. Mrs Roberts will be the key worker for Sycamore Class, with Mrs Chambers teaching on Fridays. Ms Barnes (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday) and Ms Hardman (Thursday and Friday) will be the key workers for Cherry Class. We are further supported in the unit by Miss Zelek, Mrs Garton, Mrs Saccomando and Mrs Hunt. Although the adults have particular responsibilities to a particular class or a particular child, we will each be involved in supporting the learning of all the children throughout the unit, so most of these names should become very familiar to your children. Feel free to talk to any one of us about your child at any time. As you can see, we feel very privileged again this year to be able to offer a very high ratio of adults to children; this level of staffing will allow us to provide a really varied and stimulating curriculum to our pupils and to give them the support they need to make a happy and successful start to their career in school.

This year we are proud to be launching our brand new curriculum across the whole school. It will be driven by a key question which will stimulate the learning for the whole term, with the emphasis on creative and exciting learning opportunities and on promoting children's personal, social and emotional development. This Autumn Term, our key question is: **What things change and what things stay the same?** We will be looking at changes that take place in the natural world, and changes over time, and there will be a focus on raising the children's awareness of our school values of happiness, friendship, respect, fairness, honesty and perseverance.

In our efforts to make the learning we offer pupils as personal and immediate as possible, we have decided to break down this key question into more focussed **Questions of the Week**. We will present the children with the question at the beginning of the week and review it at the end of each week. This will also allow children to reflect on what they have found out and become more aware of the progress they are making.

Next week we will be continuing to settle the children in, establishing routines and building relationships. We use the book Harry and the Dinosaurs go to School as part of our curriculum, so you may be hearing a lot about dinosaurs, too! Our question of the week will be: **Which things in our school are different to nursery and which are the same?**

Then, (week beginning 17th September) we will be continuing our transition focus with the question: **How are we the same as each other and how are we different?**



In the week beginning 24th September, we will be looking at changes in the natural world with the question: **How do plants change as they grow?**

After that, (beginning 1st October) we will be thinking about how we effect changes on materials for example by looking at changes which happen when we prepare and cook food. We will be asking : **How do we change wheat into bread?**

The following week, (beginning 8th October) we will be concentrating similarities and differences in relation to other countries and cultures, and our question will be: **What is different about how people in Africa live and what is the same?**

Finally, (week beginning 15th October) we are returning to the natural world, this time thinking about minibeasts rather than plants with the question: **How do minibeasts grow and change?**

Before the half term holiday, we will be having one of our hugely enjoyable Discovery weeks, based on the theme of autumn.

We will remind you of the question of the week and the key aspects of our weekly curriculum (including the focus for our maths and phonics work) using Class Dojo. This will support you to be fully involved in your child's learning at home.

We will be cooking and baking throughout this term, so if there are any foods which your child should not eat for any reason, please let your child's teacher know as soon as possible if you have not already done so.

As we mentioned at the meeting for parents last term, we intend to spend the first few weeks in school concentrating on settling the children into their new classes and getting to know them. We are gradually introducing our programme of teaching **phonics**, and we will be sending out more information about that as we have settled the children into school. We are hoping to spend some time with your child in the coming weeks choosing a suitable book to send home to read with you if they do not already have one. We will send further information about **reading at home** and changing reading books when we do.

We also mentioned at the meeting for parents that we will be sending the children home with their **water bottles** every day. *Please* ensure that you return the filled bottle to the correct container on every morning.

Please put a white t shirt, a black pair of shorts and a pair of plimsolls into a drawstring P.E. bag for the children to change into when we start to do P.E. lessons. We cannot stress enough how important it is that the bag, and every item in it is **clearly named** – otherwise it can be difficult to ensure that every child will have all their belongings returned to them if they go astray. The P.E. bag should be left hanging on your child's peg; we will send it home half termly for washing.

May we remind parents of children in Sycamore Class in particular that children should **not** play on the climbing frame or with any equipment in the Nursery yard before or after school. Also, if your child has younger siblings, please be aware that space in our cloakroom areas is extremely limited so we would ask you please to leave prams and buggies outside when you are saying goodbye to your children.

At the start of the school year we always aim to adapt our curriculum in response to the needs of our youngest pupils. We prioritise our time with the children to help us to build relationships effectively and to establish routines successfully in a calm and unhurried way. Nonetheless, starting school is still a very busy time for such young children and from experience we

anticipate them becoming increasingly tired. Please support us in school by ensuring that your child is well rested at home, and do not be surprised if the novelty of coming to school every day starts to wear off soon! Tiredness *may* become manifest by your child becoming more reluctant to come to school or less happy to part from you in the morning. This is something that we experience regularly and is not at all unusual. You can help by remaining positive yourself, and helping your child to manage their feelings of tiredness by focussing on the things that they enjoy and look forward to. If you have any concerns, please speak to your child's teacher.

As always, if any of you has any information, resources or expertise to support us in our learning, we would be delighted to hear from you. We welcome parent helpers in school, so if you have time to come in and support us on a more regular basis, we would be very grateful. If you have any questions regarding our work in the unit, please feel free to ask us at any time.

We are looking forward to a busy and exciting term.

The Reception Team.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Hemsley', written in a cursive style.

Miss J. Hemsley
Head Teacher