

17th September 2018

Dear Parents and carers,

Welcome to Foundation Stage! We hope you will be happy with how your child is settling in. With lots of new faces to cope with, new routines and very busy days there is lots for the children (and for you!) to take on board, so please have a word with us if you have any worries, so we can deal with them as quickly as possible.

Our topic this term is "Transport and The Emergency Services". We will be exploring this through all seven areas of the curriculum. We will be investigating travelling on foot and road safety, by road, the emergency services (with a particular focus on the Fire Service), travelling by train, travelling through the air, in fact travelling anywhere and everywhere! We will be visiting Maltby Fire Station in Rotherham after October break, to learn first-hand about the emergency services! The visit will be on Friday 9th of November and details of this visit will be sent out later on in the term. It would be lovely if any parents, who work in the travel industry, or who work for the emergency services, would be willing to talk to the children about their role in the community. Let me know if any of you think this would be possible. I have attached a brief outline of our learning objectives for each area of the Foundation Stage Curriculum.

I am sure that there are lots of things you may want to ask about, so I thought I would try and pre-empt some of your questions below, and also highlight some of the things that will help things run more smoothly on a day to day basis!

Snack and Refreshments

The children have a fruit snack each morning along with milk or water. We have provided each child with their own water bottle, which they should take home each day to be washed or refilled. We are encouraging the children at all times to develop their independence, so we will try and remind the children to fill their own water bottles if they need to. If your child would like to bring a healthy snack (preferably fresh or dried fruit, or a vegetable snack) for the afternoon, they can put it in their drawer when they come in each morning. This is helpful as the children do get hungry in the afternoon! We are a 'nut free classroom' so please don't send any snacks that do or may contain nuts. This also applies on school visits, to safeguard children with an allergy to nuts, when we are out and about.

Arriving at school & home time

Our doors are open at 8.40am for you to come in and help your child settle at an activity. Feel free to stay with your child for a story or game or until you feel the time is right to go! We aim to register the children on the carpet at about 9.00am, so please say your goodbyes before then so we can start our school day!

At home time (3.15pm) we ask the children not to leave the carpet until one of us has seen the person who is picking them up, and we have said their name. For the children's safety, please wait until your child has been given the go-ahead to leave the carpet; please be patient with us as we match grown-ups to children - we will get there in the end!

The children each share a drawer by the window where they can put their pictures, snack, reading book folder etc - please encourage your child to remember to take home their belongings or uneaten fruit each day!

Coats, book bags, jumpers etc

Could you also please ensure that your child's coats, jumpers, wellies, cardigans etc. have their name written inside; it is very hard to match clothes to their rightful owners with no names inside! Could you also please ensure you take the right school coat home each night, as they can easily be muddled up on coat pegs! A young child sometimes finds a keyring useful to identify their coat. Each child has a box underneath their peg which they can use for their jumpers or gloves, scarves etc when the weather gets cooler. **Please could your child bring a pair of wellies for outdoor play, as our outdoor area can get very muddy! These can be left on the blue welly trolley.**

PE

For the first half term, as the children settle in, we will be getting our physical exercise from the outdoor curriculum, in our wonderful recently developed outdoor area! We will start our PE sessions after the Autumn half term, but will let you know nearer the time which day they have to bring their PE clothes. Initially, PE will be in the main hall, so the children won't need pumps until the spring term. Any children who attend breakfast club will be brought to foundation by our sports coach. Any children doing afterschool clubs will be taken down to the hall by one of our members of staff. They will of course need a PE kit on those days.

Phonics & Reading Schemes

We follow the Letters and Sounds scheme of phonics, but use the Jolly Phonics actions and stories to support this. We will be holding a meeting about the Literacy curriculum later in the term to explain in detail how we teach the children in the classroom, and how you can help at home. The children will all have a sound book to take home each day, so that they can reinforce their learning with a simple activity at home. We place a lot of emphasis on forming the letters correctly, so even if your child knows their sounds we will be encouraging them to practise the formation of the letters.

Once the children have begun to develop their blending skills and have some "tricky word" recognition, they will bring a reading book home which we choose for them and change twice a week. Our reading books are all now 'Book Banded', so you have an understanding of the 'coloured level' they are reading at. However, if your child is already keen to take a reading book home to share with you, please feel free to take a book from one of our 'choose' reading book boxes. All children will be provided with a plastic reading wallet. We will also be starting very soon a lending library for phonics games and story books!

Key Person

As part of the Early Years Foundation Stage, we have to assign each child a Key Person. A Key Person supports each child's development and acts as a key point of contact with the child's parents or carers. We do stress that we are all available for everyone - please feel free to come to either one of us - myself or Mrs Kiddy or Miss Dunkley - if you have any queries or information that you think we may need. We communicate with each other at all times and all information is shared as a team. We will assign a small part of our timetable to sessions whereby the children work with their key person, for example, in circle time, a phonics session, or story time, which will give the children extra opportunities to talk/listen in a smaller group. We will let you know who your child's key person is once all the children have settled in and we have got to know their needs and interests.

Can you help with our many collections?

We collect bottle tops, corks, plain yogurt pots, margarine tubs, and cardboard boxes for junk modelling, old birthday cards, and also children's magazines to read outdoors. Thank you every little helps!

Apologies if you feel you have been bombarded with information! Please don't hesitate to ask if you have any other questions and thank you for your patience at this busy time of year!

With best wishes

Mrs J Walsh, Mrs K Kiddy, Miss T Dunkley

The Foundation Team