

**St Joseph's Catholic Primary School**  
**Foundation Stage – Autumn term (1<sup>st</sup> half) 2023**



Welcome to the Autumn Term!

After a happy and busy first week in Foundation, we hope you and your child are beginning to feel settled and very much a part of this year's Foundation Stage at St Joseph's School. Your children have been amazing and we are so proud of the way they have coped with the start to the term. Our main priorities for the next few weeks are to ensure that everyone settles in well, friendships are built and that we have lots of fun exploring together. The children will learn about the expectations and routines of Oak Class.

Our topics will evolve over time and progress in line with the children's own interests. Tapestry and the Foundation Class page on the school website will show you how our topic develops.

<http://www.stjosephsprimaryschool.com/website/foundation>



When the children arrive in the morning they are having to be more independent to sort their belongings. Though they will have some adult support, we shall encourage the children to feel proud when they can achieve things by themselves. This includes taking responsibility for their own possessions. We are establishing routines whereby children are able to ensure snack pots, water bottles and book bags find their place in the classroom. From time to time things may be forgotten or misplaced please ensure that your child's belongings are very clearly named. This helps the adults to quickly identify lost items and return them to your child.

To support your child with independence, please encourage them to put on their coats and shoes by themselves and to learn to eat independently at meal times (when ready using a knife and fork.)

Acorn Class –	
<p>The children have been very engaged during story time and sharing books is an essential part of developing communication and language skills. Through stories children can express their own thoughts and emotions, learn new exciting words and build the foundations for language development.</p> <p>All of the children should have their own book bag and they are very welcome to choose a new book each time they are at Nursery.</p>	

Oak Class -			
Subject	Sent home	Due in	Frequency
Oak Class home learning	Friday (Starting October)	Wednesday	Weekly
<p>Reading</p>	<p>At the moment we are carrying out our Baseline assessments. Once these are complete we will then start our practise read sessions 3 times a week. Meanwhile we will continue to issue 'pleasure books' which are story/non-fiction books for you share with your child each day.</p> <p>Keep an eye out for the new yellow reading record book which will have more information in it. This is where you will be able to record your comments from home.</p> <p>Reading at home is a <b>very</b> important part of your child's education and we hope it will be an enjoyable experience for you all.</p>		

## Reminders for all -

Wellies 	Please ensure your child has a pair of clearly named wellie boots that can be kept in school this will enable the children to explore outside without getting their school shoes muddy!
School lunch 	Oak children are entitled to a free school lunch every day. Please select your menu choices on ParentPay. For Acorn children a school lunch can be ordered at a cost of £2.35, please order on ParentPay. You can send a packed lunch if you prefer.  We promote healthy eating at school and so lunch boxes should not contain more than one chocolate snack and one packet of crisps.
Snack	Children should bring a piece of fresh fruit or vegetables for a snack at break time. <b>We are a nut free school.</b> We have children with potentially fatal allergies in school, therefore no food containing nuts / Sesame may be sent into school. <b>Please ensure the snacks are named by writing their name on the banana / apple skin and ensuring all pots are clearly named.</b>
Drinks	Your child must have a named water bottle in school every day. Please only send in <b>water</b> , no juice or fizzy is allowed.
Bags	Reception, Yr 1 and 2 children must have a book bag in school. This is so books can easily be checked and letters put in. <b>Please provide a change of clothes (in a bag) that will stay in school and left on your child's peg in case of accidents.</b>
Mornings	Our Foundation Stage doors are open from 8:50am. Please pass on any quick messages then, for a longer chat please email or leave a message at the office. Children and parents arriving after 9.00am will be asked to sign in at the office.
After school	Acorn (Nursery) children finish at 3:15pm and Oak (Reception) children finish at 3.30pm. If someone other than yourself is collecting your child please ensure the office has their details. We will not let them leave unless we are sure they are safe. Acorn parents- Please ensure you are on time at 3:15pm as staff have to move through to the Oak room and get things sorted for the After School Club.
Contact details	Please ensure you contact details and those of other people who may collect your child are always kept up to date. Please see the office asap if you change your phone number or address.

## Reception (Oak Class) Baseline-

The reception baseline assessment, or RBA is a short, interactive and practical assessment of your child's early literacy, communication, language and mathematics skills when they begin in school. It will be undertaken with your child's class teacher and will measure your child's progress from reception to year 6. The school, the teachers and you, as parents will not be shared and the data will only be accessed by the DFE. The teacher will be able to spend quality 1-1 time with your child, getting to know them and if they need any further support in certain areas. When your child reaches year 6, you will be able to see the progress your child has made throughout their school journey. If you wish to read further on the reception baseline, then you can find a useful parent booklet here;

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

## Phonics

At St Joseph's we believe that all our children can become fluent readers and writers. This is why we teach reading through **Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised**, which is a systematic and synthetic phonics programme. We start teaching phonics in Nursery/Reception and follow the [Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised progression](#), which

ensures children build on their growing knowledge of the alphabetic code, mastering phonics to read and spell as they move through school.

As a result, all our children are able to tackle any unfamiliar words as they read. At St Joseph's we also model the application of the alphabetic code through phonics in shared reading and writing, both inside and outside of the phonics lesson and across the curriculum. We have a strong focus on language development for our children because we know that speaking and listening are crucial skills for reading and writing in all subjects.

All teachers and teaching assistants in our school has been trained to teach reading, so we have the same expectations of progress. Our aim is to use the same language, routines and resources to teach children to read so that we lower children's cognitive load.

In our Nursery -

We provide a balance of child-led and adult-led experiences for all children that meet the curriculum expectations for 'Communication and language' and 'Literacy'. These include:

- o sharing high-quality stories and poems
- o learning a range of nursery rhymes and action rhymes
- o activities that develop focused listening and attention, including oral blending
- o attention to high-quality language.

In Reception -

We teach phonics for 30 minutes a day. In Reception, we build from 10-minute lessons, with additional daily oral blending games, to the full-length lesson as quickly as possible. Each Friday, we review the week's teaching to help children become fluent readers.

Children make a strong start in Reception: teaching begins in Week 2 / 3 of the Autumn term.

We follow the [Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised expectations of progress](#):

- o Children in Reception are taught to read and spell words using Phase 2 and 3 GPCs, and words with adjacent consonants (Phase 4) with fluency and accuracy.
- o Children in Year 1 review Phase 3 and 4 and are taught to read and spell words using Phase 5 GPCs with fluency and accuracy.

See below for progression and parent advice sheets.

Children are assessed every 6 weeks. This helps us to identify children that need 'keep up' and 'catch up' sessions. Any child who needs additional practice has Keep-up support, taught by a fully trained adult. Keep-up lessons match the structure of class teaching, and use the same procedures, resources and mantras, but in smaller steps with more repetition, so that every child secures their learning.

We recognise the importance of passing information between parents and school so please remember our door is always open and you can come and talk to us if you have any questions and concerns.

We are looking forward to a fun term ahead.

Yours sincerely,

The Foundation Stage Team.