






Hello!

I hear that you are going to be starting in Reception Class at Kenilworth Primary School in September. September is still a little while away, so I thought I'd write a letter to you to let you know how much I am looking forward to having you in my class. I best introduce myself; I'm Miss Steeden and I am going to be one of your Reception Class teachers! I say one of your teachers as there are a few other adult faces you will need to know in our class. I will be teaching you on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday and then Mrs Manning will be teaching you on Wednesday afternoons. Mrs Burrows will be your teacher on Thursday and Friday. We also have an amazing Early Years Practitioner in our class called Mrs Kenney, and a super Learning Support Assistant called Mrs Baker (who we share with Nursery) and they are both in *alllll* week! They think I'm a bit cheeky when I say that to them!

				
Miss Steeden Teacher Mon, Tues, Weds	Mrs Manning Foundation Lead and SENDCo Weds PM	Mrs Burrows Teacher Thurs, Fri	Mrs Kenney Early Years Practitioner (EYP) All week	Mrs Baker Learning Support Assistant All week

Let me tell you a little bit about myself. I am Miss Steeden and as well as a teacher, I have 4 children of my own. I like to think that having lots of children means that I know what most children enjoy. There is a lot of Paw Patrol, Disney Princesses, LOL dolls and Toy Story in my house! I also enjoy being outside and really enjoy outdoor learning, in all weathers. You'll definitely need wellies in the cooler months and a sun hat in the hotter months as we will be outside puddle jumping, painting with mud, going on nature scavenger hunts and planting flowers and vegetables. I also like craft and DIY so I will be interested to see what you might be able to craft, draw and create in the classroom. Basically, Miss Steeden likes messy play - as long as you tidy up afterwards!

Although I enjoy many popular children's stories and books like *The Gruffalo*, *Hairy Maclary* from Donaldson's Dairy, *The Hungry Caterpillar* and many more, I have chosen one of my favourite stories for you to listen to with your adult at home. It's yours to keep! It's called *The Koala Who Could* and I read it to my own children hoping that they will learn from Koala in the story. I hope you really enjoy it, and I shall look forward to reading it to you when you are in the classroom - maybe you will even join in with the words that you know.

You may have lots of different emotions about starting school - you might be super excited, you may have a worried belly, you might be ready to say "Hello" to everyone but you might also be shy. All of these feelings are normal, and after listening to your *Koala Who Could* story, then I hope you believe you could, and will be open to the new change and the exciting challenge of starting in Reception class. We will learn lots and lots but we will have so much fun whilst we are doing it!

All of your teachers are looking forward to seeing you soon, and looking forward to an amazing year ahead in our class.

Miss Steeden, Mrs Manning, Mrs Burrows, Mrs Kenney and Mrs Baker.

Dear Parents/Carers

We are sending your child this book to help them prepare for their first days in Reception.

We hope you will share it with your child by talking about the pictures together, predicting what might happen in the story, and talking about the feelings of Koala.

The Koala Who Could will be the first story that we focus on in class, and we hope that by gifting this story to your child, it will help transition as it will be something familiar in class, as well as being a story that they will be confident with, so it may help them with oral contributions.

The story is primarily focusing on the feelings of Koala and it will be a good idea to use this story as a starting point for talking about the change of going to school, and how your child might feel about this. Preparing for change with your child will help with their transition into full time school.

These are some ways in which you might prepare your child:

- Start to practise recognising their written name. Their coat pegs, trays, work, clothing etc. will all have their name on so it will help them immensely if they know what that looks like.
- If you do decide to start any letter writing with your child, please focus on writing their name before anything else, and ensure that the only time a capital letter is used is for the beginning of their name (or at the beginning of a sentence). We teach phonics using the lower case alphabet.
- Singing, dancing and making music together (pots, pans and spoons make great instruments)
- Encourage them to draw lots of pictures and praise the results, whatever they look like!
- It will help them to feel more confident in school when they can use the toilet independently. Please always pack spares as even a child who has been confident with toileting can have accidents with the change.
- It will also be a great help for them (and for us) if they can take off and put on their coat, jumper and shoes by themselves. Practising zips and buttons in particular will really help with independence.
- Your child will be sharing toys with other children, if this is something they haven't needed to do so far then maybe you could get them used to it by sharing their toys with you.
- Your child may like to leave their toys out after playing when at home (for mummy, daddy or whoever to tidy up). If this is the case, then now is the time for your child to practise tidying up as this is expected in school. We like to play the Tidy Up Rhumba at school. You may want to play this at home when tidying toys away.

Our Phonics scheme is The Song of Sounds. We sing this every day in school so that they get used to the letter sounds. We do not expect you to be pre teaching phonics to your child, however if your child already has started learning phonics and is enthused by letters then they may want to learn the song and actions. It's pretty catchy and you'll be singing it yourself in no time! You can find it on YouTube <https://youtu.be/48uf9I6P2xQ>. You can help your child with their phonics (Phase 1) by singing nursery rhymes and reading rhyming stories and talking about which words rhyme. You might also want to play a version of I-Spy with robot talk (where you sound out a word for your child to guess) e.g. I spy a c-u-p.

As for numbers, singing number songs will help them to learn the correct order ('1,2,3,4,5, once I caught a fish alive') and counting back (5 little ducks). When out and about maybe point to the door numbers and/or price tags in shops, look at patterns and shapes in the environment, look at coins in your purse or wallet, share sweets or raisins evenly, bake cakes weighing ingredients out etc. Your child doesn't need to be doing any of the workbooks you see in shops, just become Maths Detectives and see what Maths there is in the world around us.

We will be working on all of these skills in Reception so please don't worry if your child isn't doing any of this yet or if some of this sounds a bit overwhelming.

In the first Term our main focus will be Personal, Social and Emotional Development. Above everything we want them to be happy in school and to enjoy the company of other children, to be able to work and play together and to get used to the rules and routines of our unit. A happy, settled child is much more willing, ready and eager to learn. We will also have a huge focus on Communication and Language so the children will talk about things in detail, they may use story language to retell a story, they may be learning new vocabulary and adjectives when looking in our Collections boxes (spoons, buttons etc). You can help this skill by practising what your child might want to say about

a Show and Tell item and ask questions about it. You could do a Show and Tell for them and see if they can ask you questions.

We are looking very much forward to welcoming your child into our Reception Class and to working together with you to achieve the best possible outcome for your child.

Kind regards,

Miss Steeden, Mrs Manning, Mrs Burrows, Mrs Kenney and Mrs Baker