Welcome to Reception

September 2023

Dear parents and carers,

Welcome to Reception and St Bernadette’s Catholic Primary School. We would like to take the opportunity to say what a pleasure it has been to welcome your little ones into our school. It has been lovely seeing the children coming into school with big smiles and looking so smart in their school uniform. We have been delighted with how well they have come into school and we know they will continue to amaze us as the year progresses! We are looking forward to helping them grow and develop this year.

We wanted to take this opportunity to highlight some information and to tell you a little about the routines and activities happening in Reception class this year.

**The Curriculum**

The Early Years Foundation Stage is split into 7 areas of learning. It is a large play based curriculum which aims to develop the whole child. Children will learn through play and will be accessing a range of activities both independently and adult led. We will have various ‘themes’ throughout the year and will also take into account children’s needs and interest when planning. You will be able to find information about the theme for each half term on our school website on the reception class page. Our theme for the first part of the Autumn term is ‘All About Me!’ The children will be learning all about themselves, their families, where they live and much more! We will also begin to look at the season of Autumn and Harvest.

**Uniform**

The children have started school looking very smart in their new uniforms. Many of the jumpers and items we have come across have been labelled but we would like to remind any parents that haven’t yet labelled their child’s clothing and belongings to do so. Please label everything they wear, including their shoes so we can easily care for their belongings. We would also like to ask parents to ensure children’s hair is tied back at all times. Thank you for your support.

Could we ask you also include in their book bags a spare change of clothes in case of any accidents particularly underwear and socks.

**Snack and Lunch time**

**Snack:** A range of fresh fruit will be available for the children throughout the day, closing the snack area 30 minutes before lunchtime. There is a water bottle station within the snack area for your child to access whenever they want a drink. The children must take their water bottle home at the end of every day to be washed and refilled. The children are only to have water in their water bottles but may have a separate fruit juice or squash bottle if they have a packed lunch. Children receive free milk in school too and this is available as and when the children choose to have it.

**Lunch:** All children in Reception, Years 1 and 2 are entitled to free school meals. The children will pick their own lunch each morning in school. Where possible, please look at the choices with your child so they are aware of the choices for the day. If you decide to send your child with a packed lunch please ensure it is labelled.

**PE Kits**

The children will be participating in P.E. activities on a Thursday and a Monday. Every Monday and Thursday children should come to school wearing their school PE kits. All long hair must be tied up and all earrings must be removed.

**Forest School**

The children will have forest school on a Wednesday in Spring 1 and a Wednesday in Summer 1 term. The session will take place over in our school garden with our forest school teacher – Mrs Topping, The children come to school in their own clothes and must bring spare clothes and wellies in a labelled bag, Waterproofs will be provided by school however please ensure your child has enough layers of clothes to keep them warm. Mrs Topping’s advice is dress like an onion – lots of thin layers to keep the warmth in, including wearing two pairs of socks. We will be outside in all weathers – rain, wind, sun and we need to ensure your child is dressed appropriately to make the most of the session. Any questions please ask.

**Reading books**

Your child will have a home/school diary which must come into school every day. Please use this diary to write notes, comments when listening to your child read or ask any questions. It is a great tool for communication between home and school and allows us to know how your child is getting on with their reading at home and we will also write sounds or key words your child may be struggling with so you can support them at home. Although your child will be taught to read at school, you can have a huge impact on their reading journey by continuing their practice at home.

Your child will soon be receiving their first reading book. This book will be a picture book without any words. Please enjoy sharing this book with your child, encouraging them to use the pictures to tell the story. Children will have a few weeks of books without words whilst we begin our phonics teaching. Picture books help children to develop their story telling skills, vocabulary and imagination. At first children might find it tricky to ‘tell the story’ but with support from adults at home they very often become wonderful, imaginative storytellers!

When the children have acquired some skills in recognising letters and sounding out words, they will have a book with short, simple sentences. We recommend reading with your child every day at home in order to build your child’s confidence and reading fluency. In addition to reading books, you will receive a Little Wandle phonics home learning sheet every Friday. This sheet will provide you with the sounds your child has learnt that week and any tricky words they have been introduced too.

Two sharing books will be sent home each week and changed every **Monday**. Your child will pick two books from the correct reading box they would like to read. Alongside the reading books, the children will be sent home with a Little Wandle reading practice book. Your child will have read this book 3 times in school and should be able to read this book confidently. The reading practice book will be sent home on a **Thursday** and collected on a **Monday**. These books are the Little Wandle phonic scheme we follow and any books lost and not returned will need to be paid for as all books are part of a set.

The children will also have the opportunity to visit our school library and choose a book they can take home and enjoy with family members for the week. All books must be returned by Friday for the children to return their book to the library and choose a new one.

**Show and tell**

On a Tuesday your child will be able to take part in a show and tell session. Show and Tell sessions are so valuable for your child’s learning and development – they develop speaking and listening skills, gain confidence and develop their social skills. Your children will be invited to bring something into school to show to the class and talk about it. (It can be anything they are interested in but please make sure they are able to say why they have chosen this particular item) Children will be allocated their week for show and tell to make it manageable in class and to ensure everyone gets a turn. We will send a slip home in their diary to inform you when it is your child’s turn to bring their show and tell into school.

If children have something that they are particularly proud of, for example a piece of work they have done at home or a certificate they have received for something outside of school then we are more than happy to show this at any time and they do not have to wait for their designated show and tell time on a Tuesday.

Our main aim of to make sure your child is happy, healthy and achieves their full potential in all areas. We will do everything possible to make sure your child is excited to come to school and that their education is fun and interactive.

If you have any questions please feel free to speak to myself at the school gate or leave a note in your child’s diary.

Miss Gooch