



## **This week in Foundation stage...**

We have had a busy week in school. Thank you to all those who came to the meeting on Wednesday. Some simple notes from the meeting are at the end of this letter. The children have talked and 'written' about their first days in school and have been busy getting to know their new friends. They have been doing lots of listening games and sound discrimination activities, as well as making collage versions of themselves to sit in 'the birthday train'. Nuthatch class loved decorating biscuits and Robins will do the same next week.

## **Next week**

The children will start listening to stories which feature characters from the *Oxford Reading Tree* reading scheme. They will start learning about the coloured Numicon shapes which we use in much of their maths and number work and we will focus on the number 3 through traditional tales such as *The Three Billy Goats Gruff*, *The Three Little Pigs* and *Goldilocks and the Tree Bears*.

## **At home...**

Why not prepare your child for the traditional tales by sharing some of the stories. For example, there is a lovely version of *The Three Little Pigs* on You Tube!

## **Reminders...**

Milk - even though milk is free of charge for 4 year olds, please remember to register online, otherwise your child will not get milk.

## **Meeting - Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> September**

- **Phonics and sound books**  
Each week we will be introducing 4 new sounds - known as phonemes - to the children. They will learn an action and a song to go with each sound. These are 'pure' sounds which will help with word building and it is important that adults also demonstrate these sounds correctly. Don't be afraid to ask if you are not sure. They will bring home a folder containing the 4 new phonemes every Thursday. The sheets are to help children identify words which begin with this phoneme. They can then practise writing them using the school script. It is important that you sit with your child whilst s/he practises to ensure the correct letter formation and pencil grip is used. Pencils or felt pens are best for this - please do not use biro!
- **Handwriting**  
This year we are modifying the script we use with the reception children. We will continue to have a 'lead out' to encourage smooth joining of letters later on, but will no

## Foundation Stage Newsletter 20.09.19

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longer use the 'lead ins'. The children should be encouraged to use a tripod/Birdy Beak pencil grip.

- **High frequency words**

As we introduce the sounds, we will also be sending home HFWs. Some of these are phonically regular, but many cannot be sounded out so we call them 'tricky words.' Two of these will be sent home each week to be played with and practised. You can play simple, active games with your child to help them learn these words such as matching or pairs games. Short and sweet is better than the children getting bored or upset.

- **Word of the week**

Some weeks we will also explore a Word of the Week when we will introduce a special word which the children will not be expected to write or necessarily read, but is there as a vocabulary building exercise. For example, we will start with Believe, Care, Persevere and Succeed. We will use the word as much as possible in lots of different situations in order to help the children begin to understand the meaning.

- **ORT reading books and games**

The first books that the children bring home do not contain words. These books come with a script for parents to tell the story and ideas for questions. Don't feel that you have to stick to the exact script - they can be a bit long! They will also be bringing home games to help them recognise the names of the main characters in the story. Once they recognise all of the names, the children will begin to bring home books with a few words in.

- **Reading diary and additional books**

Each child will have a red reading diary to record home reading. Please date and sign the diary each time your child practises reading with you at home and add any comments you wish to make. Teachers will also record in this diary when they have read individually with your child at school.

The children will bring home a reading diary, their ORT book and an additional book from a different scheme to add variety. All these books should be kept in the book bag and only changed by your child's teacher.

- **Reading with your child**

Keep these sessions short, comfortable and enjoyable. Sometimes your child may be too tired to read at the end of a school day - you know your child best and an alternative time of day may be more successful. Encourage your child to point carefully underneath each word as it is read and follow with your finger above the text until your child is able to point accurately for themselves. Remember that it is just as important for your child to talk about the book as it is to read the words.

- **Home readers**

If you would like additional books for your child to read, please select one of the correct colour band from the home reading section. The teacher will indicate in the red reading diaries which colour band they should be choosing from. These extra readers can be found at the bottom of the stairs leading to Wagtail and Woodpecker classes and can be changed as often as you wish. These should not be ORT books.

- **Library books**

## Foundation Stage Newsletter 20.09.19

---

The children will choose a book with their teachers from the school library once a week - Nuthatch and Robins on Mondays. Please make sure they bring their library books to school on the appropriate day as they will not be able to borrow another book until the previous one has been returned.

- **Reading rainbow**

We use the reading rainbow as an incentive for children to read their school reading books regularly at home. We will be sending details of this home later, when all children have been issued with a reading book.

- **Numbers**

Look out for numbers in the environment and encourage accurate counting one-to-one - not just reciting the numbers.

- **Sharing Assembly**

Every Wednesday at 9:05 there is a whole school assembly to which parents are invited. Children from each class show some work they have been doing that week. Weekly awards are celebrated and children who have had their birthdays that week blow out their candles. At the moment only small groups of foundation stage children are attending these assemblies.

- **'Wow' moments**

In order to help us make our assessments of what each child can do, we need parental input. Look out for the WOW display where you will find post its that you can fill in when you notice something new that your child can do and add them to our celebratory display.