



West Hill Primary School
 (a partner in the SMILE Learning Trust)
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Reception Class Curriculum Letter

Autumn Term 2018

Dear Parents

Welcome to Reception Class!

Now that the children have spent a few days at school and are settling in well, we would like to take the opportunity to give you a little information about the children's learning for this term. For those of you who are new to the school, we send out a 'curriculum letter' at the start of each term. We believe strongly that education is a partnership between school and home and this is one way in which we can keep you informed about the different topics the children will be following.

Our two main topics for this term are '**All about me**' and '**Light and Colour**'. These will be the main focus for a 'cross-curricular' approach, linking different areas of learning.

During the Reception Year much of the learning occurs through practical activities, games and structured play, with an emphasis on speaking, listening, developing independence, and social skills.

	Purpose	Ways to help at home:
Personal, social and emotional development	Personal, social and emotional development is of utmost importance in the early years and activities are designed to promote an excitement and enthusiasm for learning, build confidence to try new activities as well as maintaining attention and concentration. The children are encouraged to develop an awareness of their own needs as well as being sensitive to, and respecting, the needs of others. Group activities develop the ability to take turns and share fairly, understand the needs for rules of behaviour and consider the consequences of words and actions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Play games that encourage sharing and taking turns e.g. board games, skittles etc.</i> ▪ <i>Discuss and label feelings such as sadness, happiness, feeling cross, lonely, scared or worried.</i> ▪ <i>Talk about the importance of personal hygiene – praise hand washing and independent care of themselves. Bath dolls.</i>
Communication, language and literacy	Communication, language and literacy includes learning to listen attentively and to take turns in conversations and discussions, developing the ability to speak audibly and clearly with growing confidence. We will explore a wide variety of stories, songs, rhymes and poems, linking all areas of the curriculum. Reading and writing skills are developed through the learning of letter sounds for building and segmenting words, as well as whole word recognition. Letters are learned in conjunction with handwriting skills, developing the children's ability to use writing tools effectively and to form letters correctly. We have attached a sheet detailing correct letter formation which may be useful if your child wishes to practise at home. Please read as much as possible to and with your child; sharing books is essential for developing reading skills as well as a love of books!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Look for labels, signs and letters in the environment.</i> ▪ <i>Share rhymes, books and stories as much as possible – sing nursery and action rhymes together.</i> ▪ <i>Encourage taking turns in conversation, listening to others and waiting until someone else has finished speaking.</i> ▪ <i>Spot letters that we've learnt in books or around the home.</i> ▪ <i>Play 'Eye Spy' – listening for initial letters</i> ▪ <i>Just enjoy sharing books!</i>



<p style="text-align: center;">Mathematics</p>	<p>Our learning will focus on counting and recognising numbers, counting objects reliably and accurately, as well as counting in other contexts, such as clapping sounds or hopping movements. Other activities include familiarisation with solid and flat shapes, recognising and recreating simple patterns, investigating and comparing measurements and developing the vocabulary to describe position, direction and movement. There is an emphasis on practical activities using a wide variety of games and equipment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Play games such as 'Snakes and Ladders' to help with counting accurately, and recognising and ordering numerals.</i> ▪ <i>Sing counting rhymes and read stories involving counting.</i> ▪ <i>Look for numbers, shapes and patterns in the environment.</i> ▪ <i>Collect a specified number of objects when shopping or out on a walk.</i> ▪ <i>Encourage the use of everyday words to describe position e.g. under, behind, next to, etc.</i>
<p style="text-align: center;">Understanding the World</p>	<p>Our learning begins by looking at ourselves, with a particular focus on what we need to stay healthy. We will think about healthy eating, staying clean, where we live and what we like. We begin to develop a sense of time, differentiating between past and present by looking at how our bodies grow and change. We consider our immediate environment by exploring our school surroundings and going on a walk around the village.</p> <p>Later in the term our focus is 'light and colour'. We will investigate sources of light and the use of colour and light in festivals and celebrations. We will look at the importance of celebrations in our lives and explore the Christian festivals of Harvest and Christmas, as well as festivals from other cultures and religions. We use technology to support our learning in the form of computers, cameras and programmable toys.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Go on a listening walk or look for objects of a specific colour.</i> ▪ <i>Explore and discuss the texture of various objects around the house or in the garden.</i> ▪ <i>Investigate the scent and taste of different kinds of food and discuss which ones you like or dislike.</i> ▪ <i>Talk about favourite foods.</i> ▪ <i>Notice different types of buildings and houses and their features.</i> ▪ <i>Notice and discuss how things change over time, e.g. signs of autumn and winter in the garden and how it gets dark earlier.</i> ▪ <i>Use simple computer activities or programmable toys.</i>
<p style="text-align: center;">Expressive arts and design</p>	<p>Our activities continue the theme of colour by exploring the effects of mixing primary colours for painting pictures and printing patterns. We will also make models with salt dough and make Christmas cards and decorations which require experimenting with cutting and joining techniques. We have a variety of construction toys which are widely used during practical and play activities and the children plan and construct their own models using 'found' materials. All of these activities are designed to develop and refine motor skills and co-ordination, as well as creative expression. Music plays an important part in the curriculum and, as well as singing together. We experiment with a variety of percussion instruments, as well as listening and responding to music through movement and dance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Give opportunities for painting and modelling activities.</i> ▪ <i>Listen to a variety of music, maybe while travelling in the car.</i> ▪ <i>Encourage acting out stories or imaginary and everyday situations.</i> ▪ <i>Talk about the models your child makes and the pictures they draw.</i>
<p style="text-align: center;">Physical development</p>	<p>Physical development focuses on developing body awareness, using different parts of the body and exploring a variety of ways of travelling. The children will develop a safe use of space as well as listening, responding and co-operative skills. We also practise using equipment such as beanbags, balls and hoops to refine and develop motor skills. As part of our topic work we discuss the changes and effects of exercise on our bodies. Physical development also includes being able to dress independently, as well as managing personal hygiene.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Help with cutting out pictures in catalogues or magazines, discussing how to handle scissors safely.</i> ▪ <i>Encourage correct use of a knife and fork.</i> ▪ <i>Play throwing and catching games and encourage balancing and climbing safely on play equipment at the park or in the garden, as well as on bikes and scooters.</i> ▪ <i>Use a range of pens, pencils, crayons, chalks etc to make marks, trace lines and draw.</i>

We hope that you find this letter helpful. Please don't hesitate to come and speak to us if you have any questions. Likewise, if you would like to share some of your ideas and the activities you've done, we'd love to hear about them!

Yours sincerely,

Emma Powley, Louise Stevens and Elaine Adams