



West Hill Primary School
(a partner in the SMILE Learning Trust)
Beech Park, West Hill, Ottery St Mary, Devon EX11 1UQ
01404 812599
admin@west-hill-primary.devon.sch.uk
Headteacher: Cheryl Boulton



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Year 1 Autumn Curriculum newsletter

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Class 1 after what has been a strange year for everybody, with some children not being in a classroom since March! It has been lovely to hear all about your home learning from Mrs Powley and Mrs Stevens, and I am excited for everything ahead of us in Year 1.

Unfortunately, it is not possible for us to hold our usual 'Meet the Teacher' evening and be able to meet you all in person, but hopefully you have already seen me at collection time and can at least put a face to a name! In the meantime, I have provided a quick overview of the main information for Class 1, as well as our autumn curriculum, which I hope you will all find useful.

Introduction and key objectives

My name is Mr Sapwell, and Mrs Broad is our teaching assistant, who is with us every day except Monday and Friday afternoons. In addition, teaching in Class 1 is Mrs Totten who takes the class on a Wednesday morning whilst I am out of class for PPA time (Planning, Preparation and Assessment).

Year 1 is a very important year for your child as they transition from play-based learning in Reception to more formal, structured lessons throughout the rest of the school. As we return post lockdown, this transition becomes even more essential and we have tailored our teaching to take into account the amount of school the children have missed. This means that the beginning of the year will look like a hybrid of play-based learning and more structured lessons concentrating on plugging gaps, whilst still pushing those children who are ready for the Year 1 syllabus.

Our key Year 1 objectives, however, remain the same:

- To teach children to read
- To consolidate and build on learning from Reception
- To continue to develop independence and concentration skills
- To continue to develop social skills, co-operation, empathy and kindness towards others
- To encourage a love of learning and fascination in the world around them.

Behaviour, rewards and sanctions

In school, we will be continuing a very similar system of rewards and sanctions as was in place for the children in Reception. Every child is in a house group (Moorland, Bendarroch, Warren or Elsdon) and good behaviour, effort or excellent work can earn house points, which are added to an overall school total. The winning house is rewarded with a trophy at the end of each term. We are also big fans of stickers in Year 1, which are used alongside house points to reward positive behaviour.

If there is any unacceptable behaviour in the class, then the child in question will receive a verbal warning, which escalates to a name on the board and then 'ticks' if more poor behaviour is seen throughout the day. Sanctions start with missing 5 minutes of playtime for a name and a tick, up to visiting Mrs Boulton should the behaviour continue to persist. There may be times, for instance if the behaviour turns physical, that it is appropriate to skip steps and go straight to a more serious consequence.

Returning to more positive matters, we will continue to promote and reward our 'learning behaviours' this year. These behaviours are promoted throughout the school and are reinforced through weekly certificates in class



and regular assemblies exploring each behaviour. We look for the children to show Independence, Resilience, Problem solving, Motivation and Co-operation, and it would be great for this vocabulary and message to be used at home.

Reading and Assessment

Reading is such an integral part of Year 1 and is something that I am very passionate about. Whether we are reading a book together as a class, using our comprehension skills to find information or enjoying our own storybooks, we look to promote not just confidence in decoding and understand but also a real love of reading. At present, we are assessing the different reading and phonic abilities of your children whilst also considering the best way to safely provide home books for you at home. As a result, we will not be sending home reading books until week 4 (week beginning 28/09), but are still very much encouraging you to read books from home together and hear your child read regularly. In week 4 we will also be sending home books bought by the PTFA. These books have been chosen to be read together, and cover a wide range of some of the very best books for Year 1.

In Year 1, the children will also be undertaking the Phonics Screening Check. This is a national assessment that looks at the children's knowledge of the phonics curriculum and their ability to blend sounds when decoding a new word. The check is undertaken in June and generally, the children enjoy the experience as they get one on one attention and it only involves reading! There will be more information about this as the year goes on, but for now keep working on those phonic sounds that your child learnt in Reception at home.

Forest School

Forest School is one of the highlights of any Year 1 week, and this year we intend to start Forest School next week (Thurs 24/09). Forest School takes place on Thursday mornings and is led by Mrs Broad in our on-site Forest School area. We do ask that the children come to school in their Forest School clothes, which they can stay in all day. For this, they will need long trousers and a long-sleeve top or jumper (so they don't get scratched or stung), as well waterproof top and trousers. We ask that children come to school in trainers or school shoes, but bring wellies to wear for Forest School. We do have spare clothes and waterproofs in school, but not enough for everybody so it is important to provide your child with appropriate clothing. As the weather gets colder, we have found that layers are better than one thick jumper, as the children often get hot and want to remove them!

Below is an overview of our curriculum for this term, including ideas for how you can help at home which I hope you will find useful.

English

We are spending a lot of time looking at a variety of books and stories this term and using this to help develop our writing, building on the basic skills we learnt in Reception. We will look at two books the children may well be familiar with in the form of *Handa's surprise* and *Peace at last*, as well as Autumnal poems and non-fiction texts. On top of this we will be spending a lot of time focusing on our letter formation and presentation. We will continue to develop our phonic knowledge by revising work from Reception and working through Phonic Phase 4 and Phase 5.

We will learn to:

- retell stories and order events using story language
- improve our comprehension by finding main events, characters and specific information in simple texts.
- listen with sustained concentration, building our vocabulary and understanding of new words.
- compose and write simple sentences independently, using our phonetic spelling and developed punctuation.
- develop our ability to read and enjoy simple texts, including our own writing.
- write non-fiction labels and captions in autumnal displays.

How you can help – the more time you can spend reading and enjoying books at home, the better at this age. Discuss the plot and different characters as well as encouraging your child to phonetically sound out and decode tricky words. Try to link stories back to their own experiences in order to develop discussion. When writing at home, please ensure that the focus is on letter formation and finger spaces.

Mathematics

Maths continues to build on the basic skills from Reception such as place value, number recognition and basic addition and subtraction. We also begin to introduce new vocabulary and areas of learning such as measure, counting in 5s and time. We will learn to:

- begin counting, reading and writing numbers to 100 and the numbers to 20 in words.
- state the number that is 1 more or less than any given number to 100.
- add and subtract one digit and two digit numbers to 20.
- recall all paired number bonds of 10, then 20.
- recognise, name and describe common 2-D and 3D shapes.
- record and show simple data, with links to the science curriculum.
- count up in twos, fives and tens.

How you can help – make Maths part of everyday life. Look for as many opportunities to ask your child questions such as ‘how many apples in the bowl?’ or ‘if I took away one of your sweets, how many would you have?’ It would also be very useful to look around the house for 2D shapes (flat shapes) and start making Mathematical vocabulary common place.

Science

In science this term we will:

- investigate the human body, including identifying and naming parts of the body and exploring our five senses.
- discuss changes when we and other animals grow older.
- collect data about the differences between us e.g. shoe size, eye colour.
- discuss what humans and animals need to survive.
- investigate the changing seasons and the effects of different weather and seasonal change.

How you can help – encourage scientific discussion using the correct names for parts of our body e.g. heel, wrists and shins. Use their senses as often as possible by asking them how food smells, how an object feels etc. Take the time to look at photos of familiar people (themselves, parents, grandparents) now and when they were younger and discuss how they have changed. As we head into deeper autumn, it provides the perfect opportunity to talk about how the trees and weather are changing with the season.

Geography (before half term)

We are investigating the local environment and area around West Hill. We will be doing a lot of work on simple maps and discussing the difference between physical and man-made features.

How you can help – when walking/driving to school talk about what you are passing and the journey you take. Discuss whether features have occurred naturally or have been made by someone.

History (after half term)

In History we are looking to build upon the children’s understanding of the past and putting lengths of time into perspective. We will be concentrating on Guy Fawkes and the Gunpowder plot in order to discover more about something that happened before we were born, but is still recognised and celebrated now.

How you can help – refer to basic timings when talking about things you’ve done together, e.g. that was a week ago, or we went there a year ago. Discuss the traditions and reasons behind Bonfire Night, particularly if you are attending an event.

Art

In Art this term we are starting to experiment with different mediums and techniques for creating art. We will look at the works of Andy Goldsworthy to investigate using natural resources in our pictures, before thinking about more traditional mediums such as using and mixing colour in painting.

How you can help – look at the different colours and textures in nature. Encourage your child to create different pieces of art at home using a variety of techniques and materials.

DT

We will be having a DT day near Christmas, during which we will be designing and creating our own 'moving' Christmas cards, learning about pivots and levers, whilst developing our motor skills.

How you can help – encourage independence and safety when using scissors, glue, tape etc. Learn about creating simple mechanisms to create movement.

P.S.H.E.

In P.S.H.E. we will be thinking carefully about our own feelings, actions and place in the community. We will be exploring new beginnings and coping with change at the start of the year including thinking about how we all react differently to situations. We will look at ways that we can keep calm when we are upset and how we can tell if other people are upset or sad and how to make them feel better. We will also be thinking about how we are all different and how we need to respect these differences.

How you can help – encourage your child to think about how they are similar and different to their friends, as well as ways to manage their own emotions and friendships more independently.

R.E.

This term's R.E we will be exploring what it means to have faith, as well as considering what God means to Christians. The children will also learn about some key Bible stories such as the story of Christmas.

How you can help – talk to your child at home about different celebrations you have in your own house, religious or otherwise. Discuss why you do different traditions and how these take place.

P.E.

P.E. this term looks at promoting fine motor skills and body awareness through basic movement and sequences. In Gymnastics we will be focusing on different types of movements such as different rolls, as well as creating balance. In our outdoor sessions we will develop basic throwing and catching skills and beginning to apply them to team game situations.

How you can help – simply encouraging as much outdoor play as possible will really help your child's motor skills. The more opportunities they have to think about how to use their body and find balance will stand them in good stead going forwards in P.E.

I am sure you will agree that we have a very busy and exciting term coming up! I hope that this has helped you to understand more of what the curriculum looks like for your child and, more importantly, the ways that you can help at home. Thank you for your continued support and please don't hesitate to email the office if you ever have any queries, and they will pass them on to me.

Kind regards,

Mr Sapwell