

Year 1 Autumn Newsletter 2023

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Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to Year 1! We have really enjoyed getting to know the children this week. As the children transition from Reception to Year 1, we have planned lots of practical activities, including many opportunities for outdoor learning; in order to help the children find their feet in the new Key Stage. The afternoons will still be heavily planned around child initiated learning, in which the children will have access to both of the classrooms and the outdoor area, allowing them to explore different areas to enhance their learning.

Over the Autumn Term, we will learn about Space. Many of our afternoon adult led sessions will be linked to this theme. In Art and Design, we will make junk models of aliens, create underpants based on ‘Aliens Love Underpants’ and think about the features of moon cars. In Science, we will learn about the weather and about different materials. In RE, the children will learn about Sources of Wisdom, Symbols, Actions and Beliefs and Practices. The two PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education) topics for the autumn term are Being Me in My World and then Celebrating Difference.

This term we will be continuing the ‘Little Wandle’ Phonics scheme. The children will improve their phonics skills in daily sessions in order to help them progress with reading, writing and spelling. They will also work on handwriting during both phonics and separate handwriting sessions. We will be teaching the children to write using handwriting lines in order to help with their sizing and formation of letters. In English lessons, we will focus on letter formation and building sentences. We will start by sequencing pictures and writing short sentences based on Aliens Love Underpants and Man on the Moon. In Maths, we will focus heavily on developing understanding of number and place value using a variety of practical resources and interactive games.

For an overview of Topics and Curriculum areas taught this year, as well as more detailed information about each of these, please visit the school website: <https://www.stcatherines.herts.sch.uk/curriculum/>

We also try to regularly update photos of our learning, so keep an eye on it to see what we have been up to during the year.

During reading sessions, the children will be given a book which they will read three times in school. By Thursday they will then bring it home to read over the weekend. *Please ensure that this book is back on Monday in order for the scheme to work properly.* Please try to keep the books in a good condition and be particularly careful of water bottles leaking in the bags. The children will also visit the school Library weekly and will bring a book home to share with an adult. They may not be able to read this book by themselves but it should promote a love of reading and expose the children to a wide variety of texts. Please record in the orange reading record every time you have heard your child read.

After a few weeks, the children will start to bring home short Home Learning tasks that are designed to consolidate their learning in school. They may be given a variety of tasks, including comprehension and handwriting practises. There will also be a Phonics sheet highlighting the words and sounds the children will learn in the upcoming week. It would be great if you could look at this and practise the words and sentences with your child. This will help them progress through the reading scheme and help them to be successful in the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check in June. They will be given short maths tasks for Home Learning once we feel they are ready to receive them. When they bring their Home Learning folders home, please return them to school by the following Thursday so that new tasks can be put in ready to bring home on the Friday. They can keep any previous tasks at home so that the folder does not get too full. Once the children are familiar with Home Learning expectations we will introduce Seesaw. This is an online learning platform which is used throughout the rest of the school. Thereafter children will receive one piece of Home Learning in their folder and one on Seesaw each week. This will enable us to make videos and provide links to aid with some Home Learning.

Our PE days should be Mondays and Thursdays. However, these days can change at times due to other commitments in the hall so please ensure your child has their PE kit in school all the time. We will have some PE lessons outside, even as the weather gets colder. The children should have a dark coloured tracksuit that they can wear for PE outside, in addition to a t-shirt, shorts and plimsolls or trainers. If your child wears earrings, it would be great if you could take them out on PE days but if this is not possible, we have surgical tape in school to cover them. Please ensure that all clothing/belongings that the children have in school are clearly labelled with their name and class on as this enables us to return them to the child rather than them going to lost property.

The children now choose their lunch independently each morning. They also still get offered a piece of fruit at morning break time and milk if requested. Children are welcome to bring their own piece of fruit for this if they would prefer. They should also bring a named drink bottle containing water every day. They are able to access this throughout the day and can refill it if necessary. This is kept in the classroom and should be different to the drink provided in their packed lunch if they have one.

Please try to avoid your children playing with the toys in the outdoor area in the mornings, we often have things set up for the day or find that bits go missing or end up in the wrong place.

Throughout the year, the children will be able to bring home our class teddy (Oli 1C or Digger 1B) for the weekend. They will have a diary that they can put any photos and writing in to show what they got up to with them. Please bring them back in by the following Wednesday so that they can share their experience with the class before going off to their next home!

Finally, if you have any questions or queries, do not hesitate to catch us at the school gate after school. If you would like to make an appointment for a longer conversation, feel free to arrange one with the school office. We look forward to meeting you all over the next few weeks!

Kind regards,

Mrs Fitts, Mrs Boothby & Miss Bull,