



Aim High....Fly High!

Wednesday 11th September 2019

Dear Parents/Carers

I hope you have had an enjoyable summer.

Firstly, I would like to welcome all of our new families to Duxford Primary and a very warm welcome to you all to our reception class - Sheldrakes! It has been lovely to see the children coming into school looking so grown up in their uniforms and with big smiles. In Reception, we operate a broad and balanced, experiential curriculum which focuses upon the importance of learning through play. We want the children to have lots of fun as well as learn. I am looking forward to working with you and your child and the many exciting opportunities this year. Below is some important information for you all.

The first few weeks

We have a very busy term ahead of us, however, we will be starting the term with learning about our new environment, the school, routines, behaviours, expectations within school and getting to know one another. You are welcome to come into the classroom for the first two weeks to help settle your child, however, we do ask that you say goodbye and leave promptly to enable us to start our learning.

Tapestry

We will be using an online programme called Tapestry to log your child's learning journey during their time in Sheldrakes. Tapestry enables us to upload photographs, videos and notes of your child's learning and development during the day which can be made available regularly to you. We invite you to contribute to this growing journal by commenting on the journal entries, or even adding your own. Please do let us know what your child loves doing at home by sending photos and videos back, which will also help us see your child's development at home. Together we can share the journey of your child's growth and first amazing year in school.

Literacy at home

Please read lots of different stories to your child at home. Ask them questions about what is happening in the story. Can they guess what might happen next? Ask them to re-tell the story to you. Can they tell you who the characters in the story are? Look for letters and words in the environment. Can they 'read' the logo on the Tesco or Asda shopping bag, can they tell you the first letter sound of their name etc.

Numeracy at home

It is important that the children can say the numbers in order to 10 and then to 20. Look for numbers and shapes in the environment. Can they find a number 2 on a door or a number 7 on the bus? Can they see a square window or a circle shaped clock. Ask children to get you 3 pencils or 4 spoons. Can they count how many chairs are around the table or how many packets of crisps are in the bag, touching each item as they count etc.

Homework

To begin with, your child will be very tired, so please let them rest at home. We will start to send home story books to share at bedtime after a few weeks and then move onto reading picture books with no

words. This will encourage your child to tell the story using the picture clues and the first stage in learning to read is looking at the pictures and memorising the story, please give your child lots of praise for this. In school the children will begin to learn letter sounds and the action that goes with each of the sounds. As they begin to learn the sounds and start to sound out words, they will then be given a reading book. When they start to read the words, if there are any words that they cannot read themselves, it is fine for you to read it to them.

The curriculum

The children learn through a play-based curriculum which aims to develop the whole child. The curriculum is delivered through the children's needs and interests as well as through topics, seasons and celebrations which change each half term. We will send out letters of how you can help your child at home.

PE

The children will participate in lots of physical activities in Reception, including riding bikes, climbing, running, jumping, dancing and games. We will be having PE lessons on a Friday afternoon and all of the children will need a PE kit (white t-shirt, black shorts and black plimsols/pumps or trainers). Their PE kit can be left in school and we will send it home at the end of each half term to be washed. All items must be labelled with names. Please also be aware that, for health and safety reasons, earrings must be removed for P.E.

Names in uniform

Please can you put your child's name in all items of their uniform, including their shoes. It is inevitable that the children will take their uniform off when they are doing PE, dressing up or painting and items of clothing do get lost.

Snack

The children will be provided with a daily snack of milk and fruit. We ask that they bring in a water bottle from home each day so that they can have a drink of water throughout the day.

Letters and money

Please can we ask that if you are sending any money or notes into school that you put them in an envelope (it can be a recycled one) with your child's name on and what the money is for.

Coats and Wellies

Please can we ask that all children have a coat and a pair of wellies with them in school every day. Even if the weather is lovely in the morning by lunchtime it could be raining and we will be going outside in most weather conditions as well as often playing in the stream and mud kitchen. (We will provide top to toe waterproofs for children playing in the mud kitchen). If you wish to leave a raincoat in school that will be fine.

Parent helpers

If you would be able to spare some time per week to come into Sheldrakes to help with 'funky fingers time' or listen to children reading, we would love to have parents in class to support the children's learning. So please let us know!

Dates for your Diary

Harvest Festival

Christmas Nativity

Wow moments

We have a wow wall just outside Sheldrakes classroom to help celebrate your child's achievements and special moments. Please do bring in any certificates, photos and wow stars for your child to share with the class. Stars are attached to this letter and more are available on request.

Messy play

We would like to offer as many new exciting opportunities and activities as possible to your child and allow them to develop their fine motor control through sensory experiences. You will see there is a donation list for messy play resources and we will be greatly appreciative for any resources you may be able to donate. This could be a bag of value pasta, shaving foam, jelly etc. There will be a new list at the beginning of each term. Thank you in advance for all donations received.

Role play and loose parts

We are continually appreciative of all of the items you are able to donate for our loose parts play to encourage investigation and exploration. This may include small boxes, recycling packaging, cardboard tubes, plastic lids etc which can be used for junk modelling. We are also appreciative of any old 'grown ups' shoes, scarves, ties, bangles etc that can be used for role play. Finally, if you have any clear outs of toys (cars, trains, happyland etc) again we will be most grateful of any donations.

We want your child to have a wonderful, happy year in Sheldrakes, in preparation for the rest of their school life. If there is anything that we can do, please let us know. If you have any questions or concerns, we may be able to meet either briefly at the end of a school day or, for a longer discussion, you will be able to make an appointment with the school office.

I look forward to working with you and your child.

With kind regards,
Mrs Carly Shannon