



Aim

Fly High

High,

Friday 11th September 2020

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 our reception class - Sheldrakes! Following the odd circumstances of the children's start to school life, our key focus will be settling them in, addressing any anxieties and focusing on good learning behaviours. As we settle the children, our first topic will be 'Why do you love me so much?'

I am very much looking forward to seeing all of your children coming into school, I am sure they all look very grown up in their uniforms and hopefully they will all be wearing big smiles too. 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. Unfortunately, due to Covid, you are unable to come into the classroom, however, myself and our class TA, Mrs Kolarik, will ensure they settle quickly and calmly. We therefore ask that you say goodbye and leave promptly to enable us to start our learning. If any of the children find it difficult to settle we will contact you to let you know.

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 your 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 outdoor PE lessons on a Friday afternoon. During the first half term, Reception won't need their PE kits as we will focus on games that develop spatial awareness, listening skills etc. On a Friday your child is welcome to wear trainers into school. After half term, due to the situation with Covid 19, children will not be able to change for PE sessions in school and so will be expected to wear their PE kit to school on a Friday. Children will also have an outdoor learning session every week on a Wednesday (these sessions will start in the next few weeks), again your child is welcome to wear trainers on this day. 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 items of their uniform off when they are busy playing, 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.

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 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.

Proud moments

We have a 'Proud Clouds' wall just outside Sheldrakes classroom to help celebrate your child's achievements and special moments. Please do email in any certificates, photos and proud clouds for your

child to share with the class. Paper copies of clouds will be sent home during the first week 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. A donation list for messy play resources will be emailed out and we will be greatly appreciative of any resources you may be able to donate. If you would like to donate something please send an email so I can keep updating the list to ensure we are able to generate a variety of resources and not lots of the same. 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.

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, especially during these unprecedented times, I would be happy to speak with you. This can be by email or telephone, or for a longer discussion I will be happy to meet with you either virtually or in person at a social distance. You will be able to make an appointment via the school office. You will not be able to come into school or speak to me without an arranged appointment. Quick notices can be emailed to me via the school office or by leaving a message with the member of staff on gate duty.

I look forward to working with you and your child.

With kind regards,
Mrs Shannon