

Holly Class Newsletter

September 2009

Welcome back to Holly Class!

We hope you all had a lovely Summer holiday, despite the weather and are looking forward to the start of the new school year. As many of us are new to Holly, I thought it may help you if we clarified a few details. I have also attached our curriculum overview showing our intended topics, as well as our timetable, although these are always subject to change to meet the children's needs.

The children will have a short phonics session each day and will continue to focus on these sounds during the week, through their play. They will be introduced to our 'Sound Table' and encouraged to bring in objects starting with the sounds of the week, in return for a sticker!

For those children not yet ready to write, there will be plenty of opportunities to practice their pre-writing skills and motor control. When your child is ready, they will start to practice their handwriting using a cursive script. Typically, when first learning to write, children 'print' their letters. They then move on to 'joined up' writing at a later stage. Learning two styles of handwriting can add an extra layer of difficulty and cause confusion. It is therefore, often more helpful if a child can learn to use a single system of handwriting right from the start. The most important feature of cursive script is that each letter is formed starting on the line, without taking the pencil off the paper - and consequently, each word is formed in one, flowing movement. The key advantages to this system are:

- By making each letter in one movement, children's hands develop a 'physical memory' of it, making it easier to produce the correct shape;
- Because letters and words flow from left to right, children are less likely to reverse letters which are typically difficult (like b/d or p/q);
- There is a clearer distinction between capital letters and lower case;
- The continuous flow of writing ultimately improves speed and spelling.

P.E., as you will see from the timetable, is on Tuesdays and Wednesdays so children will need to bring their P.E. kit into school on Monday and take it home to wash on Fridays. Holly Class 'wellie walks' will be on Friday mornings and we ask that children keep wellington boots in school along with any all weather/waterproof clothes that they may have.

For those children who need support with toileting, we would be grateful if you could provide a change of clothes, wet wipes and nappy sacks, so that we are prepared for any accidents.

As regards snack time, your child may bring a drink (preferably water or fruit juice) and healthy snack. Milk is available to order from the office and free fruit is also provided.

The children have settled extremely well in their first week back and seem to be taking the experiences of school life, in their stride. The Reception children have been given a home/school book. They will be using these to stick in the sounds they have learnt each day, so that this can be discussed and reinforced at home. Please feel free to make any comments or observations about your child's learning, in this book. I will endeavour to check these books weekly, alternatively I am usually available in the classroom first thing or an appointment can be made via the office.

Thank you for your help and support.

Mrs Lisa Plant and Mrs Pauline Smith