

Reception Newsletter

Autumn 2026



Dear Families,

Welcome to you all. We are so proud of how the children are settling – each child is an individual and each child adapts to the new classroom in different ways. Together as a team we want your children to thrive in a nurturing and caring learning environment. If you have any worries or concerns about your children, please come and talk to us at drop off or pick up

Kind regards, Team Reception

Physical Development Focus

Please can children come in their PE kits on a Wednesday from next week. We will be working on our Gross and Fine Motor skills to begin with.

Themes

During the term, we will be using an overall theme and planning from the children's current interests, curiosities and questions.

Autumn 1 - Ourselves

Autumn 2 - Toys

For a more detailed view, please have a look at our Knowledge Organiser.

Autumn Home Learning

- Reading a library book together.
- Practice grapheme cards & tricky words daily.
- Sharing reading books (even without words)

Each week, we will also suggest an activity that you can do with your child to help support our learning in the classroom.

Parents as Partners

Thank you for sending in your Home Information sheets and scrapbooks – they are really helping us to get to know the children well. They are loving sharing their books with their friends old and new. **If you have not yet returned them, please do soon so that your child can share them with their friends.**

Reading Wallets

We will start to send reading wallets at the end of this week. In them will be....

- **Reading books** – initially there will be books without words. Once we have learnt enough graphemes and they are secure in blending, we will send books with words home.
- **Sharing book** - In order to encourage your child to become a lifelong reader, it is important that they learn to read for pleasure. Children will choose a book to share with you from our school library for you to enjoy together. We do this on a Tuesday, so please make sure the books are in their bags on this day.
- **Grapheme Cards & Tricky Words** – A new set of graphemes will be added at the end of each week. Please help your child practise each one. Included will be a guide of how to say the GPC and the rhyme for the formation for the individual letters.

Please return this folder to school **every day**. Thank you in advance.

Phonics Workshop & Phonics Open Week

Phonics Workshop for Parents

Thursday 17th September 9:30 & 5:30 pm

Come and find more about how we teach phonics in Early Years and Key Stage 1.

Reception Phonics Drop in Sessions

WC 21st September (Monday, Tuesday & Thursday)

Come and watch a phonics lesson in action. You will see how best you can support your child at home on their phonics journey. Sign up with Mrs Cain in class.

Family Photos

If you have not yet, please can you send in a family photo for our 'Proud to be Me' display in our classroom. Again, the children have enjoyed sharing the special people in their lives with their friends. Thank you to those who already have.

Book Buddy, Counting Crow & Birthday Buddies

These characters will make their way to your home, over the weekend soon. Details will be attached.

Pebbles & Buzz

Let me take this opportunity to introduce Pebbles our school tortoise and Buzz, the school dog who is currently on maternity leave.

If you would like to take care of Pebbles over the weekend, please let us know and we can arrange.

Show and Tell

Children are welcome to bring items in or share experiences with their peers. We have a basket that children can drop their item in to keep them safe.



Family Friday Reading

Come and share some stories with your children every Friday at morning drop off.

How to keep informed and up to date...

- Ask a staff member
- Facebook Page
- Class page on website
- Read emails

Year 6 Buddies

Our wonderful Year 6 buddies will accompany us to the dining hall to help the children to know the routines of lunchtime. They will help the children collect their lunch, show them where to sit and show them out to the playground afterwards.

Year 6 children will also come and read with us every Friday afternoon for the rest of the year.

Dates to Remember - Autumn Term

Thursday 17th of September

Parent Phonic Workshop – after morning drop off & 5:30pm

WC 21st September

Reception Phonics Open Week – Monday, Tuesday and Thursday after drop off.

WC 21st September

Reception Phonics Open Week – Monday, Tuesday and Thursday after drop off.

Friday 2nd October

Grandparents Morning (until 10:30am)

Thursday 8th October

10:45am - Harvest at St.John's Church, Digswell

WC 19th October

Parents Consultations

Friday 23rd October

Occasional Day – school closed to children

Monday 26th October

Half Term

Monday 2nd November

INSET School closed

Friday 27th November

INSET School closed

Monday 1st December

Occasional Day School Closed

Thursday 10th December

EYFS Christmas Songs Performance

Thursday 17th December

9:15am - Christmas Service at St John's Church

Friday 18th December

End of Term – 1:45pm finish

Tuesday 5th January 2027

Children return to school

Assemblies

Reception children will be attending two assemblies later in the autumn term. Singing on a Thursday which is led by Mrs Cain and Celebrating Me on a Friday.

Phonics at Homerswood

At Homerswood we use Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised as our systematic synthetic phonics (SSP) programme to teach early reading and spelling. We will work through the entire Little Wandle Programme until your child can successfully utilise their phonic knowledge and blending skills to read fluently. Children need to learn to read as quickly as reasonably possible, so they can move from learning to read, to reading to learn, giving them access to the treasure house of reading.

Phonics in Reception and Year 1

As usual, children in Reception and into Year 1 have daily phonics lessons. They will be taught 4 new grapheme phoneme correspondences (GPCs) per week, plus a review lesson on a Friday. Knowing a GPC means being able to match a phoneme (sound) to a grapheme (written representation) and vice versa. The children will also learn a series of 'tricky words'. Tricky words are those words which cannot be sounded out using their phonemes. We assess your child every six weeks to check progress. Any child who needs extra support will have keep-up sessions planned for them.

Reading

Children in Reception start taking part in reading practise sessions later in the Autumn term. The children are taught in small groups three times a week. The children read the same book three times a week. In the first session we work on decoding (sounding out) the words, the second time we work on prosody, which is reading with expression - making the book sound more interesting with our storyteller voice - and the third time we look at comprehension. We read the book three times in school because we want to develop fluency. The more children see words, the more they begin to read them automatically without having to sound them out.

Supporting your child with reading at home

Although your child will be taught to read at school, you can have a huge impact on their reading journey by continuing their practice at home. There will be two types of reading book that your child will now bring home:

- A reading practice book. As usual, we will continue to change an actual, physical book once a week.
- A sharing book

Reading practice books

These decodable books have been carefully matched to your child's current reading level. When listening to them read the book please remember to give them lots of praise – celebrate their success and where necessary their perseverance!

- Tips:
- If they can't read a word, allow them time to use their sounds to build it up, where necessary help them to build the word or read it to them.
 - Re-read sentences with the children to develop rhythm and intonation.
 - After they have finished, talk about the book together.
 - If your child is reading it with little help, please don't worry that it's too easy – your child needs to develop fluency and confidence in reading.

Sharing book

In order to encourage your child to become a lifelong reader, it is important that they learn to read for pleasure. The sharing book is a book they have chosen for you to enjoy together. Please remember that you shouldn't expect your child to read this alone. Read it to or with them. Discuss the pictures, enjoy the story, predict what might happen, use different voices for the characters, explore the facts in a non-fiction book. The main thing is that you have fun!

Reading Records

Please use the Reading Records to note your child's assigned books. It is important to us that the record is easy for families to complete so please leave a short comment in the record to let us know your child has read the books. We are always interested to hear how they got on. We look forward to catching up with you about your child's reading progress in our parent's evenings. Please do not hesitate to talk to us if you have any questions about your child's reading in the meantime.

Supporting phonics at home

For further information on how to support your child with phonics, please visit the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds website: <https://www.littlewandlelettersandsounds.org.uk/resources/for-parents/>. You will find a grapheme information sheet to help you with formation and pronunciation. It is really important that you pronounce the sounds correctly at home if you are supporting your child. The videos are on the website for you to refer to and if you are unsure, please ask.

We hope you and your child enjoy reading together at home.