

Welcome to Dippers and Robins Class

Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 September 2025



Welcome to Dippers and Robins, whether your child is new to Dippers and Robins classes, is moving up or has already been in Robins a year I hope this information is useful. If you have any questions please speak to me at the end of the day.

Miss Ali Reid

General

If you would like to contact us for any reason, please use the school admin email and we will get back to you as soon as possible. We will also be available for quick messages at the end of the school day. There are two formal parents' evenings during the year. We will open the gate at 8.40 am each morning and call the register at 8:50am each morning and your child will need to be in the classroom promptly then to ensure they do not miss any announcements or learning time.

You will be aware that we are a 'uniform school' and the wearing of uniform is actively encouraged, fostering pride in the school. Children should be encouraged to be always smart and presentable and should wear sensible black shoes (not trainers). Children may come to school on Wednesday in their PE kit. Please see our website under the 'Parents' tab for more information about uniform.

Curriculum Coverage

Children in the Reception year follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum and children in Year 1 and 2 follow the National Curriculum. We have a Foundation Stage unit in Dippers (Reception and Pre-School) where the children have an environment that is specifically tailored to their curriculum. Miss Reid and Sophie structure the day to ensure that all children in Dippers and Robins get the teaching time they need as well as the independent practice that allows their learning to develop. We learn through direct teaching, child-led and adult-led activities, all wrapped up in lots of play and fun in a supportive environment. All children will spend some time in both classrooms and our outside area but Preschool and Reception will usually be in Dippers classroom and Year 1 and 2 in Robins classroom.

Phonics and Reading

Reception and Year 1 children have daily 20-minute phonics lessons and lots of opportunity to practise what they have learned during focused activities and during independent play.

Guided Reading with an adult takes place once a week for all children in Year 1 and 2 and as the year progresses, Reception children will also have regular Guided Reading sessions.

Year 1 and 2 children will also have the opportunity to read independently for 20 minutes every day in school. Year 2 children will work on comprehension quizzes using our Accelerated Reader program.

Story time is a very important time of our day and we will come together to foster a love of stories and reading for pleasure.

Please see the homework section below for ways you can help at home with this.

Writing, handwriting, spelling, punctuation and grammar

Reception children concentrate on letter formation and segmenting words into phonic sounds for a large part of the year. Later on in the Reception year, they start to write sentences and sequences of sentences. Year 1 and 2 children will explore a wide range of text types to link their writing during the year and their reading and writing skills will be developed and extended through studying these texts in depth. The children will be expected to write independently, editing and improving their writing as part of the process.

Year 2 children will also have *Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar* sessions focusing on important tools to help improve their writing. Handwriting sessions take place several times a week for all year groups, starting at basic letter formation in Reception to joining in Year 2.

Maths

In Maths, the children will develop their skills through a mixture of direct teaching, including formal written lessons, investigations, practical activities and games.

Reception children are taught separately to Year 1 and 2 children and within these groups, children are supported in their own maths journey and will receive the help they need to become secure in place value, calculation, shape, space and measure including time, and additionally for Year 2, basic fractions. In Year 2, children are introduced to multiplication tables and will become fluent in the 2, 5 and 10 multiplication tables. Please see the homework section below for ways you can help at home with your child's Maths learning.

Understanding the World and Topics

In Year 1 and 2 we delve into Science, History and Geography topics. For Reception children this learning is delivered through Understanding the World activities. Please see the Curriculum Maps for this term.

PE

PE will be on **Wednesday** with Mrs Bamber this year. We will also practise our PE skills during active learning throughout the week in EYFS and KS1.

Children need to wear navy shorts and a pale blue polo shirt or tracksuit bottoms and tops in colder weather. They also need to wear trainers. PE kits should be worn to school on the days that PE is timetabled. All kit should be clearly named please.

Outdoor Learning

This year we aim to take our learning outside several times a week. Forest school no longer has a set time each term but will be woven into the curriculum as appropriate. Maths might be outside, music, science or any other part of our learning where the children can be active and gain inspiration from our wonderful environment. We have enough wellies that all Robins and Dippers children already have a set of "school" wellies under their pegs. A waterproof coat every day of the year is really important, not just for break time but lesson time too. If you would like to send in a set of separate waterproofs and/or change of clothes to keep in school that would be helpful but we understand if you cannot do that – we do have lots of spares. If we know we are likely to get particularly muddy or smelling of campfires we will let you know so that children without a school set can bring waterproofs in on the day.

Home Learning

Read, read, read and read some more!

Without a doubt, learning to read is the most important step in a child's academic journey and, along with their emotional well-being, it has top priority for us in Robins and Dippers.

Reception children will bring home a wordless book for the first few weeks of the Autumn Term. Please have a look at this with your child and help them to work out the story from the pictures. Ask them lots of questions about what is happening and guide them in knowing the conventions of turning the pages the right way from front to back. They will also bring home a story book for you to read **to** them. The love of stories is so important in learning to read so this is an opportunity to just enjoy the books together. Once we have taught enough letters and sounds through our daily Phonics sessions, your child will bring home a book with decodable words in that they should be able to sound out independently. The more letters and sounds they learn in Phonics the more complex the reading will become.

Pupils will usually have their books changed to take home on a Friday and will keep them for a whole week. Reading and re-reading the same book for a week is an excellent way to embed their phonics learning and develop fluency. Children will have a yellow Home-School Diary in which to record the reading they do at home.

Year 1 children will bring home books from Phase 5 Phonics, linking to the letters and sounds they have been learning that week. They should be able to read these independently. Pupils will have their books changed to take home on a Friday and will keep them for a whole week. Reading and re-reading the same book for a week is an excellent way to embed their phonics learning and develop fluency. Children will have a yellow Home-School Diary in which to record the reading they do at home.

Year 2 children bring home books that are within their Accelerated Reader book level (this is recorded on the inside cover of their yellow Home School diaries). These should be read at home and at school (more than once is advised if they are short books) and then they complete a comprehension quiz in school to test their understanding of what they have read. Accelerated Reader will tell us the results of the Quiz. At the beginning and end of each term we do a Star Reading Test which gives us the Book Level the child should be reading at. Please encourage your child to read at home every day and record what they read in their Home-School diary.

Online Homework: in addition to reading (not instead of please – if you are struggling for time please prioritise reading!)

In the second half of the Autumn Term we will send home links to websites to support learning at home. The children's individual logins will be in their yellow home-school diaries.

English Homework

Phonics Bug: (YEAR 1) - Good for practicing phonics for reading and spelling. It has a variety of books that the children can read online or can have read aloud by the computer as well as games.

Spelling Frame (YEAR 2) - A spelling resource which focuses on learning spelling rules and patterns. It allows children to look at example words for a spelling rule and play games to learn the rules. Please note: We no longer do weekly spelling tests as research shows that learning spelling rules is a much better use of all our time than learning words in isolation that are swiftly forgotten when the writing books appear!

Maths Homework

Numbots (YEAR 1) – Great for practicing counting and addition and subtraction

Times Tables Rock Stars (YEAR 2) - great for times tables practice and particularly good for rapid recall. We will introduce this once we have taught our Maths unit on Multiplication.

As parents ourselves, we are well aware how hard it can be to fit homework into busy lives amongst the needs of siblings, mealtimes, bedtimes, out of school activities, and just having time to relax with your children after a busy day at work and school! If it is becoming a battle or if fitting it in seems impossible, just focus on the reading, the extras are just great practice, not essential. If you are still finding it hard, talk to Miss Reid at the next parents' evening, or before. Please don't ever feel like you are failing if you can't get these things done at home. We can come up with a plan together – with three boys Miss Reid has been there and gets it!

Collective Worship

We hold Collective Worship every day and use this time to explore our school values. Our Thursday, Collective Worship focuses on celebrating achievements and children are welcome to bring in awards they have gained outside school to share with everyone. Please also email the office and let us know if your child has demonstrated the current school value at home and we will celebrate this too.

Information

A link to our fortnightly newsletter is sent home by email and contains important, up to date information and upcoming dates and events as well as photos and a short description of what the children have been learning that week. **Please make sure you check it weekly.** If you need to contact a teacher directly, please email the admin address admindiptford@thelink.academy and your message will be forwarded to the relevant teacher. We are striving to reduce our “paper footprint” and moving towards sending all information electronically. If you do need a paper copy of any specific letters, please drop into the office and they will be happy to print one for you.

We hope that this letter provides all of the information you need however please do ask if you have any particular questions. We are looking forward to an exciting year ahead and we are really looking forward to sharing it with your children and yourselves.