

Welcome to Dippers Class

Reception, Year 1 and 2



A warm welcome to those who have newly joined us as part of the Dippers family, and welcome back to those moving into a new year group this year. The information in this letter is designed to give you an overview of our class and structure of our learning. Any questions however, please do reach out via our admin email or catch me on the gate at the end of the day.

Mrs Pritchard.

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. Lessons begin at 9:00am.

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. Children may come to school on Wednesday in their PE kit and suitable clothing for Outdoor Learning as detailed below. 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 specific Foundation Stage unit in Dippers (Reception and Pre School) where the children have an environment that is specifically tailored to their curriculum, however as we follow similar themes and curriculum 'hooks', we encourage provision to be accessed by all year groups to develop their individual learning. Mrs Pritchard and Sophie structure the day to ensure that all children in Dippers get the teaching time they need as well as the independent practice that allows their learning to develop or to 'choose their learning'. 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 areas but Preschool and Reception will usually be the EYFS room and Year 1 and 2 in the main 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, literacy lessons and during independent play. Guided reading takes place in the morning sessions for Year 1 and 2, and Reception two direct sessions a week alongside reading with an adult for their word reading practice. Year 1 and 2 children will also have the opportunity to read independently for 20 minutes every day in school. Year 2 children, after a short period of recap of their phonic knowledge, 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. In addition, they will explore texts through shared reading, role play and other play-based activities to explore stories and non-fiction texts. 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, History and Geography

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 and other areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. Please see the Curriculum Maps for this term for specific content areas.

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 or white polo shirt or tracksuit bottoms and tops in colder weather. They also need to wear trainers or similar active shoes. 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 where we can, and we aim to weave outdoor learning across our curriculum. 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. It is useful to have a pair of wellies at school for this reason, but we have plenty to borrow! A waterproof coat every day of the year is really important, not just for break time but lesson time too. We take a specific session of Outdoor Learning on a Thursday mid-morning, where we take our snack and playtime too. This is woven into our weekly 'Welly Walk' that is open to the wider community for children and families to come and see what Diptford has to offer in terms of outdoor space. On Thursday, please make sure that your child brings or has in school, a set of waterproofs or 'muddy suit', wellies, and a change of clothes for afterwards – mud and water always seem to find their way in even under the best of waterproof trousers!

Home Learning

Reading

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 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 Wednesday 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 and move on to comprehension.

Children will have a yellow Home-School Diary in which to record the reading they do at home, and allows us to track the 'three read' system we use for those learning phonics. Year 1 children will bring home books from Phase 5 Phonics, linking to the letters and sounds they have been learning that week or week before. They should be able to read these independently.

Year 2 children will eventually 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: (Please note - if you are struggling for time please prioritise reading!)

Later in the Autumn Term, we will place into your child's Home School Reading Diaries various logins for additional support resources that you can access at home for additional practice and revision linked to their level of learning.

Reception and Year 1 – A Phonics Bug Log in where you can access additional books online as well as phonics related digital games.

Please do see reading as the priority however, this can take place at any time to suit you and your child. After school may not always work for you. At times, where we might identify an area that your child may need to have a little more practice in, such as spellings, Mrs Pritchard will let you know and provide suggested activities that they can do at home with you.

Collective Worship

We hold Collective Worship every day and use this time to explore our school values. Our Thursday, Collective Worship focuses on world events or special calendar events. On Friday we celebrate achievements and examples of our school values. 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 when it comes out. 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.

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.

Home Learning

We would like the children to focus on reading daily, when possible, for 20 minutes. The benefits of reading have been found to improve spelling, comprehension and language development which is why this is a key priority for our school. Children will also have access to several different platforms including Times Table Rock stars and Spelling Frame where they can access games and develop their spelling and number skills.

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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 have a really exciting year ahead and we are really looking forward to sharing it with your children and yourselves.