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“Learning Together, Learning for Life”

Aspiration

Independence

Resilience

Respect

Jackson Class Termly Letter

Autumn term 2025

Class Teachers:

Mrs Cottenden (Mondays, Tuesday, Fridays) & Mrs Arnott (Wednesdays and Thursdays)

Mrs Wittich teaches Jackson Class for P.E. on a Tuesday and Miss Wilson for Forest School on a Friday.

Dear Parents/Carers,

It's welcome back to Jackson Class for lots of our children this year, and a big welcome to our new children and families! We hope you will all feel very welcome and settle quickly into the new school year.

Mrs Cottenden and Mrs Arnott job-share the teaching of Jackson Class. We make a fabulous team and work very closely to plan for your children's learning and to discuss progress within the class. You are welcome to speak to either of us with any questions or concerns, either in person or using the email addresses at the end of this letter.

Please find below some practical information and reminders, and some information about what your child will be learning this term.

You are also invited to these meetings where we will share more information with you:

Meet the Teacher: Monday 8th September at 2:45pm (in person or via Google Meet)

Phonics Workshop: Wednesday 10th September at 7pm (in person in the school hall)

School Values

This term we will be learning to demonstrate our school values of:

Independence by being responsible for our own belongings and selecting our own resources and making choices in our learning activities.

You can support your child with independence through packing their own school bag and carrying it themselves, getting their own clothes ready and getting dressed for school as independently as possible, including fastening their own shoes and coat.

Respect by learning to follow the daily routines of the class and school, being kind, polite and helpful to one another, building positive relationships with each other through our learning and play, looking after our classroom and all the resources we have in school.

Encourage your child to show respect outside of school as well, with family and friends.

Aspiration by trying new things and encouraging each other to take risks and challenge ourselves.

You can support your child by encouraging them to try new things and 'have a go' even if something is a bit tricky.

Resilience by persevering with our learning, trying new things and reflecting on our learning and choices.

Encourage your child to talk about things if they found something tricky or something happened that made them feel sad or disappointed. At school we encourage the children to talk about how they are feeling as this really supports them to understand their own feelings, develop resilience and move forwards.

School uniform and Equipment

- Please ensure your child brings a **coat** to school every day as we will continue to use our outdoor area in almost any weather!
- Please name **EVERYTHING** (including footwear, hats, scarfs and gloves). When things get taken off, they all look the same!
- Any earrings should be small plain studs.
- Please make sure shoes, socks and tights and hair accessories are in line with our expected uniform. Long hair must be tied back neatly.
- Please provide your child with a clear, **named water bottle** with a sports lid top every day. This will need to be taken home at the end of the day, washed and refilled. Bottles must only contain water. The children are able to access their water bottles in the classroom during the day and they can be refilled if needed.
- Please provide a pair of **named wellington boots** to be kept at school. These live in our welly shed and are used for playing in our outdoor area in wet weather and are also used for Forest School.
- **P.E.** lessons will be on a **Tuesday** with Mrs Wittich. Please ensure that your child's P.E. kit is in school for them to change into. They will bring it home again at the end of the day.
- **Forest School** is on a **Friday** with Miss Wilson. Your child should come to school wearing their school P.E. kit all day. They will change into their wellies for Forest School. Please ensure your child has a suitable coat for the weather.
- **School Bags:** Please ensure School Bags are in school **every day** and please check your child's bag and take out any letters or pictures every night.
 - **All children** need to bring their **home-school communication book** each day.
 - **Reception children** also need to bring their Little Wandle **reading book** each day.

Home Learning

You should have received details about your child's Google Classroom account. Please check Google Classroom and the home-school communication book regularly for messages, updates on our learning in school, and home learning activities. We also love to see the learning that your child has been doing at home – you are very welcome to upload learning activities and achievements from home to Google Classroom. Please do comment on what we post too on the Google Classroom stream.

Home-School Communication Books

Please check these daily for any messages, including minor accidents and first aid. If your child has a bump to the head, you will be telephoned.

- Please record when you have shared your child's library book with them, and any other books they have enjoyed at home. Reading to your child promotes a love of reading, teaches them how books are used and helps develop their vocabulary.
- Children in Reception should be reading their Little Wandle reading book every day – please record this in the home-school communication book too.

Library book

Starting next week, all the children will borrow a book to share with you from the school library. Please record in the home-school communication book when you have read this with them.

- Our normal class visit to the school library will be on **Wednesdays**. Please make sure library books are in school bags to return each Wednesday.

Reception reading books

You will hear more information about reading books at the Phonics Workshop. In a few weeks they will start to bring home books with decodable words. In the meantime, they will be bringing home a "reading book" with no words. Please share this book with your child on a daily basis, ensuring they understand which way up the book goes, how to turn the pages carefully, and talk to them about what is in the pictures. This is an important part of getting them used to having a reading book, ready for when they start to read words themselves. Please record in the home-school communication book when you have shared this book. Reading books will normally be changed on a Friday.

How and what do we learn in the Early Years Foundation Stage?

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) the children learn through a mixture of child-initiated learning (play), adult-led whole class teaching, adult-led small group activities and 1:1 activities.

Our planning is flexible and responsive to the children's interests and the direction they choose to take their own learning. We do not, therefore, follow topics as such, but do have some focus themes which will guide us through the term.

The children in Jackson Class spend the majority of their time together as a whole class of Nursery and Reception children. They benefit from each other, with opportunities to learn collaboratively through play and to share their understanding and ideas with each other.

The children are, however, taught in separate groups for Phonics and a short adult-led Maths session each day.

We will spend the first few weeks focussing on settling in, understanding the routines of the school day, and getting to know each other. We will be using the books “Owl Babies” and “The Colour Monster” as our focus for the first couple of weeks.

Later on in the term, we will observe the changes around us and learn about Autumn. We will plan other focus areas as the term goes on, based on the children’s interests, bringing in experiences and celebrations that are relevant to them. We use books and songs to support our learning each week.

Areas of Learning

Our learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage is divided into seven areas, and all of our learning and activities cover at least one of these areas, but usually many areas all at once!

Personal, Social and Emotional Development: This underpins all of our learning in the EYFS. The children are encouraged to form positive relationships with each other, understand and manage different social situations and gain a greater understanding of feelings through play and stories.

- This term our focus is on developing independence, empowering the children to do as much as possible for themselves.
- Please support them with this at home, by encouraging them to dress themselves, pack and carry their own school bag, be as independent as possible with using the toilet, recognising and keeping track of their own belongings.

Physical Development: Every Tuesday the children have a P.E. lesson with Mrs Wittich, which will focus this half term on Fundamentals of P.E. skills, and after half term on Ball Skills. Getting changed for P.E. and managing their own clothing is an important part of Physical Development in the Early Years.

In addition to this, the children have continual access to activities that develop their gross motor skills such as digging, climbing, building with our large loose parts (crates, planks etc) and riding trikes and scooters. Mark-making takes place inside and out, using pencils, pens, chalk and paintbrushes. Fine motor activities such as threading, rolling playdough and learning cutting skills are a regular part of our activities. Reception children will also be taught the correct formation of each letter through our daily phonics sessions.

Communication and Language: This also underpins everything we do in Early Years. Whilst the children are engaging in child-initiated learning they are encouraged to talk with each other, and as adults we play alongside them and develop their language skills. We read stories and sing songs or rhymes every day. They will be sharing their “All About Me” boxes with the class over the next few weeks, which supports speaking and listening skills.

We also have three “Star Stories” each half term. These are carefully selected high quality texts, which we read frequently as a class, and the children develop deep familiarity with these texts through frequent reading, using story props to retell the story, acting it out, and talking about the stories. For the first half term, our Star Stories are “Owl Babies”, “We’re Going on a Bear Hunt” and “Elmer”. Your children may like to read these stories at home as well – if you don’t have a copy, perhaps you could borrow one from the local library.

Literacy: Reception children will begin to learn written phonemes and will start to blend simple words. Please support your child by listening to them read their reading book every day and practising the correct letter formation of each letter as they learn its sound. They will bring home a letter formation sheet for each new letter that we learn.

Nursery children develop skills in preparation for learning to read and write. This includes listening games, identifying and making different sounds, listening to a range of stories, learning nursery rhymes and songs. They have plenty of opportunities for mark-making.

Maths: We have an adult-led Maths activity each day, as well as embedding mathematical understanding in child-initiated learning throughout the day.

Reception children will be focussing on the following skills with numbers to 5:

- Accurately count with 1:1 correspondence
- Recognise the numerals
- Subitise (recognise the amount without needing to count) numbers up to 5
- Compare numbers and quantities
- Explore the composition of numbers, e.g. that 4 can be made of 1 and 3 or 2 and 2.
- Continuing and creating repeating patterns

Nursery children will focus on:

- Reciting numbers in order
- Counting objects, recognising numerals and subitising numbers 1-3
- Comparing amounts, whether there are more, fewer or the same
- Exploring repeating patterns in songs, stories and with objects

Understanding the World: The children will have opportunities to talk and learn about themselves and others, including their family and friends. Later in the term we will learn about Autumn and how the world around us changes.

Expressive Arts and Design: As part of thinking about themselves the children will paint a self-portrait. They will learn songs and rhymes and have continual opportunities to express their own ideas and skills through construction play, small world play, role play in our home corner and mud kitchen. They have access to varied painting, drawing and craft/modelling resources, and musical instruments.

We look forward to meeting you at the Meet the Teacher and Phonics Workshop meetings.

If you would like to talk to us at any other time or have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us using the home-school communication book, speak to us at the end of the day, or email us.

Mrs Cottenden: j.cottenden@reed.herts.sch.uk

Mrs Arnott: s.arnott@reed.herts.sch.uk

(We will respond as quickly as possible, but please be aware that during the school day we are with your children, and emails will not ordinarily be responded to in the evening or at weekends.)

We look forward to getting to know you and your children as we go on an exciting learning journey together!

Mrs Cottenden and Mrs Arnott
(Jackson Class teachers)