



## MARTON-CUM-GRAFTON CE VA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Welcome to Class 1's Reception Year!

Dear Parents and Carers,

What a fantastic first week in Class 1!

It has been lovely to see the familiar faces of those who were in our class for their pre-school year and we are delighted to welcome a number of new faces too. Your children have been brilliant. We are very impressed with how they have been entering school in the mornings. They are doing a super job of settling in, adapting to new routines and getting to know new friends. Some mornings are bound to prove a little harder than others as tiredness settles in but we are ready with cuddles, smiles and distractions for your children and are more than happy to give a reassuring phone call if needed.

*I appreciate this week's letter is a rather long newsletter but hope that the information and explanations will be of use to you!*

### **Our learning**

As well as getting to know each other, we have started our first term of the year by sharing and enjoying the book '**Pete the Cat: Rocking in My School Shoes**' by James Dean and Eric Litwin. This book has helped us to share ideas about new experiences and about life at school. We have all been 'rocking' our way through school, perhaps your children have been singing the little refrain at home! The children have talked about and shared ideas on paper about all the things they like to do in their school shoes and have had a good explore around our school environment.

The children have begun learning and remembering our rules of '**Kind hands, Kind feet, Kind words**' and our together time 'ready to learn' expectations 'keeping hands and feet to ourselves, voices away, eyes looking and ears listening'. We love to hear the children's news, questions and ideas but it can be rather tricky to do so if everyone speaks at once and so we are working very hard from the beginning to encourage raising a hand or putting up a 'thinking thumb' to show they are waiting for a turn to speak.

We have also celebrated four birthdays this week as **Frederick, Ollie, Arabella** and **Jemima** have all turned 5 years old, best birthday wishes to all four of them!

**ASPIRE • BELIEVE • ACHIEVE**

These first weeks will inevitably continue to focus on the three 'Prime Areas' which are shown below, in bold. We will use our early days in Reception to help us to learn more about each child so that we can plan the next steps of their learning journey in ways that will capture their interest.

The children will be involved in focussed small group and one to one time, short whole class sessions and a lot of child initiated access of our provision areas. The opportunities we plan still aim to cover the seven areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage:

- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)**
- **Physical Development (PD)**
- **Communication and Language (C & L)**
- Literacy (Lit)
- Mathematics (Ma)
- Expressive Art and Design (EAD)
- Understanding the World (UW)

We will ensure that all children in Class 1 (Nursery and Reception) are assigned a Key Worker within the next week or two and will inform you about this. The Key Worker role in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is a valuable element ensuring that children and parents have a named member of staff with whom they can share achievements and concerns and who will be responsible for ensuring children's profiles are regularly updated. Mrs Williams has overall responsibility for monitoring the progress and development of each child in Class 1 but please know that you may, of course, approach any of us to share questions, concerns and information.

We aim to create a warm and caring atmosphere in a stimulating environment. In order to achieve this, behaviour expectations will be made clear to the children in these first days and weeks and then reinforced through circle time discussions as the year progresses.

In this busy environment we do expect children to do as they are asked and hope that you will support and reinforce this at home. This forms a significant part of our focus on PSED.

### **Home Learning**

At this early stage in their school life we will not send home any formal 'homework' but do encourage you to talk to your child about what they have been doing in school. Talk to them about numbers, letters, labels and signs around them. Do they notice or recognise different numbers or letters in the world around them, such as on clocks, packaging and road signs?

As the term progresses the children will bring home occasional phonic, number or topic based activities to share with you and try at home, if you have time.

Read with your child whenever opportunity arises. You are welcome to borrow books from the classroom and we will soon be encouraging children to choose a library book from our book corner to bring home to share with you.

### **Practicalities**

#### Staffing in Class 1

**Mrs Williams** is the class teacher for all of Class 1 on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays

and Thursday mornings. **Mrs White** is the class teacher on Fridays and is joined by **Mrs Taylor** who teaches PE in the morning. As well as supporting the class Monday to Thursday, **Mrs Naish** leads the class with a music session and a creative focus on Thursday afternoons.

We are very lucky to have highly experienced, passionate and well-qualified staff in our team. Supporting our class are **Miss Wilkinson** (Teaching Assistant), **Mrs Snowden** (Nursery Assistant), **Mrs Garcia** (Teaching Assistant) and **Mr Walkington** (Teaching Assistant). We also welcome **Miss Gilby** into our team this half term as she embarks on her teacher training at Marton cum Grafton.

### Start of the Day

The Class 1 cloakroom entrance will be opened at 8.40am each morning when children may start coming into the classroom. After hanging up coats and putting away bags we are encouraging to children to find their name card to write over which they then post in our little post box. Sometimes the morning task may be a pencil control formation card to reinforce particular handwriting strokes or a number formation card. The children can then come to the carpet to share a book or news with their friends.

You are very welcome to stay for this time but if your child seems settled and it suits you to go this is also fine. When the chime rings at 8.50am the children should be encouraged to say goodbye and to come to the carpet area ready to sing our morning song and start the day.

All children should have wellies in school and may bring outdoor trainers (which can double up as their PE shoes), otherwise they will have to stay on the playground on wetter days rather than enjoy the whole of the outdoor area.

We encourage the children to keep hydrated throughout the day, please send a bottle of water in with your child each day. They should also please have a *sun hat, sun cream and PE kit* in school.

### Snacktime

The Early Years children are all offered a drink of milk and fruit/vegetable snack as part of their school day. Although children higher up the school need to bring in a healthy snack, there is no need for the children in the lower school to do so as a free portion of fruit/vegetable is provided each day.

If your child has already turned 5, milk has to be paid for and if you have not registered you can get information about this at the school office.

### Hometime

After our end of day story time and school prayer all of the Class 1 children will sit together with a member of the Early Years Team. We obviously need to be sure that all children get to their adult safely and so a member of staff will always be on door duty. This member of staff will call children from the carpet individually, where they will be sharing stories, singing songs, watching a short episode of a favourite TV show or listening to music while they wait for their turn. We appreciate this can sometimes be a long process and do thank you for your patience and understanding with this.

If, at the end of the day, you ever wish to speak to Mrs Williams, or another member of the team, about any concern, achievement, issue or anecdote concerning your child then please do wait until all children have been dismissed so that we can concentrate fully on the conversation.

## **Reminder**

Please could we ask that you check that all of your child's belongings are clearly named. This includes coats and shoes as well as all items of school uniform. We have already had confusion over school shoes of the same style and size and over cardigans. It's a real help to us and your children if their things are named. Thank you.

## **Working Together**

We know that it can feel very frustrating when you ask your child what they have been doing at school only to be told 'nothing'. I therefore hope Class 1's weekly newsletter will go some way to giving you an insight into your child's experiences and time in school. We will be displaying examples of some of the learning that has been taking place on our 'Learning Journey' board which is just outside the Class 1 entrance.

Please also watch out for a letter in the next few weeks inviting you to stay and play with us in Class 1.

I would like to highlight the importance of communication between home and school, please do let us know if you have any concerns or questions. If you do not collect your child and are unable to come into school to see us then please send a note or email, or ring the office and leave a message so we can get back to you.

Please also look out for the blank 'a note from home' slips (in the wallet on our cloakroom notice board), please take these and fill them in with your child's interests, experiences and achievements before returning them to us in school to contribute to your child's Learning Journey. These can be as full or as brief as you like.

We look forward to developing positive relationships and to sharing your child's achievements with you and of course to ensuring that your child enjoys their time in Reception.

Many thanks for your support in this first week of Reception Class, we wish you a happy weekend.

Best wishes from

**Mrs Williams and The Early Years Team**