

Ducklings Welcome Letter...

We would like to welcome you to Ducklings Class.

Our Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) class is made up of both Nursery (aged 3-4 years) and Reception (aged 4-5 years) children. Nursery are referred to as Foundation 1 or F1 and Reception are named Foundation 2 or F2.

The Early Years Curriculum is made up of seven areas of learning. Communication and Language, Physical Development and Personal, Social and Emotional Development are called the 'prime areas' as they are at the heart of all learning in the foundation stage, Mathematics, Literacy, Understanding the World and Expressive Arts & Design are labelled the 'specific areas', which are predominantly knowledge and skills based. Continuous provision is the term used for independent learning through play both inside the room and in our outdoor area, and children will be supported and extended in these activities through positive interactions with adults. These interactions are most often child-initiated and incredibly valuable in leading us as to how to teach children in this first year of school and how they learn most effectively. Children will also engage in focused (adult-led) Literacy and Maths activities and these will be differentiated by your child's level of development.

The most important thing for the first few weeks is that your child feels happy and safe at school. We will do all we can to settle them in and make them feel very special. We have an open door policy - the best time to catch us is after we have seen all of the children out safely, so about 3:30pm usually (except Tuesdays which are staff meeting evenings). If you have anything you would like to share with us, such as achievements from home or memorable experiences, we are always happy to hear or read about them, in addition if you have any concerns or worries, please don't hesitate to come and see us.

Reading

Reading is the key to succeeding as they say! Some children will pick it up quickly, others will take more time. Our aim is to foster a love of reading with all children, whatever their ability or interests.

We will endeavour to hear your child read in school at least once a week. We keep a record of when children read and who to, so we will try to ensure they are heard as often as possible. During a reading session, we discuss characters, events, look for sounds and common words the children may know and ask questions about their book, such as "What do you think might happen next?" At the start, your child may be given a book without words; this is to encourage discussion about picture clues and the structure of a story (beginning, middle, and end) and the use of good descriptive language. **Your child will only receive a book with words once they can recognise the letter-sounds s a t p i n m d and confidently segment (sound out) and blend these letter-sounds to read words such as sit, tip, din, etc.** When your child does receive a book with words, please read the book to your child several times and see if they can spot any of the sounds or key words that we are learning – these can be found on the inside cover of the reading book. When you have read with your child, be it a school reading book, a favourite from home or even the back of a cereal packet (!!!); please let us know by writing a comment in their Reading Record book.

Writing

Our Literacy lessons combine Reading, Writing (Literacy) and Speaking, Listening & Attention and Understanding (Communication and Language). Your child will also have handwriting sessions to develop correct letter formation. This begins with gross motor activities and progresses to fine motor when they are ready. Please encourage your child to hold their pencil correctly at home

using a “tripod” grip (Google this for an image if you are unsure), encourage correct letter formation (starting in the correct place) and most importantly encourage them to ‘have a go’ as all mark-making is valued.

Maths

Our Maths lessons will involve lots of fun practical maths where we will be practicing basic number skills, counting up to 20 objects, finding one more/one less, adding and subtracting, doubling and halving. The more opportunities you expose your children to the better - look out for numbers in the environment (out shopping or house numbers), count anything (biscuits for a snack, stairs up to bed, pages in a book). We will be playing with sand and water to talk about size, weight and capacity. Baking is a great practical activity to do with your child. Talk about how many jugs of water it would take to fill the sink make your best estimate, then do it! We will also be solving problems and playing games, learning about shapes and patterns in our environment. Please talk to your child about all the different shapes in our daily lives, expose them to words like ‘cube’ (e.g a dice) and ‘sphere’ (e.g a ball).

Physical Development

We have PE sessions every Wednesday and Thursday afternoons, with our Sport’s Coach, Miss Edden. The children learn to negotiate space, develop motor skills, play games, and learn ball skills and the importance of keeping fit. In addition to this, the children will be given the opportunity to develop their motor skills using balance beams and trim trails amongst other things in our outdoor learning area and “Funky Fingers” activities in the classroom. Physical development is also embedded in all areas of the curriculum, such as changing for PE by operating zips and buttons, holding equipment correctly and safely such as scissors, paintbrushes and pencils etc. **For health and safety reasons, it is important that any long hair is tied back on these days and children with pierced ears either have them removed on these days, or parents provide ‘Micropore’ tape to cover studs.**

Topic

Our topic for this half term is ‘Marvellous Me!’ This is a theme where children learn about themselves and their families. It has focus on Science and Personal, Social and Emotional Development. We will be looking at how we have changed over time, looking at our families and similarities and differences. . We will be learning about the five different senses and exploring the human body with a focus on emotions. A “Ducklings Dabblings” letter will come out to further explain the activities your child will have the opportunity to explore in due course.

A few things to remember...

- ✓ **If you haven’t already done so, please download the SeeSaw ‘Family’ APP and scan your unique QR code**
- ✓ **Our Library is open during ‘Stay and Play’, if you would like to take your child into the Library to choose a book to take home, Mrs Pickett will make a note and let you know when the book needs to be returned**
- ✓ **Please download the Tapestry APP in preparation for your invitation to see your child’s online Learning Journal (for children who are new to Newton Regis)**
- ✓ **‘Stay and Play’ is on Thursdays between 8.45 and 9.15am in the Ducklings classroom, all other days, gates are locked at 9.00am, so please ensure you arrive on time and have had the opportunity to settle your child before leaving**

- ✓ Please label all of your child's items – clothes, PE kit, shoes, wellies, drinks bottles etc to avoid confusion and help develop the children's responsibility of looking after their own things
- ✓ We discourage children from bringing in toys from home as they can get broken or become lost within the classroom or even muddled with our own resources! There will be opportunities for special treat 'Toy Days' during the year

We are very much looking forward to sharing a fabulous teaching and learning year!

Best wishes from,

The Ducklings Team xx

Mrs Barclay, Mrs Bushnell, Mrs Samways, Mrs Smith and Mrs Gifford