

We hope you have had a wonderful Christmas and a Happy New Year! We have lots of plans for 2019 and we are looking forward to the term ahead. The aim of this letter is to give you an overview of what's going on this term and explain how you can best support your child.

Important dates this term

Nursery Maths workshop Wednesday 30th January
Reception Maths workshop Wednesday 6th February
Science Museum visit for Nursery – date to be confirmed
Venture Centre visit/Adventure playground – date to be confirmed
Parent-teacher learning review meetings – Week commencing Monday 25th March
Natural History Museum – Wednesday 6th March
Reception to Forest School every Monday starting week commencing Monday 21st January.

Our Christian Values

As you know, at St Thomas' we have a strong, distinctive Christian ethos and encourage children to develop values of respect, forgiveness, perseverance and friendship. Please look out for the displays of our values in Nursery and Reception classrooms. You will see how these important values link to all areas of the Early Years Foundation stage curriculum.

Reading

Nursery- Your child will be starting to learn and become aware of the names and sounds of the letters of the alphabet through simple, enjoyable songs and rhymes.

Reception- Your child will continue to learn a variety of songs and rhymes related to the alphabet as well as learning them through daily phonics sessions. We will be continuing to develop our blending skills to support us with our reading development. You are welcome to stay and participate in these sessions on a Thursday morning after parent reading morning!

Links to Phonics learning websites:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V3qTeyZxrJA&safe=active>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Djz82FBYUg&safe=active>
<http://jollylearning.co.uk/overview-about-jolly-phonics/>

Our whole school theme this term is

Dinosaurs and Monsters (Nur) Fairy Tales (Rec)

We will be offering the children plenty of opportunities to paint, draw and make objects from the environment or aspects of our core books that interest and stimulate them.

Children in the foundation stage will be singing a variety of songs and rhymes and have a chance to dance on our outdoor stage as well as creating their own puppet shows.

Home learning and how parents can help

As stated in the welcome handbook, it is very important that you read to your child for a short time every day. Discuss the story, talk about the pictures and predict what will happen next or explain why an event in the story happened. The more stories a child hears, the more they learn to understand how stories work. Those with a greater experience of stories are more equipped to learn to read. A great deal of a child's understanding about the world comes from stories.

Communication and Language- Speaking and Listening

Supporting the developing speech, language and communication skills of young children underpins every aspect of our role as early years' practitioners and its importance cannot be over stated. We know that effective communication skills are the building blocks of learning. We will promote conversation and open ended interaction, and give children the time and opportunity to use their emerging speaking and listening skills for a range of purposes.

It's really important that every child's voice is heard so we will be encouraging and supporting your child to speak with a loud, clear voice. We will also focus on the way children greet their family, friends and adults. Parents can help at home by encouraging children to be the first to say "Hello", "Good morning", "Good afternoon" and "How are you?" when they arrive at school.

Weekly events

Parent Reading morning- Nur –Every Wednesday Morning
Rec – Every Thursday morning

Book borrowing- All book bags should be brought into school by Wednesday so that we have time to change the children's books and send the books home on Fridays.

STICKY FRIDAYS in Nursery- You are welcome to join us in compiling your child's learning journey. Please ask members of staff for further details.

PE is on Friday mornings where we will focus on developing children's apparatus skills.

Reception children should bring in their PE kit on Monday and leave it until Friday when it can be taken home.

Prime Area: Personal, Social and Emotional development

Nurture groups- Learning how to share, take turns and develop a strong sense of respect and manners.

Circle time activities - What does it mean to be a good friend? How can I help my friends? How can I make my friends feel happy? What can I do if my friend hurts my feelings? What does it mean to have kind hands, kind feet and kind words?

Value – Friendship

- I can use kind words and kind hands
- I can share with my all of my friends
- I can say sorry when I have made a mistake
- I can include friends in my learning and play

Specific Area: Understanding the World

- Learn about similarities and differences in relation to people, places, objects and materials.
- To select and use technology for particular purposes.
- Go on local walks and visits to our community spaces.
- Trips to the Science Museum, The Venture Centre, Battersea Park Zoo.

Prime Area: Communication and Language

- Retell familiar stories through words and pictures.
- Act out familiar stories.
- Use vocabulary that is influenced by books.
- Use language to imagine and recreate roles and experiences.
- Use talk to engage in imaginary play.
- Comment and ask questions about aspects of their familiar world, such as the place where they live, or the natural world.

Spring Term Theme:

Fairy Tales

School Values: Friendship, Forgiveness, Respect and Perseverance

Specific Area: Literacy

We will be reading the following stories:

- Jack and the Beanstalk – Traditional tale
- Peace at Last – Jill Murphy
- Goldilocks and the three Bears – Traditional tale
- The Three Little Pigs – Traditional tale
- The Three Billy Goats Gruff- Traditional tale
- Little Red Riding Hood – Traditional tale
- Rapunzel – Traditional Tale
- George and the Dragon by Christopher Wormell
- Would you Rather by John Birmingham

Other activities

- Writing words, captions and simple sentences related to artwork and core texts that we have studied.

Prime Area: Physical Development

- Junk modelling and workshop tools to create houses and castles.
- Learning sequences of movement in a dance.
- Learn about healthy foods and prepare dishes to eat and cook.
- To develop physical confidence using a variety of climbing apparatus.
- Develop fine motor skills through a range of activities.

Specific Area: Expressive Arts & Design

- Music and movement – Chinese Dragon dance
- Using percussion instruments to learn about pulse, rhythm and pitch.
- Junk modelling and workshop tools to create houses and castles
- Look closely at the artwork of Paolo Uccello- George and the Dragon.
- Drawing and designing our own fairy houses using junk modelling and craft materials.

Specific Area: Mathematics (M)

- Looking at uses of colour and patterns in a variety of artwork.
- Regular counting, ordering numbers and developing a secure understanding of number.
- Combining groups and developing our understanding of addition and subtraction.
- Looking closely at geometric shapes (circle, square, triangle, rectangle, hexagon) and investigating 3d shapes (cubes, spheres and cones)