7th September 2018

Dear Parents and Carers

Welcome to Reception.  It has been lovely to see the children this week coming into school looking so grown up in their uniforms and with big smiles.  We have learnt where to put all of our belongings and where to find our lunch! The best part has been investigating all the different areas in the setting and we are super at tidying up after ourselves.

In Reception we operate a broad and balanced, experiential curriculum which focuses upon the importance of learning through play.  The curriculum is delivered through topics and theme days which will change each half term and, after initially getting to know each other, will reflect the children’s interests.  Our first topic is Magical Me and allows everyone to get to know each other, our likes and dislikes and interests whilst we settle into the daily school routine. During these first few weeks we will focus on getting to know your child, finding out what they can do well and working out their next learning objectives.  We will then use this information to split the children into smaller groups for daily phonic and numeracy sessions.

During the year we will endeavour to keep you fully informed about themes and special days through the website, text messages and the blue communication folders, which will come home on Fridays. You will also be kept up to date with meetings, workshops and other information. Please return the emptied white communication folder every Monday.

Parentmail is our school communication system for emails and texts. In the next few weeks you will receive an email from the company with details about how to set up your account. In the meantime, we will send home any communication via your communication folders.

Home learning is a vital part of your child’s education and in EYFS we use home learning to consolidate your child’s progress against the weekly learning objectives.  Every Friday we will update the home learning on the Reception class page of our school website with a task. If you struggle to access the home learning please let us know and we will send a paper copy home each week. This week we would like your child to take ownership of their home learning book, by decorating the front cover.  You could use stickers, photographs, draw pictures, use glitter pens and be as creative as you like! We look forward to seeing and sharing their works of art with the class next week.

In addition to this we are sending home a cloud template for you to complete with something amazing your child has done. It might be sleeping in own their bed at night, being a bridesmaid or page boy or riding a bike. It can be anything that is a celebration for your child and a moment to be proud of. These will then be shared and displayed in our class on our ‘proud cloud’ display. You can send in as many clouds as you wish over the year to go alongside ones that staff and children will complete in school.

We suggest that these home learning tasks are in addition to helping your child develop their reading skills.  During the coming weeks your child will receive their first home reading book and planner. The first stage in learning to read is by looking at the pictures and memorising the story, please give your child lots of praise for this.  This 1:1 reading with your child at home is really beneficial, providing your child a chance to practise what they have learned, build up their reading knowledge and learn about how books work. When they have finished reading the book twice with you please write a comment in their planner, return them to school and we will change it for a new one.  Please continue reading other books to your child as it helps them build up vocabulary and story patterns.

We want the children to have lots of fun and enjoy their learning and would like to share their experiences with you through our electronic observation programme, ‘2Build a profile’.  Parents with children from our Nursery setting will continue to enjoy their child’s learning journey through to the end of Reception via regular e-mails. Parents with children new to our school will have your email address entered in to our 2simple package, which is a secure online system.  Please consent to the 2build a profile invitation so that we can share your child’s learning journey with you. If you have not yet received a request for this please let us know. In addition to this, you will also be able to see some of the fun we have been having by checking the Reception pages on the school website.

You may have already heard about golden tickets! We give golden tickets for good behaviour, kind friends, helpers, nice manners and generally being wonderful children.  If your child hasn’t done yet then they will probably come home to tell you when they have been awarded one. These special tickets go into a box and at the end of every half term they are mixed up and Miss Salisbury picks out a golden ticket at random and that child wins a prize.

Finally some general reminders…

* Please ensure you have returned any outstanding forms to us from your induction packs and the £10 voluntary creative fund, if you wish to contribute – this fund really does help us to make the year extra special for all of the children with cooking, food tasting and creative activities. Can we ask that this is cash and not a cheque.
* All children need to have a coat with them in school every day.  Even if the weather is lovely in the morning, by lunchtime it could be raining and we will be walking to the main building for lunch and PE.  The children will also continue to choose outdoor learning and play whatever the weather!
* If you haven’t already labelled all belongings and clothing with your child’s name please do so to help us return items to the right owner.
* The children will be provided with a daily snack of milk and fruit.  We ask that they bring in a clearly labelled, filled water bottle from home each day so that can have a drink of water when they need one. Please remember it is only water.
* From time to time your child may have an ‘accident’ toileting or become unwell and may need adult assistance. Please ensure that the intimate care policy (copy in communication folder) has been read, signed and returned even if your child does not have a regular need. This will give us permission to help support your child if needed.

Thank you for support and patience through the first week.  We want your child to have a wonderful, happy year in Reception in preparation for the rest of their school life.  We are usually available after school for any questions but please wait until all the children have been safely released first. For other conversations, concerns or worries, please arrange to come in and talk to us through our school email address (office@lickeyhills.worcs.sch.uk).

Kind regards

Dr Kirby and Mrs Reading