CURRICULUM INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

**PRIMARY 1 YEAR GROUP 2020-21**

**P.1. Daily Routine**

* 8.30am – children arrive to school
* Children are encouraged to come into the classroom by themselves – this promotes independence
* Children hang up coats, self–register and take their message pouches out of their schoolbags
* 8.45 am - whole-school prayers in the dinner hall
* Fruit/milk/water at snack time (approximately 10 am)
* Break time: 10.30am-10.45am
* Lunch time: 11.45am-12.30pm
* Home time: 1.30pm

(After School supervision / After school clubs available from 1.30pm-2.30pm)

**Learning through Play**

* Play provides opportunities for children to experience learning in a meaningful and purposeful way.
* Play provides a context for children to access the content of the curriculum.
* Planned sessions of **indoor** and **outdoor** play – topic based

**The Revised Curriculum**

* Activity-based learning
* Areas of Learning – Communication (Language and Literacy), Mathematics and Numeracy, Using ICT, The Arts, The World Around Us, Personal Development and Mutual Understanding, Physical Development and Movement (PE)

**Communication - Language and Literacy**

*Talking and Listening*

* Children develop their talking and listening through the natural process of growing up
* Focus on oral language - skills are developed through all areas of the curriculum
* ‘Active listening’ encouraged – children are taught ‘rules’ for listening and reminded to follow these throughout the day
* Following instructions – both in school and at home
* Listening to the teacher and each other through various activities
* Stories, poems, songs, rhymes, Circle Time, Show and Tell, Daily News

*Phonological Awareness*

* By developing children’s phonological awareness, we *‘provide children with a tool for future reading and writing’* (N.I. Curriculum)
* Starting point is **oral language**
* Developing young children’s awareness of words, syllables, rhymes and phonemes (sounds in words) significantly increases their later success in learning to read and write
* Initial emphasis on developing attention and listening skills
* Listening to and taking part in stories, poems and rhymes – identifying rhyming words
* Exploring the structure of words – tapping/clapping syllables
* Hearing and identifying beginning/middle/end sounds in words
* Exploring sounds within the environment and patterns of sounds within words

*Reading*

* Reading experiences are informal and enjoyable
* Children encouraged to develop a love of books and the disposition to read as stories and books are read to them
* Listening to a wide range of interesting fiction, non-fiction, poetry and rhymes
* Access to a wide range of reading material – children are encouraged to use the book corner daily and become familiar with letters and words in books
* Reading books introduced when children have developed concepts of print and are ‘ready’ to read:
* Main Reading Scheme –Oxford Reading Tree
* Story based scheme - children read the whole book – begins with picture stories (no words).
* Children are encouraged to ‘retell’ the story and discuss what happens.
* High Frequency words (key words) will be sent home weekly – *please go over these at home.*

*Reading at home*

* Give children access to as many books as possible:
* School library books
* Books from local library
* Parents can help by encouraging children to ask questions, discuss pictures, retell and predict events using full sentences.
* Encourage independence and check knowledge. Check that children are following across the lines (tracking).
* Discuss stories and ask plenty of questions!
* Above all, always keep reading positive and enjoyable!

*Writing*

* Lots of ‘Pre- Writing’ activities
* Experimenting with a range of writing materials – pencils, pens, crayons, paint, chalk etc.
* Children are encouraged to write for a variety of purposes
* Emphasis will be placed on Left to Right orientation and pencil grip.
* Lower Case letters – correct formation is very important
* We follow a handwriting scheme – children will be encouraged to form their letters according to this scheme from the beginning – please encourage your child to do so at home also!

*Linguistic Phonics*

* Usually introduced after Halloween
* Children learn to associate a ‘symbol’ (letter) with each sound.
* Emphasis on letter sound, not letter name.
* One letter/sound per week (s, a, t, p, i, n)
* Segment words into individual sounds e.g. sat - s/a/t
* Begin to blend sounds together to make simple words e.g. s…a…t - sat
* Parents can help by encouraging children to practise the sound associated with each letter.
* It is very important that you are saying the sounds correctly. If you are unsure, there is a helpful video that will show you how to say the sounds correctly –

Google – ‘sounds of the English phonic code’ - it will take you to a YouTube video.

* This can also be found on:

<http://phonicbooks.wordpress.com/2011/03/13/how-to-say-the-sounds-of-letters-in-synthetic-phonics/>

**Mathematics and Numeracy**

* Taught through activity-based learning, with real-life examples and an emphasis on proper mathematical language.
* Areas covered are – Number; Measures; Shape and Space; Handling Data

**The World Around Us**

* This subject incorporates Science & Technology, Geography and History.
* Topic approach – Myself, Toys, Light and Dark, Spring, Holidays
* Lots of practical learning and discussion takes place.

**The Arts**

* Incorporates:
* Music
* Drama
* Art and design
* Linked to World Around Us topics and celebrations in our calendar year.

**Personal Development and Mutual Understanding**

* PATHS programme – ‘Promoting Alternative THinking Strategies’
* Achieved through ‘circle time’ activities
* Focus on Rules, Compliments, Calming Down/Self Control, Feelings, Manners/Fair Play, Problem-solving

**Physical Development and Movement (PE)**

* Indoor and outdoor play every day - greatly develops fine motor skills.
* Two PE sessions per week
* Important to encourage independence in dressing themselves
* **Please label PE uniforms/shoes!**

**Religious Education (RE)**

* ‘Grow in Love’ programme - stories, poems, songs and prayers
* Focus on themselves and others around them
* Helping and caring for others
* Assemblies

**Using ICT**

* Pupils are constantly developing their ICT skills:
* Logging on to computers
* Interactive Whiteboard used on a daily basis
* Navigating around screen/ various programmes (supporting the curriculum)
* Using the iPad, games, websites, cameras, Bee-Bots

**Assessment in Primary One**

* Informal assessment – teacher observations
* Speech and Language Link – all pupils assessed in Term One
* Mid-term Assessment in February and End of Year Assessment in June to assess progress in Literacy/ Numeracy

**Reporting to Parents**

* Parent Teacher Meetings will take place week beginning 9th November
* Annual report is sent home in June
* Reports on all the ‘Areas of Learning’
* Indicates your child’s strengths and interests
* Explains how your child can further develop their skills

**Homework**

* Weekly Homework – given on Monday and collected on Friday
* Related to work/topics covered in school
* Lots of practical/discussion activities to reinforce learning
* Should last no longer than 10-15 minutes per day
* Letters/Sounds/Key words/Reading homework daily

**Our Positive Behaviour Approach**

* We have a school Positive Behaviour Policy which sets out whole school rules
* We have a whole school reward system where certificates are presented each week at assembly for the Pupil of the Week
* Each pupil is part of a “House Team” which encourages working together and taking responsibility. Each class teacher gives out 5 house points per week
* Traffic Light system to encourage positive behaviour

**Healthy Break Policy**

* Aims to promote the dental health of the children by ensuring that they do not take sugar-containing snacks and/or drinks between meals during the school week.
* Fruit/milk/water provided every morning in P.1.
* **The school has a strict “No Nuts” Policy.**

**Health and Safety/ General Points of Information**

* Please try to ensure that your child arrives to school on time. If you arrive at school after 9:10 you must bring your child to the office.
* Please remember that if your child has an appointment they need to be collected from the school office
* If your child is absent please send a written note on the day that they return
* Pupils must not bring mobile phones to school. In exceptional circumstances speak to the Principal.
* If you change your telephone number, address or other contact details, please let the school know as soon as possible
* Please put your child’s name on all their belongings.
* Money is collected on a ***Monday*** and yellow money pouches should be used.
* **(Healthy Break £4 per month/ Dinner £13 per week /Milk £15 per term)**
* We would prefer that children do not wear earrings to school– if worn they must be studs only – these need to be covered at home for P.E. sessions please

**Appointments**

* If you wish to meet with me, please phone the school office and leave a message. I will then contact you to arrange a suitable appointment time
* Unfortunately, I am unable to discuss issues during the school day or take phone calls.
* In an emergency contact the Principal through the office.

 **Attendance**

* **Regular** and **punctual** attendance at school is essential. If your child’s attendance falls below **90%** you will be contacted by the school principal to discuss.
* Attendances falling below **85%** are referred to the Education and Welfare Officer.
* Also, please note that attendance is recorded as “**Authorised”** or “**Unauthorised”. *Both*** recordings affect the overall attendance of a pupil.
* The only exception is if a pupil is on a SCHOOL activity; this does not affect overall attendance.
* All absences must be explained in writing to the class teacher.

# Thank you for your continued help and support!

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you wish to talk about your child.

*Mrs R. Fearon*