



**Bathampton Primary School**  
*Together on a learning adventure*

## **Class One**

**Welcome Letter 2017**

Dear Parents

Welcome to the start of a new academic year in Class One. This letter is important in introducing you to the class, and hopefully will help you to support your child's learning. Attached is a copy of the class topic web to show you some of the things we will be doing in the first term of the year. Also attached is a class timetable to give an idea of the structure of the week. As you would expect this timetable is very flexible and may be subject to change.

### **Staff**

Mrs. Lake will be teaching all week with the exception of some Wednesday mornings when Mrs Clarke will teach the class in order for Mrs Lake to complete tasks related to her Deputy Headteacher role. We have full time cover this year from four teaching assistants (TAs). Mrs Hedges will be working on Monday and Tuesday mornings (and providing some support on Wednesday and Thursday mornings) Mrs Huntley will be in class on a Wednesday and Thursday morning, and Miss Yandell on a Tuesday and Friday morning. Miss Murphy will be in Class One every afternoon.

### **PPA (Planning, Preparation and Assessment) time**

In Class One, PPA time is covered by Mrs. Kelley who is one of our very experienced HLTAs (Higher Level Teaching Assistants), alongside Miss Murphy. Mrs Lake's PPA time this year will be on a Monday afternoon.

### **The Year One Experience**

This year is a time of transition between the Reception experience and the more structured timetable of older children. At the moment, and until they are ready for a more structured day, all children will have some time during the school day to choose their own activities. By the end of the year the children will be engaged in more adult-led learning activities to prepare them for Year Two. You will see from the timetable that we have daily Literacy and Maths lessons, which may also encompass other subjects. Our topic work ensures all areas of the curriculum are covered throughout the year.

### **A 'Mastery' Curriculum**

In 2014 a new National Curriculum was introduced which clearly sets a new set of objectives that the children in each year group are expected to know and 'master'. There is a change to the stages at which different skills are taught and age-expectations have generally increased. We hope that by working closely with you as usual we will enable the vast majority of our children to achieve the age expectations. As always frequent reading at home and support with any homework will help children to be successful. Details of the new year-by-year curriculum are attached and on the website.

## **Phonics**

Children will continue to have a daily Letters and Sounds session to develop their phonic awareness in reading and spelling. Sound books will be sent home to support the phonics learnt in school; these will come home on a Friday to be returned the following week please. Towards the end of the year, all Year 1 children are required to undertake a phonic screening test where they read real and pseudo (made up) words. These will be covered in class and I will provide you with examples at a later date, for your information.

## **Reading**

Your child will continue to bring home a reading book every day to share with you. Please place the yellow reading diary and reading book in the basket at the beginning of **every** day. Your child will be taught how to change the book during the school day.

We would be very grateful if you could write in the reading diaries whenever your child reads at home, giving at least the date and the page number reached, but preferably also a comment. We will try to ensure that your child is heard read at least once a week by a teacher, teaching assistant or volunteer. However at certain times of the year events may conspire to make this impossible. There are many other opportunities to extend your child's reading throughout the school day, with whole class reading of big books, reading on the Interactive Whiteboard, individual worksheets and reading in groups.

Frequent story telling and reading sessions at home with a parent are key to a child's success in reading and also to success in many other areas of the curriculum. Research has shown that this is the most significant way that parents can support children's learning at school. Less confident readers will need sufficient support and encouragement to keep the focus on the story, whilst decoding simple words. Please offer sufficient support to make reading fun and easy, with a focus on understanding. It is often beneficial to repeat reading books and use the tips and games in the front or back cover of our newer resources to extend the reading experience. It is also beneficial if your child reads a range of books and genres.

Please encourage your child to express opinions about the characters in the story, the plot, and what might happen next. It is also a useful skill for children to retell a story remembering to include who the story is about, what happens and how any problems are resolved. When children move from one coloured book band to another, they will be 'benchmarked' to assess whether or not they are ready for the next level. This will assess your child's reading and decoding skills, as well as their understanding and retelling. From Year Two onwards reading tests assess a child's understanding of the text rather than their ability to read aloud, so intelligent conversations about stories are increasingly important.

## **Spelling**

Spelling lists will be given at the beginning of Term Two, to help your child learn a bank of known words. Your child will be tested in class on Fridays with the words listed. This is a simple introduction to the idea of a test and is not intended to be a stressful experience for your child. If the whole list of words is too daunting, please feel free to reduce the number of spellings that your child learns. We encourage children to learn spellings using the Look, Cover, Write, Check method, following the sequence:

LOOK at the word

COVER the word

WRITE the word

CHECK their spelling against the word.

Your child will benefit from frequent practice using this technique. Some children will need daily practice and others less frequent sessions. It is also useful to review spellings

from previous weeks to consolidate the learning, and to ensure that these have formed part of your child's stock of learnt vocabulary. This is important in ensuring that learnt spellings are retained.

### **Handwriting**

This is an important skill, and any game or activity that supports this is to be encouraged. Drawing, colouring, cutting, sewing, playing with Lego, for example, all help develop hand control and fine motor skills. Some children will be working towards Handwriting Milestone One (correct letter formation) and others will be working towards Milestone Two (correct letter formation and size, with writing on the line). Throughout the year your child's handwriting will be assessed and school Milestones rewarded with a certificate and mention in assembly.

### **Mathematics**

Please help your child with their mental manipulation of **numbers** to increase their confidence and speed. This could include counting forwards and backwards from a given number, saying a number that comes before or after a given number, or simple addition and subtraction problems. Maths games can be great for long car journeys or bath times! The School Maths Games that are borrowed from the library are a shared, fun activity and will help your child consolidate their mathematical understanding. These will come home weekly. (See below)

Playing games involving numbers bonds to 10 (6+4, 7-3 etc) and then 20 (18 + 2 etc) and 100 (60 + 40 etc) is fun and would be helpful. Children will have the opportunity to be tested on their knowledge of these number bonds, in order to achieve their Number Bond Milestones. The Milestones are intended to be a rigorous but fair test of a child's ability to recall their number bonds, without the need for counters or fingers. This knowledge will help in all sorts of Maths lessons and in real-life situations.



Your child will shortly receive log-in details for RM Easimaths which is a computer based resource for developing mathematical skills in an enjoyable way. This computer based learning system is interactive and personalised to your child's ability as they move along, providing numerous activities and very clear feedback. Use of this resource will help your child with their Maths and will support work being completed in school; any time that your child spends using this resource will be beneficial.

### **IT**

The school has recently invested in some new i-pads for use in the classroom. Your child will have the opportunity to use these, and the laptops, exploring age-appropriate programs and websites throughout the year.

With the ever-increasing use of technology, E-safety is now part of our curriculum. At Bathampton, we try to take a proactive approach in educating children about how to stay safe online. E-safety links are available on the school website (general help and advice for parents) at:

<http://bathampton.bathnes.sch.uk/index.php/learning-adventure/learning-games/>

As a school, we recommend children switch off their screens at least an hour before bedtime and ideally earlier and preferably have 'screen free' bedrooms for sleeping. We advise that screen time (of any sort) is limited. Two hours would be a maximum per day. Some organisations suggest swapping screen time for outdoor adventure or exercise time or ensuring that the time spent on both is at least equal. Screen free days are a great idea. We advise parents to monitor children's computer, phone and Internet use at home to ensure they are viewing age-appropriate material *e.g. You tube videos, online / video games* and use filters where necessary. If you have any concerns relating to E-safety, please speak to class teachers, Mr Falkus or Mrs Edmund.

### **Topic Work**

You will see from the topic web that our theme this term is 'Going Places'. If your child would like to bring any interesting items from home that link to our topics each term, I am always happy to share them. However, we would prefer toys to stay at home! During the coming weeks we will be thinking about journeys, transport and the local area.

### **Barnaby Bear**

In Class One we have our very own class bear who likes to travel and go on visits, keeping a record in his diary. He is available for the children to take home for a few nights and share an adventure with. Please encourage your child to complete a page or two in his diary as independently as possible and return within a week to allow all members of the class to care for him.

### **Show and Tell**

The children will have an opportunity to share their news or to 'Show and Tell' on a rota basis. In Class One we have a 'Show and Tell Bag' which the children bring home in turn. When your child brings the bag home, it is their opportunity to bring it back to school containing up to 3 items they would like to share and tell the class about. These could be books, photographs, something they have made, or a toy. Whatever they choose it is always more interesting when they are able to tell us lots of information about it.

### **Library Books and Maths Games**

Your child will be able to choose a library book and Maths game to bring home every week (day tbc). Your child will be able to choose from any of the books in the library; this may be a book they can read, or one for you to share together. Please try to play the Maths games at least once before returning; they really do make an impact on children's learning. Please place library books and Maths games in book bags on the given day when they are ready to be returned.

### **Punctuality**

We would ask that all children arrive in school punctually in the mornings and, if possible, say goodbye to parents and adults in the cloakroom or corridor. We are keen to develop the pupils' independence at this time of day and there will generally be starting activities in the classroom at 8.40 in order to settle the children, and prepare them for learning. Urgent messages can be passed to the teachers but we would be grateful if longer discussions could wait until the afternoon when the teachers will be able to talk at leisure.

### **Home-time messages**

If your child is going home with somebody different at the end of the day, please record this in the home-time book located in the cloakroom. Please include the date, child's name and the person collecting your child.

**Water Bottles**

Please ensure your child brings a named bottle to school every day, filled only with water (no squash or juice). Please ensure water bottles are also taken home daily and washed.

**Uniform, PE kit, Wellies**

Please ensure your child wears the correct school uniform and PE kit. These items should be clearly named. We are keen that children should be able to play in our amazing school grounds all year and a pair of new or second hand wellington boots is a requirement in the winter and a great investment in allowing your child to experience the freedom of the woods and the field. These can be kept on the class wellie rack in the playground.

**End of the day**

We will bring the children to the front door of the school each day. Some parents like to wait in a similar place each day and children often find this helpful and reassuring. A wave helps us to see you more quickly and clearly, as we will try to catch your eye to acknowledge the handover;

I look forward to working with you and your child this year. If you have any queries please do not hesitate to see me. We are keen to sort out any problems quickly and would welcome visits at the end of school to improve communication.

Kind regards  
Mrs. Lake