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Friday 11th September 2026

Puffin Class – Routines & Autumn Term Curriculum

Dear Puffin Parents,

This letter will give you an overview of our routines and the learning experiences planned for the Autumn Term.

Morning Routines
Next week (Monday 14th September – Friday 18th September), Mrs Tweedie will be outside the main office entrance between 8:45 – 8:55 to meet and greet the children as they arrive. This week is an opportunity to support your child with the next stage of their transition. You are still very welcome to walk up to class together and help settle your child if they need it. If your child feels ready, they can begin saying goodbye to you at the main office entrance, where Mrs Tweedie will be waiting, and then make their way up to class independently.

From Monday 21st September, all Puffins will need to say goodbye to their adults at the main office entrance. We will have practised this with the children, and Mrs Tweedie will be there each morning to support anyone who may find this change a little challenging.

Mrs Tweedie will have our home list with her every morning. Please let her know if your child is being collected by someone different. She will also be able to take any messages you may have.

'Come & Play' Parent Sessions
To give you the opportunity to spend some time in school with your child, we will be holding a series of 'Come & Play' sessions during the first term. There will be activities set up in the classroom between 2:55 and 3:15 on the following dates:

Thursday 24th September
Monday 5th October
Wednesday 4th November
Tuesday 17th November
Wednesday 2nd December

Keeping You Informed/Communication
We will be using the ClassDojo app to share whole-class stories, upcoming events, and day-to-day updates. I will add all dates from this letter to our ClassDojo calendar too. We will use Tapestry to create a personalised profile for your child and to record and celebrate their learning progress.

If you would like to share any information or concerns, please pass on any messages to Mrs Tweedie in the mornings at drop off, or speak to Mr Lawrence at home time. If your child attends Breakfast Club, you can also pass on messages to Miss Coyle. Please note that we do not use the messaging feature on ClassDojo for communication. We are always happy to arrange a suitable time to talk or to book a phone call so that you have the opportunity to speak with us.

Snack Time, Milk & Water Bottles
All Puffin children receive a free piece of fruit or vegetables each morning during snack time. Children are also welcome to bring their own **named**, real pieces of fruit or vegetables if they prefer. Where possible, please can items like snack pots be brought to school in their book bag, rather than an additional rucksack, as they can find it tricky to carry all of their things at home time.

Puffins who are 4 years old are given a free carton of milk each day. Once your child turns 5, they are no longer entitled to free milk and deliveries will stop. If you would like your child to continue having milk, please register and pay via the Cool Milk website as soon as they turn 5: https://www.coolmilk.com. (It may be helpful to pop a reminder in your calendar.)

Please ensure your child brings a water bottle to school every day. Puffins can access their water bottles at all times and are encouraged to drink regularly, including at snack time, lunchtime, and after physical activity. Water bottles should contain only water for use in class. If your child finds drinking plain water difficult at home, you may send an additional bottle for playtime and lunchtime containing flavoured water or squash. We can then support your child with transitioning from juice to water at their pace.

Friday Mornings
Mrs Peters will be teaching Puffins every Friday morning until 11:30 while Mr Lawrence has his planning time. She will mainly be teaching science-based lessons and activities.

PE Kits
Please ensure that PE kits are left in school for the whole week. PE bags will be sent home at the end of each half-term for washing (just ask if you would like it before then and your child can take it whenever you need it). During the Autumn Term, we would like the Puffins to go through the process of changing themselves for each PE lesson, as developing independence with dressing is part of the Reception curriculum. Keeping PE kits in school also allows us to be flexible each week and choose the best time for our PE sessions, depending on the weather and hall availability. We will begin our PE sessions from Monday onwards.

Welly Wednesdays
We will begin our Welly Wednesday sessions on **Wednesday 16th September**. Each Wednesday, please ensure your child brings a set of suitable waterproofs, clothing, and footwear (e.g. wellies) to change into. We will be getting muddy and heading outside in all weathers! Every item must be named and brought to school in a named bag. Some weeks, our Welly Wednesday sessions may include a local walk. We will put out helper requests when needed!

Age-Related Expectations
Attached to this letter are the expectations for 3–4 year olds, which the children will have been working on at Pre-school. We will be spending lots of time playing and talking alongside your child to see how confidently they can meet these expectations independently. The first six weeks in Puffins are all about understanding each child's strengths and identifying their next steps. We will share our assessments with you during the Autumn Term Parents' Evening, which will take place in the last week of this half-term.

The Reception expectations have also been attached. These outline the skills and knowledge your child will be focusing on throughout the year. Later in the year, we will share the Early Learning Goals, which the children will be assessed against in June.

Autumn First Half-Term Assessments

During the first six weeks, we will carry out four main assessments:

1. **Speech Assessment:** We use *Speech Link* to identify any individual sounds your child may need support with. The programme provides activities for us to use in school and indicates when a referral to a Speech Therapist may be appropriate. Home learning opportunities are also provided.
2. **Language Assessment:** We use *Language Link* to identify any gaps in children's understanding of vocabulary. This also provides activities and home learning suggestions to support individuals.
3. **Reception Baseline Assessments:** Reception children in England complete national baseline assessments within their first six weeks at school. These are short, interactive and practical assessments of early literacy, communication, language and mathematics skills. More information can be found at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reception-baseline-assessment-information-for-parents.
4. **Phonics Assessments** At the end of the half-term, we will assess your child's progress in Phonics, based on the learning covered during the first six weeks.

Autumn Curriculum

Our key themes for the Autumn Term are:

1) Seasons: Autumn and the transition into Winter
2) All About Me: families, personal history (a home project will be shared in the next few weeks), birthdays and creating self-portraits
3) Looking After Ourselves: understanding feelings, making friends, and keeping ourselves clean and healthy (e.g. exploring correct hand washing, brushing teeth)
4) Farming: linked to our Harvest learning
5) Oracy: learning the rules on how to take part in a discussion
6) Celebrations: Harvest, Diwali & Christmas.

During the first six weeks, we spend lots of time exploring classroom rules and routines and focusing on building friendships within the class. The different learning areas, both inside and outside the classroom, provide opportunities for play, discussion and shared exploration. We build these areas up with the children throughout the first half-term so that they develop a sense of ownership over their learning environment.

Maths & English

We will be using a Maths Mastery scheme which has been developed by the NCETM (National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics). The scheme gradually builds important mathematical skills and knowledge, and provides children with lots of visual imagery to support their understanding and help them commit learning to their long-term memory.

For handwriting, we will be using the Letter-join scheme. We begin by exploring patterns, learning how to sit correctly for writing, and how to hold pencils properly. Each child will also focus on the correct letter formation for their name.

We follow the Little Wandle Phonics and Reading scheme. Phonics takes place daily, and reading will be taught in guided groups three times a week.

To provide you with more information and to share home learning strategies (including home learning and reading books), we will be running parent information sessions on the following dates:

- Phonics & Reading: **Monday 21st September** at 5:30pm or **Tuesday 22nd September** at 3:30pm
- Maths: **Wednesday 7th October** at 5:30pm or **Thursday 8th October** at 3:30pm
- Handwriting: **Monday 9th November** at 5:30pm or **Tuesday 10th November** at 3:30pm

Diwali
Puffins will enjoy a special Diwali-themed week starting on Monday 9th November. This will include a celebration day on **Thursday 12th November**, when Puffins are invited to come dressed in their bright, colourful party clothes. On this day, we will cook together and share a Diwali feast.

Celebration Assemblies
All parents and families are invited to attend our Harvest and Nativity assemblies. No tickets are required. The Puffins will be performing the Tableau scene in the Nativity.

- Harvest: **Wednesday 21st October** at 9:40am
- Nativity: **Monday 7th December** at 2:30pm or **Tuesday 8th December** at 9:15am

Lots of information to absorb. Please let us know if you have any questions!

Mr Lawrence & Mrs Tweedie