

February 2023

Dear families,

We wanted to provide an update on the second half of the Spring Term, which we hope you enjoy reading all about.

As you know, our topic this term is 'Open a door....' The children have been opening doors to different countries around the world each week. We have been learning about different countries, the culture, food, animals and then comparing these factors to the UK.

The children have been exploring questions such as:

- Where is your family from?
- What is the country like?
- What is the weather like?
- What language(s) do you speak?
- What types of food do they eat?
- What types of festivities are held in this country?

This term we are reading the story [Mr Wolf's Pancake](#) and [The Gingerbread Man](#). The children are hot-seating different characters and learning to ask good questions. By learning to ask questions, children are able to find out information and deepen their understanding of a topic or their interests. The children have been sequencing the story as well.

We have been busy cooking and baking this term too. We are learning to make lists of ingredients we need, and discussing the purpose of a recipe. We write instructions for our cooking. The children have made pancakes for Pancake Day and baked gingerbread biscuits this week. We are trying out different recipes to make our pancakes and biscuits healthy.

- What can we use instead of sugar?
- What kind of toppings can we use?

The children are also planning and making their own gingerbread man hand puppets. By planning their puppets, the children are able to create a design and reflect upon the steps they need to take to make their puppets.

Role Play:

In the role play area, we have set up a supermarket. This ties in with our PSHE as the children are learning about being healthy and making healthy choices. When taking your child out shopping to the supermarket ask them if they can find something healthy. Can they help plan a healthy meal?

Phonics

Phonics teaching is a big focus, and we are supporting your children to become great readers and writers. All children are taking a Phonics book home. Please listen to your child read and ensure that these books come to school every day.

Words are everywhere – practice reading and writing by helping your children to sound out the letters they know. Get your child to write words and even challenge them to write simple sentences.

In their Phonics folder I have included a high frequency word list (RED words). These are words that children should know how to read and spell by the end of Reception. These words cannot be sounded out.

When reading with your child each night you can ask questions before, during and after the reading. Understanding what has been read to us and understanding what we read is an equally important skill to becoming a strong fluent reader. These skills help the children think about what they are reading and being able to talk about or answer questions about the story. Here are a few **reading comprehension** questions that can be tried at home:

- Before:
 - What do you think this story will be about? What might happen in the story?
 - Where do you think the story takes place? How do you know? (Encourage your child to look at the illustrations on the book's cover).
- During
 - What is happening in the picture?
 - What has happened so far? Is it what you expected to happen? Why or why not?
 - What might happen next?
 - How do you think the story might end?
 - How do you think the character is feeling here? How would you feel if you were the character in the story?
- After
 - Did you like this book? Why? (Encourage your child to explain their reasoning in a sentence. This will help them develop their own opinions about books).
 - What happened in the story?
 - What was your favourite part? Why?
 - What was the most exciting part of the story? Can you find it?
 - Why did that character do...(give a situation/event from the story)?

Maths

In addition to this cross-curricular learning, we have started exploring numbers in further depth by counting amounts, finding one more and one less and applying our knowledge through problem-solving. We enjoy solving a good problem!

The children will be learning to order numbers from the smallest to the largest. Placing numbers in a sequence is an important skill. Numbers can be put into sequences in numerous ways. It demonstrates the children's understanding of number.

They will also be recapping shapes, their properties and repeating patterns. We will also focus on positional language. Can you give your child a set of instructions to follow for e.g., Give your child a teddy bear? Can you put your teddy above your head?

Here are a few activities that can be done at home to support your child's learning:

- **Ordering numbers (1-10, 1-20):** Create your own number cards using pieces of paper. Support your children with number formation. Mix up the numbers and then ask your children to put them in order. Can you use a timer to see how long it takes to order the numbers? Can you beat your time next time? When your child is confident with ordering numbers, give them only three to five random numbers and ask them to put them into order. Can you place these numbers in order of smallest number to largest number?

- **Patterns:** look for patterns everywhere (songs, stories, fabrics, repeating patterns). Can you create your own patterns? What can you use to make a repeating pattern? Can you clap out a pattern or make an actions pattern (clap, jump, clap, jump...).
- **Shape 2D and 3D:** Collect some objects you can find in your house that are 3D shapes (cereal box, crisp tube, boxes of tea, oranges, DVDs, etc...). Sort them into groups of the same shapes. How many objects have corners? How many round objects do you have? How many have curved edges or sides? Can you sort them by what 2D shapes you can see in the 3D shape?
- **Number Bonds:** Explore number bonds within 5 using objects from your home. Find five objects and two plates or boxes. Place some objects on one plate and then take the rest of the objects and put them on the other plate. Count how many are on each plate. What number bond did you make? How can we rearrange them to find another way to make five? I can see that there are two on this plate. If I hide the other plate, can you tell me how many are on it?

Library Books and Reading

‘The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you’ll go’

— Dr. Seuss

One of the most important things you can do with your child is to Read, read, read! This week the children have loved hearing a range of stories and singing many nursery rhymes. Please take 10 minutes to read with them every night. This is so important for your child – it will help to develop their communication, language and concentration skills, and fosters curiosity and creativity.

The children will be borrowing a book from the library every **Tuesday**. Please make sure your child has their book folder with them. **The children would usually change their books every Tuesday. So please make sure that you return the book to the class by Monday.**

Here are important days of our week:

Tuesday – We encourage all of the children to borrow a book from our school library. Please make sure your child has a book bag or a bag with them.

Wednesday- Every Wednesday we cook something as a class.

Friday – Celebration assembly where we celebrate what has happened in the Early Years. Your child will get a chance to be ‘Star of the Week’ and get a certificate. They will also get a sticker if they come to school every day. Also, one child will take Summer and another child will take Winter home for the weekend.

Home Learning

Home Learning is an effective tool used to support the learning in the classroom and to help children develop into independent learners. In EYFS, children learn through experiences, hands-on learning and play. Home Learning will focus on developing and supporting communication/language skills, understanding of the world, and physical development. Home Learning will be set as projects where the children will be able to learn or create something to share with their classmates. This half term’s home learning will be:

- **Can you find a healthy alternative to sugar?:** Find a recipe for pancakes or gingerbread and make it. Measure out the ingredients and discuss the method for making this recipe. After enjoying your tasty creation, can you think of an alternative ingredient to replace the sugar? Investigate different ingredients and then make your recipe again using your alternative ingredient. Did the method change or the mixture look different? Did it cook the same? Would you recommend this new recipe to a friend? How did your new creation taste? Can you draw and write captions for each step of your recipe?

- **Open a Door:** Where is your family from? Explore where your family is from in the world by learning and comparing different music, clothing, food and culture from that country. Bring in or post on Tapestry about your family. This will be added to your class book about Tiger Class' families.

Please share your home learning on Tapestry. We look forward to seeing your Home Learning projects and sharing them with the class.

Spring Show

Every year the Early Years put on a special Spring Show. This year we will be showcasing the story, 'The Gingerbread Man.' Every child will dress up and take part in the show. Teachers have let you know what role your child will play and either given you a line to rehearse or song actions to practice. Please support your child by practising at home especially if they have a talking part as we want our children to show resilience and confidence during the final performance.

It's always a highlight in the Early Years for all to watch!

Ramadan

We will be learning about Ramadan. Ramadan is a special month for many families. Please ensure that the children are always going to bed by 7pm. We always tell the children that they can have Iftar during the weekend.

Learning Journeys – Tapestry

This year in our Early Years we are using a new online learning journal called Tapestry to showcase our children's amazing learning. Please activate your account by checking the request email I have sent from Tapestry. If you need any help please come and find me. We are uploading photos and videos of your child's learning in school to their learning journals. Also, feel free to add your own photos if you wish; it is always wonderful to see the learning that goes on outside of school too.

Healthy bodies, healthy minds.

A gentle reminder that healthy children need:

- Plenty of sleep: 10-12 hours every night. This means bedtime at 7pm!
- Fresh fruit and vegetables every day.
- Lots of water to drink.
- Clean, healthy teeth – your child must brush their teeth **every morning** and **every night** before bed to stay healthy.

PLEASE ENSURE YOUR CHILD HAS A WATER BOTTLE WITH THEM EACH DAY so they can drink freely throughout the day.

Important events / diary dates:

- British Science Week-13/03/23
- Special Someone Celebration – 17/03/23 at 3pm
- Spring Show Costume Making Workshop – 23/03/23 at 9am
- Spring Disco Dance – 24/03/23
- The EYFS spring show- We will be performing the story of The Gingerbread Man 29/03/23 at 9.30
- Last day of term (31/03/23 at 2pm)

Thank you for your continued support.

The Reception Team