

Autumn 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to Willow class. Here is some information that will hopefully be of interest to you, apologies if some is repeated from previous messages. We have twenty-four children in the class this year.

Staff and Helpers

Emma, Emily, Alice and James are our classroom assistants. Emma will be in class on a Monday and Tuesday, Emily on a Wednesday, Alice on a Thursday and Friday and James will be in each morning and on Wednesday and Friday afternoons. Lucy will be helping to cover PPA (planning, preparation and assessment) time on a Wednesday afternoon when she will be taking the children for music and PSED. Emily will take Willow Class for Forest School on a Wednesday afternoon also. This will enable us to split the two year groups with the reception children having Forest School first while the year ones are with Lucy and then they will swap so that all the children experience both aspects of the curriculum. Mrs White from the music service will be teaching the children music on a Wednesday morning.

Morning Routine

Our routine to start each morning is as follows:

- Hang up coats and hats
- Put lunch box, if they have now, on the bench by their coat
- Self registration, using the interactive board
- Put reading bags in the basket ready for changing books
- Go to the activities on the tables

Reading

The year one children took reading books and 'share with me' books home yesterday. Share with me books will be allocated next week for the Reception children. These are books for you to share with your child and may progress to them spotting sounds and tricky words we have learnt in class. Once we have started our phonics lessons and the children learn to blend sounds they will get a Rhino Readers book. I will be allocating each child a book changing day, so please look at the next Dojo which will explain the plan. I aim to talk to each child individually about the books they have shared or read (for year one) at home at least once each week. This will progress to listening to them read their Rhino Reader book. I will move them on when I feel they are ready to do so. Each child develops at different rates and the practise they get at home is very important to this development. 'Share with me' books will be recorded in reading records, so please comment on your child's response. It does not need to be a long entry just initials may suffice, but it helps us to know that the book has been shared at home.

PE Days

We have PE on a Tuesday (taught by me) and Friday (taught by Mr Russ). Please don't worry if you haven't got the school PE T-shirt, a plain white one or their usual polo shirt is fine. All the PE sessions will be in the hall. We will be developing PE skills, covering fitness, fundamental PE activities, dance and ball skills. It is important

that children with long hair have it tied back on PE days. In fact, it is advisable for long hair to always be tied back to stop it getting in the way of activities.

Homework

A strange concept perhaps for children so young, but I know some already class their reading at home as homework, which in some ways I suppose it is and is certainly something many of you will do with your children on a daily basis. It is good to get into a daily routine, finding the right time for you and your child. Good habits formed now really do affect their reading development.

Bookmarks showing sounds we have learnt in phonics will be coming home for the reception children to practice and have a go at reading some words as well as keeping you informed. The year one children will have spellings to learn linked with their phonics lessons. Please look out for spelling books in a few weeks' time.

A '**Willow Class Reading Adventure**' bag will be travelling home with each child during the year so that they can share information about books they enjoy with the rest of the class. Lizzie Lion will be in the bag to enjoy all the books you will be sharing.

Fruit and Water

All children are entitled to a piece of fruit which is provided as part of the free fruit for schools scheme. This fruit is received at morning snack time. In the classroom, the children have named beakers which we use to get drinks of water from the water jugs. The children have constant access to this as well as the water fountain, and we have designated times in the day when the children have the opportunity to have a drink.

Interesting Stuff

Planning this term begins with the theme of 'Me and My Family', followed by exploring the story of 'The Enormous Turnip' and the story 'Think Big' when we will think about what children would like to be when they grow up. The rest of the term we will be finding out about seasonal changes, looking closely at the different materials around us, celebrating a number of festivals starting with 'Harvest', 'Diwali' and then 'Christmas' as well as exploring the value of 'Humility'. The children will also be exploring 'Why is the word 'God' so important to Christians?' and 'How should we care for the world, and why does it matter?' as well as looking at our locality. Finding out why we have Bonfire Night and Remembrance Day will be part of our learning this term. The year one children will be finding out about Mexico and making structures under the theme 'Pirate Paddy's Packed Lunch' as well as exploring the above themes at their level. There is a visit to the pantomime at Theatre Severn to look forward to at the end of term. Please look out, next week, for the termly plan on Dojo or the school website for a week by week break down of what we will be covering in the curriculum.

Forest School will happen on a weekly basis, and we hope to carry out our outdoor learning no matter what the weather, so having a coat in school is important. Wednesday's are '**Wellie Wednesdays**' when the children will need to come to school in old clothes. Thank you for bringing in Wellies and remember they can either stay in school all term or please bring them in on a Monday and put them on

the wellie rack and then collect them at pick up time on Friday.

Baseline assessments for the reception children will take place during the first six weeks of term. They will be carried out by observation, one-to-one tasks and talking to the children and will not seem any different to the usual everyday running of the class.

I hope this term will be an exciting and rewarding one for your child. Please contact me if you have any concerns or queries regarding any matter which may be of consequence to your child's education. We will be having settling-in interviews in October, which will be an opportunity to talk to you about your child.

Thank you for your interest and support.
Mrs A. D. M. Portman

Sharing the same book over a number of days

Look through the book and encourage your child to tell you a story from the pictures.
Read the story to them and talk about what they said and what they have heard.
What can they remember about the story? Can they recall the main events?
What was their favourite part?
Was there anything they didn't like?
Would they recommend the story to a friend?
Can they see the letter . . . on this page? Play spot the letter or spot the tricky word.