



Dear Parents/Carers,

September 2021

Welcome to Reception at West Hampstead Primary School. We hope you had an enjoyable summer. It has been lovely to welcome your children to Reception over the past days, and we hope their first term in Reception will be an enjoyable and exciting time. This letter will tell you all about the learning we do at school and some of our routines.

Our priority is that the children feel safe, happy and secure in their new environment and that they build relationships with the other children in their class and the adults who are working with them. We want the classrooms to be busy and fun places where the children can develop the skills to become independent and enthusiastic learners.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

Our **topics** this term are:

- Me and My Little World
- In the Night Sky
- Festivals (ongoing throughout the year)

Through these topics, we will be covering the seven areas of learning and development set out in the **Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage**, which has been updated this year and can be found on the government website.

There are three Prime Areas of learning:

- **Communication and Language**
- **Physical Development,**
- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development,**

There are also four Specific Areas:

- **Literacy**
- **Mathematics**
- **Understanding the World**
- **Expressive Arts and Design.**

Throughout the Early Years we are supporting children to develop effective characteristics of learning. These skills and attitudes include **playing and exploring, active learning,** and **creating and thinking critically.** We want the children to become curious, motivated, resilient learners and creative thinkers.

When your child starts at Reception, we will be making observations regarding their starting points which will enable us to build effectively on their knowledge and skills. This process will also include a short, statutory baseline assessment that is taking place nationally in all schools.

The Early Learning Goals (detailed in the statutory framework) summarise the knowledge, skills and understanding that all reception children should have learned along the year. Through discussions at two parents meetings throughout the year and in a final end –of-year report, we will keep you informed about your child's progress towards these goals.

More detailed information about specific areas of learning, including phonics and reading will be sent out as we progress through the year.

A Day in Reception

Once the children have had time to play and settle into the classroom, there is a short carpet session where we introduce the day's learning. The children are then able to choose activities independently in both the indoor and



Healthy School

Head teacher: **Sam Drake**
School Business Manager: **Paul Dougan**
Dornfell Street London NW6 1QL Tel: 020 7435 8646
Fax: 020 7435 8739
e-mail: admin@westhampstead.camden.sch.uk



school
achievement award
department for education and skills



and outdoor areas, and during this time adults engage with the children during their play and work with individuals and groups on focused activities. There is a whole class phonics session before lunch and a maths session in the afternoon.

Routines

Beginning and end of the day

Please bring your child to the **Reception gate** for 8:50am for a 9am start. Attendance and punctuality are very important and are monitored by the school. When a child is late they miss out on their learning time and can become anxious. It is important that your child attends school every day and develops good habits early on!

At the end of the day, the gates open at 3:20pm and children should be collected by 3:30pm. If you have older children to collect, we suggest that you collect the youngest first. Please let us know if there is going to be a change to your usual collection arrangement, **as we are not permitted to release children to anyone but you without written or verbal permission**. If you are late collecting your child this can cause them unnecessary anxiety. In an emergency, please contact the school as soon as possible.

We try to keep the end of day dismissal as smooth and quick as possible, however **the children's safety is our first priority**. This means we need to release the children in an orderly, calm fashion which may take a few minutes. You can help by **standing back from the classroom door** in the playground. This prevents the doorway from becoming congested and chaotic, which can make it difficult for the children to exit and for staff to see if they have reached their adults. Once you have collected your child, we do ask you to leave the playground as soon as possible.

PE

Our P.E coaches Karl Beckford and Hayden Thomas visit the Reception classes on **Thursdays** to work with the children to develop their physical skills. Your child does not need a P.E kit at this stage, but please ensure that they have appropriate footwear on Thursdays e.g. trainers or plimsolls. Children also need to wear shorts, jogging bottoms or leggings (**no tights**) for P.E.

Clothing

- Please **name** all your child's clothing (including jumpers, cardigans and coats).
- Jewellery is **not allowed** in school for safety reasons.
- Buttons, buckles, belts etc. are difficult for little fingers to deal with - especially when you are busy and in a hurry to return to your activity. Please bear this in mind when choosing clothes for school. Velcro is much easier than shoelaces and helps children to be independent.
- The children have access to the outdoor learning area throughout the day and in all weathers. Please ensure your child wears **suitable clothing for different weather conditions**, for example, a water-proof coat.
- Comfortable, closed shoes are important so children can fully access the outdoor learning.

Other information

- You are not expected to provide a snack because fruit is available for the children throughout the day.
- Please make sure your child has a **named water bottle** at school as water fountains are out of use.
- All children in reception are eligible for a healthy **free school meal**.
- If your child is having a **packed lunch**, please ensure it is healthy (**no crisps, chocolate, sweets or fizzy drinks**).
- As we are a healthy school, it is our policy **not to accept birthday cakes or treats**. Birthdays are celebrated in the classroom with special stickers and songs.
- As part of our first topic (Me and My Little World), we are focusing on families. It would be great if you could send in a family photo for your child to share in class. You could send in a physical copy or email it to reception@westhampstead.camden.sch.uk and we are happy to print it for you at school.

If you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to speak to us and we will help in anyway we can. Emails can be sent to admin@westhampstead.camden.sch.uk. We are very much looking forward to working with you and your child this year.

Best wishes,

Jenny Armson, Berni Quirke & Meltem Alici (Avon Class) Lisa Gafa & Maxine Lee (Lily Class)