

# Stanbridge Lower School



Tilsworth Road  
Stanbridge  
Leighton Buzzard  
Bedfordshire  
LU7 9HY

Telephone: 01525 210328  
[info@stanbridge.beds.sch.uk](mailto:info@stanbridge.beds.sch.uk)  
[www.stanbridge.beds.sch.uk](http://www.stanbridge.beds.sch.uk)

8<sup>th</sup> September 2021

Dear Parents or Guardians,

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome your child to Reception Class. All the children have settled in very well and come into school smiling each day. It has been lovely to watch them enjoy the provision and begin to form new friendships. The children have engaged so well with our first topic, Owls, where we have been outside on the field 'nature hunting', painting with feathers, reading 'Owl Babies' and baking owl biscuits. The children have enjoyed the warm weather this week and have been busy playing with the sand and water tray and making pies in our outside kitchen. They have also enjoyed using our new outside wooden toadstools to sit on and watch each other perform songs and tell stories! Here are just a few bits of information that will help you become more familiar with the Reception daily routine.

Please check the Reception blackboard in the front playground for information about weekly nature topics and the learning experiences the children will have each week.

Your child will need a pair of wellies to keep at school so that we are able to go outside in all weather. Your child will need a book bag and are expected to bring this to school every day. It is safer for the children to leave toys at home, as we aren't able to share home resources and wouldn't want them to get lost or broken. Please make sure your child brings a coat or rain mac in during cold and rainy weather and that your child brings a hat to school and that you apply sun cream to last all day during hot weather.

## Reading

Each week on a Friday your child will be given two home reading books. These will match the reading level they are reading in school. They will match their phonic reading ability as best we can but do not follow a set order. The children are allowed to choose the books they bring home but always have guidance from an adult.

Your child will be given a reading record to bring home. Within the reading record I will attach words your child will need to learn how to read. Each Friday, these will be assessed and you will be informed of any



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words they need extra help with. The words I send home will be either Phase 2 and Phase 3 Tricky words or words containing particular phonic sounds your child needs to learn.

Please use the reading record to record each time your child reads their books at home. We suggest reading little and often with your child (4-5 times a week for about 10 minutes) Children will be rewarded for their home reading by receiving stickers and class prizes.

### Phonics homework

Your child will have a phonics homework book and will be given 2/4 sounds to learn each week. These sounds will be the same sounds we are learning or recapping in class and will be sent home each Friday in time for them to be taught at school the following week. Please make sure your child has their phonics homework book in school every Friday.

Please make sure your child recognises the sounds and can say them aloud. For each sound, encourage your child to think of 3-4 words containing that sound, draw a picture matching one of the words and list these words on the lined section of the page. To begin with, the words will be written in highlighter or in black cursive by myself for your child to overwrite/underwrite but as the year progresses your child should be able to think of and write words themselves. As your child progresses they will be asked to use a selection of the words to independently write 1 or 2 sentences. These are to be written in pencil on the lined pages of the book provided. We have been using this method of spelling homework with the children for several years now and have found it to be very successful in allowing the children to make good progress with their phonic knowledge.

To consolidate their knowledge of all the Phase 2, 3 and 4 phonic sounds, there will often be weeks when we recap sounds previously covered.

You have been invited to a phonics homework presentation with Mrs Forbes on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> September 10.30 - 11 am. Mrs Forbes will be able to explain to you how we teach phonics and how you are expected to support your child with their homework. Any questions you may have she will be able to answer for you. I will send out phonics homework on the Friday following your presentation with Mrs Forbes.

Each week, your child will be given a poem to learn by heart at home. The poem will be linked to our nature topics and children will be learning it in class daily. These won't always be at the matching reading level to your child so please read it to them if they are struggling. The poems will be found inside the reading record.

In Reception the children will participate in lots of physical activities. Many of these will be through active play rather than in structured PE lessons. These may be inside, but many will be out on the playground, school field or in our outdoor area. From January we will begin structured PE lessons and all children will need a PE kit consisting of a t-shirt, shorts and trainers and as the weather gets colder you may also want to provide them with a tracksuit top and bottoms. If children do not have suitable kit, they may not be able to join in with certain activities.

We offer a wide and varied curriculum. We have lots of school visitors from theatre companies, dance workshops to the police and fire brigade.

This year we will be offering the October Parent Consultations via individual zooms. Here we can discuss how the children have settled in as well as their key areas of learning. If you do need to speak to me before hand, you are welcome to either at the Reception gate, over the phone or you may wish to write a letter.



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We are hosting a Harvest Festival this year on the 13<sup>th</sup> October, where Reception children will join in with Year 1 and Pre School to perform some harvest songs and share some art. This will be held in our front playground. The children are also invited to bring in a decorated or unusual pumpkin for our 'Harvest' whole school display outside the school's fence. Some interesting ones will be chosen by Miss Godwin and prizes can be won! Please give a tin or small donation towards our chosen charity. More details to follow.

This year, Reception children will be collaborating with children in Pre-school and Year 1 to put on our very own Christmas Production. We are very excited as it's a special time of year in school and we missed out on the experience last year. It will be a very special occasion where parents are invited to watch the performance. There will be more information available about this closer to the time.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me via the school. I look forward to working with you and your child this year.

Yours sincerely,

Miss Hughes



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