



St White's Primary School
Challenge, Commit, Conquer and Celebrate



September 2019

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to Reception and the start of your child's exciting school journey at St White's Primary School.

Our focus in the first few weeks will be on getting to know your children and helping them to settle into school. They will have plenty of opportunities to get to know each other and explore their surroundings.

This term our topic is 'This is me'. Throughout the term your children will learn all about themselves, including how they change as they grow and how to share their views and opinions about things they like and things that they do not.

Over the coming days, staff will begin to send home reading books that will be placed in your child's book bag, together with a reading record. This is for you to write your comments each time you share a book with your child. Your child will love showing us the comments you have written about their progress.

The first books that will be sent home are picture books that do not contain words. They are designed specifically for you and your child to use to tell a story or sequence of events using the pictures. Picture books are vital to develop good comprehension and language skills. The idea is that you spend time enjoying books together and talking about the pictures. The school is passionate about developing children's love of reading. Picture books are the most wonderful way of sparking your child's interest in reading.

Reading books will be changed weekly and your child will be given a maximum of 3 to take home and share and read over the course of the week. Your child will continue to bring picture reading books home and books with words will gradually be introduced. The expectation is that children will reach yellow reading band by the end of the academic year.

By half term, staff will have introduced your child to our 'Reading Challenge'. This is a system where the children are challenged to read at home on five or more occasions over a week.

Sneyd Wood Road, Cinderford,
Gloucestershire, GL14 3GD
Tel: 01594 822311
admin@st-whites.gloucs.sch.uk
<http://www.st-whites.gloucs.sch.uk>
www.facebook.com/stwhitesprimary



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Reading records will be checked weekly, however, it is important that reading books and reading records are in school every day. Children always love a challenge and your support in helping your child achieve is very much appreciated.

Phonics is a method of teaching children to read through making connections between sounds and symbols in the alphabetic writing system. Your child will be very busy learning phonic sounds at school. They will be very eager to show you what they can do so they will bring home their phonic cards to practise the sounds that they are learning. You will notice that on your child's phonic sound cards some letters are printed and some are written using a cursive font. This is deliberate: it is important that your child is exposed to different text types. When learning to write the sounds, your child will be learning how to write in a cursive style. The cards must be returned to school every day because they are used in school daily. Please ensure that you are encouraging your child to practise the sounds on the cards and to look after them. If for any reason, the cards become lost or damaged they will need to be replaced. You will be able to purchase new ones and it is important that you let the class teacher know if you need them.

In the early stages of your child learning their sounds, you might find it useful to look up on YouTube Jolly Phonic videos. They are extremely helpful for demonstrating the correct sounds. It is important to remember that it only takes 5 minutes to practise phonic sounds but makes an enormous difference to the progress your child will make with their reading. The school will also, on Thursday 19th September, at 5:30pm, be holding a Reading Information Evening, where phonics will be demonstrated and you will have the opportunity to ask any questions. We hope to see you all there.

St White's School is a healthy school. All children drink water in school and bring in named bottles that contain plain unflavoured water which they can leave in class and refill every morning. Your child will be provided with a drink of milk or water and a free piece of fruit every morning. We are also very fortunate to be part of The National School Breakfast Programme. This is a government programme which is funded until March 2020. The school continues to be very excited about this initiative because research conducted by the Education Endowment Foundation shows the delivering breakfast in this way improves academic achievement. Being part of the program means that every child, when they enter the classroom, is offered a piece of bagel that they can eat during learning time until 9am. Bagels will be on offer, from Monday, every day and children will be encouraged to eat one if they wish to. The bagels are made to order for the school. If you wish to see nutritional information about the bagels please ask at the

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school office.

Throughout their time in Reception, your children will record their learning in maths and English books and in Learning Journeys. Over the course of the year, you will be invited into school for 'Learn alongside your child' sessions. At these times, you will have the opportunity to have a look at your child's books. In addition to this, photos will be added to the class padlet, on the class page of the website, showing you the exciting things going on in school.

This term, P.E. sessions will take place on Mondays and Fridays. We advise that P.E. bags are brought into school at the beginning of a term and left in school so that children have access to their P.E. kits at all times. Please make sure that all items of clothing are clearly labelled.

Finally, when the weather starts to become more unsettled please make sure that your child has a named coat in school at all times. The children have continuous access to the outdoor areas and so coats are required every day.

The Reception Team are really excited to be welcoming you and your child to St White's Primary School and are looking forward to getting to know you better over the coming weeks. Please remember that the team is always available to answer any questions you may have, either at the school gate or by making an appointment at the school office, so please do not hesitate to ask if you need our help.

Kind Regards

The Reception Team

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