



Plum Class News

Autumn 1

I am delighted to welcome you all to Plum class. For many of you, it's the first time I've met you and your family and for others, we've had the pleasure of working together before. Whichever camp you fall into, I'm really excited to get to know your child and support them in their journey through Reception.

I hope you had a restful summer and that you're ready for the new school year ahead. Despite the fact that it has been a different start for us all, one which I am sure you as parents have all been apprehensive about, the children have done amazingly well and have quickly settled into their new class. Although the mornings can be tricky for our children, as separation from parents has had to be prompt and independent, the children have shown true emotional resilience – they seem to be finding the separation easier than us parents! Life in Plum class is quickly settling and the children are forming friendships and gaining in confidence daily – it is wonderful to see.

Hopefully you will find the information detailed in this letter a useful guide to our day in school. If you haven't already done so, please take time to look at the Swansfield Park website, it is a great way of finding out information. More specifically, if you go on to Plum Class page and then into Home learning in the 'class pages' tab you will find all the learning that has taken place over the past week. This is where we will share details and photos of all the wonderful things we have been up to on a weekly basis and this will start from Friday 11th September. In addition, it will inform you of how you can support and extend our class learning at home. Please don't hesitate to email me for any clarification. In addition, if you need a quick word in the morning or the afternoon, I'm always happy to take any quick questions and queries once I have finished getting all children into school or dismissed.

Read, Write, Inc (RWI)

All children in Plum Class will begin Read Write Inc sessions from Monday 14th September. Within RWI, Plum class will begin the exciting journey of learning and using the letter sounds that will unlock the door to reading and writing. We will share the letter sounds that we learn each week with you so you can support your child at home. In addition, we'll be in touch very soon with further information about how RWI will develop throughout the year.

Mathematics

In Reception, mathematics will mainly be taught through practical activities, games, lots of talk and lots of opportunity for taking this learning outdoors. This half term, we shall be ensuring that everyone in Plum class has a solid understanding of numbers to 10. As well as counting forwards and backwards, ordering, reading and writing digits, we'll be comparing numbers by using clear mathematical language such as more, less, fewer, most and least. For children who master these skills within 10, we'll progress to numbers up to 20. In addition to this, we'll be learning 2D and 3D shape names, investigating the properties of these shapes and looking for them in the environment that surrounds us at school. We'll make and talk about repeating patterns and autumn and harvest produce will provide us with lots of opportunity to order and compare size.

Please remember that we are a nut free school so packed lunches must not contain any nuts or foods that contain traces of nuts.

The World

During this half term our main topics will be ***Myself, My World and Feeling Fine, Autumn and Harvest.***

These themes will enable us to get to know the children, their interests, likes, dislikes and preferences. Alongside this, we really want the children to enjoy coming to school and for them to be happy whilst they settle in to a new environment with new rules and routines.

Moving on from this, we will be exploring harvest, finding out about crops that are gathered in and learning harvest songs. This will lead nicely into a study of autumn and we will use our senses to discover changes in the natural world around us.

Creative Work

Singing is a daily occurrence in Plum class and we'll be learning lots of new topic themed songs as well as enjoying old favourites! There will be opportunities for painting and collaging, particularly as we explore autumn and harvest. The children will explore, select and mix colours for purpose. Of course, there will always be plenty of creative materials out every day as part of our continuous provision and children will be free to follow their own interests and ideas.

The Physical Stuff and The Outside Environment

There are always plenty of opportunities for physical activity in Plum class to support gross motor development. Plum class garden provides many avenues for children to use their whole bodies; climbing and balancing across wooden planks on our tyres, digging in autumn bulbs, regularly sweeping our extremely leafy garden and dancing, hula hooping, stilting and using up our abundance of energy! We will also be engaging in regular morning exercise through song and dance with relaxation and stretching sessions in the afternoons. Scissor work, collaging with autumnal objects, threading activities and model making will help to ensure that our fine motor skills get a bit of a work out too! We'll also be working hard to ensure that children hold pencils correctly with a comfortable tripod grip (thumb and first two fingers). You can support your child by encouraging a good pencil grip at home. Please ask if you need further clarification on this.

We go outside in all weathers and we have the appropriate suits for the children to wear, although a spare set of clothes or waterproofs is always appreciated (in case they do get wet or muddy). **Every child in Plum Class MUST have a pair of wellies in school.** These stay in school in our welly box – stored in Plum Class corridor.

We intend to begin short PE sessions from Thursday 17th September. Your child will need to come to school in jogger bottoms/leggings, a T shirt, school jumper/cardigan and trainers. Your child will stay in these clothes all day.

Please ensure that all clothing, shoes and wellies are named.

During this half term, in everything we do, we will be teaching the essential personal, social and emotional skills needed to keep our classroom a happy and thriving place to spend our days.

School360 Learning Journals

Your child's online journal is our way of recording your child's development and journey from Nursery through to the end of their Reception year. It includes photographs and observations of significant moments during their time with us which link to the Early Years Curriculum that we follow. For many of you, you're familiar with these journals so please feel free to begin adding your observations from home straight away. It would be particularly appreciated if you could add photos and descriptions of the activities you do at home linked to the weekly learning that I write about in the home learning section of our class webpage. If you're new to Swansfield Park Primary, we'll be in touch very soon with log in details for your child's journal. As we normally do a parent information session on these journals early in the school year, we'll add a short video to the website in place of this due to the COVID situation and we'll let you know when it's uploaded.

Sharing your child's precious creations

Children love to bring home the treasures that they make at school. However, as you know we are trying to reduce the items that need to travel between school at home. So, we've decided that children will keep their 'makes' in their drawers all week and we'll send them home in a polly pocket on a Friday. Then, you can leave them to quarantine for a few days if you wish before they come out in your home.

Thank you for your patience in these unprecedented times. Together, we can ensure that Plum class children enjoy an exciting and fulfilling year in Reception despite the limitations of the current climate.

Remember I am always here to answer any questions, offer any support or listen to any concerns,

Mrs Anne-Marie Grimes (anne-marie.grimes@swansfield.northumberland.sch.uk)