

# Apple Class

## Nursery News

Spring Term 1



Firstly, a very happy new year to all our Apple Class families and a very warm welcome to our new Apple Class children! We really do hope that you've had a very enjoyable and happy Christmas and would like to extend our thanks to you all for your support throughout last term and for your kind wishes, cards and gifts at Christmas. We are raring to get going again and look forward to some super learning and lots of fun throughout the spring term!

### Staff Changes

You may have noticed some new faces in Apple Class! Let us introduce you to Courtney and Chrissy.

Courtney will be our Early Years Apprentice. She will be mainly based in Apple Class on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

You may have seen Chrissy Morris – Watson towards the end of last term in Apple Class. She will be staying with us on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

### Our Curriculum

Children learn as they play and play is at the core of our curriculum in Apple Class. We provide a range of play-based provocations and encourage the children to engage with these. As staff, we spend a large proportion of our time joining children in their play, encouraging communication and language development. We encourage children to be curious, to ask questions, to spot things that are happening and to be imaginative.

**Our themes this half term are 'wonderful Winter' and 'all about birds'.** We will however encourage children to follow their own interests and current fascinations.

There are many skills that we will be focusing on over the half term and beyond and these include...

- Turn taking and sharing fairly with others
- Speaking in full sentences
- Independence when dressing for the outdoor environment (**we will be going outside in all weathers this term and it will get chilly if we get snow, so please bring a named hat, scarf and mittens every day.**)

We will **continue to...**

- Listen and join in with refrains and repeated language in stories in whole class discussions and in smaller groups
- Clap rhythms in words and phrases and listen to the initial sound in words (especially the first initial of our name)
- Follow instructions
- Ask and answer questions
- Retell stories and create our own
- Snip with scissors – using thumb and first two fingers
- Hold pens and pencils with our thumb and first two fingers to make shapes, lines and to trace letters in our names

It would be great if you could reinforce these skills at home!

### A few reminders to keep Apple Class running smoothly...

- If you arrive after the gate has been closed in the morning, please take your child to the main office so that they can be signed in.
- Please ensure that all items of uniform are labelled with children's names. This is particularly important for jumpers, cardigans, shoes, coats, hats, scarves and mittens/gloves. The children take these items off with great regularity during the day and if they are not labelled, it's very tricky! Staff must then spend their time finding and sorting items instead of interacting and working with the children.
- Please have **water only** in bottles brought to Apple Class each day
- If your child wears pull-ups, please ensure a plentiful supply along with wipes and nappy sacks
- Please remember to provide a change of clothes for your child in case of accidents. The changes of clothes should be passed to a member of staff and will be stored on your child's peg. Please return any clothes to Apple Class which your child may have been changed into when their own clothes were not provided.

### Skills to support learning

#### Take 5 – simple ways to support with your child's learning this half term

1. Share and read many wintery stories together and read them lots of times. Encourage your child to learn any repeated phrases and vocabulary.
2. Cut out pictures of birds and cold colours (white, light blue, silver) from papers and magazines to create a collage – be sure to hold scissors with thumb and first 2 fingers, if you need a pair of child's scissors, just ask as we have lots!
3. We'd still like you to encourage your child to trace the 1<sup>st</sup> letter of their name. Be sure to use a capital letter. We've added the school script to our Apple Class page to help you. If your child is confident, get them to write their whole name! Don't forget to hold pens between thumb and first 2 fingers.
4. To build upon finger strength, you could make some simple bird feeders and hang them up outside to help the birds survive during these colder months. Using some string and cheerios carefully thread the cheerios onto the string and then tie at both ends.
5. As we learn the name of some common birds, go for a walk, and observe what the birds are doing. Can you see a bird in its nest? Can you see a bird flying? Can you find a bird having a wash? Can you spot some of the birds that we've talked about in Apple class?

If your child is due to start in Reception Class in September 2023 please ensure that you have applied for a place at Swansfield Park Primary School. Unfortunately, being in the nursery does not guarantee you a place. You can apply through the Northumberland County Council website. If you need any help with your application, please speak to a member of staff. It can be accessed via the Northumberland County Council website and search for 'Reception entry applications'

**Last day to apply BY is JANUARY 19<sup>TH</sup> 2023**

## Our core texts



**Blue Penguin** by Petr Horacek, **The Polar Bear and the Snow Cloud** by Jane Cabrera, **One Snowy Night** by Nick Butterworth, **Lost and Found** by Oliver Jeffers, **Stanley's Stick** by John Hegley, **The Bog Baby** by Jeanne Willis, **Penguin and Pinecone** by Salina Yoon.

We will also be sharing lots of other stories but these will be our focus up until February half term.

## Learning Journals

Thank you to everyone who has logged on and contributed to their child's learning journal. It has been great to see so many contributions from home and also to engage in dialogue with you about the entries we have made through the comment box. This really helps us to share next steps in your child's learning and offer ways that you can support these at home. If you are still unable to access your child's learning journal, please let us know and we will send out the invitation request again. Please do remember that when you receive this request, it will not come from school, it comes directly from School 360.

## Shared Learning

As parents and carers, we value the key role that you play in your child's education and we are committed to working in partnership with you to ensure the best outcomes for your children. As a part of this collaboration, here are the details of this half term's home learning task:

Family history is an important part of our Early Years curriculum and a great way to begin exploring the past. We'd like to explore 'brothers and sisters' for this term's family learning. This can involve looking at photos of your family – when brothers/sisters were born, a time before brothers/sisters or the children themselves were born. It can involve their brothers and sisters or brothers and sisters of parents. It can also involve cousins if this is relevant. The key is for children to begin to discuss and talk about their family history. You can upload photos and information from this task to your child's School 360 Journal and we look forward to talking with the children about their findings. The children could make a pictorial family tree, make a montage of photos or simply snuggle on the sofa with some photos and a parent to chat!

## Lending Library

For families that aren't aware of our lending library – this has now started again! Children will receive a book, once you've read it, bring it back and we will swap it! We ask that you engage in interactive story sessions with your child on a daily basis. Sharing stories promotes your child's development in so many ways.

Reading stories will:

- help your child learn to value books and stories
- expand their vocabulary, develop an awareness of sounds and develop early literacy skills
- develop their attention and listening skills
- help your child develop their expressive speech skills e.g. sharing their ideas, opinions, predictions and relating stories to their own experiences
- help your child understand new or frightening events
- help your child learn about the world, their own culture and other cultures

We ask that you upload a photo, drawing or video to their journal illustrating your child's response to the stories e.g. favourite book, character or event. They might also relate stories to their own experiences and feelings.

**Let's get started with our new year and new Spring term!**

**Mrs Beth Farrar and  
Mrs Anne-Marie Grimes**

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