



**THERE'S
NO
FULL STOP
TO LEARNING**

RECEPTION NEWSLETTER – AUTUMN TERM 1

Dear Reception Parents/Carers,

Firstly, Shirley and I would like to welcome you to Reception at Reay Primary School! We are delighted to be teaching in this year group and are already thoroughly enjoying it. We hope you all had peaceful and fun summer holidays and are now ready for an action packed and exciting first half to the Autumn term!

Topic:

Our topic this term will be *ANIMALS*. We will be using the wonderfully gripping and contextual Mantle of the Expert in order to be guided by the children as to where this might go but please do consider taking your child to places of interest in terms of animals e.g. Vauxhall City Farm, London Zoo, Battersea Park Zoo, Richmond Park, the ponds in Brockwell Park, Kew Gardens, the vets or a pet shop. Don't forget to take photos of your child and email them to me with any quotations from them about what they are doing so that they can tell us all about it afterwards.

Interesting things for our investigation table:

We are hoping to create an investigation table for the children to look at and study new and interesting things they have found. It will involve lots of magnifying glasses and interesting objects so if you or your child finds something interesting outside on a walk, please do encourage them to bring it in and explain why it is interesting and should be investigated further. Please note, this **does not** include general toys, rather, it is more natural things such as an acorn, fir cone, feather, wasps' nest or an oddly shaped shell.

Class Mascot and Diary:

In order to stimulate good speaking and listening within the class, we are going to give each child the class mascot, Mary the otter, for the weekend at some point throughout the year. We hope that you will take Mary to interesting places or do interesting things with her when you have her so that the children can talk about their experiences on the Monday morning when they return her. We would love it if you could take lots of photos of her and your child doing things and then email them to me so that we can show the rest of the children and use them as a stimulus for their talk about their weekend. My email address is: lucy.coates@reay.lambeth.sch.uk. Please do pop them on a named memory stick if that's easier. If you would like to have her on a specific weekend because you are doing something in particular, please do let me know and I will try to arrange it. Similarly, if you would like to take her away in the holidays, please do, just please ensure that she sends us a postcard and that she comes back!

Uniform:

Thank you for all making such an effort with the uniform. The children all look great. Please do just check that everything is named as they are often taking things off especially at this time of year. That especially applies to scarves, hats, gloves, wellies etc later on in the year as things get a bit colder but also PE kit.

P.E:

P.E. is on Wednesdays. Please ensure that your child has black shorts, Reay PE t-shirt, socks and plimsolls in their bag every Wednesday. Please ensure these are all named. These do not need to be taken home every week as they will not sweat too much but this is of course up to you. Nicola Curran will be taking them for PE each week and is an experienced Reception teacher as well as our Sports Lead so they are in very safe hands.

Family Photos:

Please email or send in a photograph of your child with their family for our families display board. We are going to pin them to our board so you can all be with us all of the time. Please note: this will most likely be a permanent display so I will give them back to you at the end of the year. I will happily print them and make frames for them if you just want to email me them.

Homework:

As you know, Reception is all about learning a lifelong love of learning, discovery and exploration. As a result, we don't set homework in the form of worksheets or spellings to learn. However, we do have **Family Maths Learning Journals** (light blue, A4 book which should be in their book bag with this letter) which have one question for each week stuck into them for you to tackle with your child. This can be achieved in a number of different ways and is not meant to be a formal situation. Inside, you will find a username and password for their Mathletics site. This has lots of maths practice on it and you are welcome to encourage your child to use it as much as possible. I will keep an eye on their usage and set them challenges to complete.

Similarly, we have **Reading Journals** which go home and come back each day. These are to record every child's reactions to the books they are reading e.g. they might draw a picture of their favourite character or you might record what they laughed at or found scary. If you are not sure what to give them, please do look in the back of them for a list of ideas which you can suggest. Again, these are not supposed to be laborious and formal, just fun and informative for everyone. I don't want to overwhelm you with a huge, long list of good reading/writing apps so my advice is to have a look and see what you like and what you think you'd like to share with your child. You can search for suitable, approved apps on the National Literacy Trust website - <https://literacyapps.literacytrust.org.uk/> Here are some of my favourites though:

- Nosy Crow apps - <https://nosycrow.com/apps/>
- Hairy Phonics - <https://www.nessy.com/uk/apps/hairy-phonics-1/>
- Handwriting Without Tears - <http://wetdrytry.com/>
- Mr Glue Stories – allows you to record yourself reading the story and then it adds all the sound effects etc. <http://mrgluestories.com/>

For both journals, I will not be marking them formally either but will certainly be reading them every week and awarding lots of stickers and praise for those children who do regularly write in them.

Junk modelling and collage equipment:

We are very grateful for any junk modelling or collage materials you may accumulate over the week. Please do send in as much as you like as we will enjoy cutting and sticking and creating things with it. There is a big chest by the door which is there so that your child can just pop it in there the moment they come into the classroom.

Tooth brushing and the Daily Mile:

We have been approached by a number of parents asking us to help with normalising daily routines such as going to the toilet, eating lunch, changing into and out of school uniform and getting clean after our learning. We therefore wondered if you would like children to have a named toothbrush and toothpaste at school so we can all brush our teeth together after lunch to learn how to do it properly together and to make it normal. Please do let me know what you think and I will organise it if you feel this would be helpful. It has been recommended by the NHS that we offer this in schools.

We have also started to do our version of the Daily Mile around the playground (don't worry – it is nowhere near a mile) and have started talking every day about how to stay fit and healthy.

Dates for your diary:

Thursday 20 th September:	Coffee Morning – come to meet Caroline Andrews and Lucy Coates and find out a bit more about what Reception is all about.
Wednesday 26 th September:	Parents' Homework Session – to learn about how we do homework at Reay and to pick up lots of helpful tips etc.
Friday 28 th September:	Harvest Assembly (donations of tinned food etc greatly welcomed for local hospice)
Thursday 18 th October:	Parents' Evening - you will be able to sign up for a time slot nearer the time.
Thursday 13 th December:	Infants' Winter Show (AM and PM)
Wednesday 19 th December:	Junior Winter Show performed to EYFS and KS1

Trips:

If we have a trip, we will send you out a letter with as much notice as possible asking for volunteers to come with us to help. Please do come on as many as you can. I realise that it is not always possible of course but it is brilliant when lots of parents/carers come to share in with all the fun.

I have just whizzed through all of the information and would be happy to go through some or all of it with you after school any day. If you come along to the coffee morning, I will go through all of this and more as well as be available to answer questions.

**All the best,
Lucy Coates and Shirley Mouellef**