

Foundation Stage Newsletter: Autumn Term 1

Dear Parents,

We would like to welcome you to Foundation Stage and we hope you enjoy it just as much as your child will. Our main focus for the first half term is to support children's emotional wellbeing by ensuring that your child settles into school and forms friendships to develop secure foundations and give them the best start to their time at Downsway Primary School.

Our first topic of the year is Marvellous Me!

We will start this term with the topic '**Marvellous Me**' which allows us to get to know each other. Our topic will change every half term and you will receive a topic map and newsletter to explain what your child will be learning at school. Our learning follows each child's individual needs and interests through planned play experiences linking to our topic, which makes learning active and meaningful. We also include seasonal and cultural learning themes that will help your child learn more about our world. During this topic we will be learning about our senses, our differences and similarities and how we have changed since we were babies. Further information can be found on the topic map.

Please can your child bring in a photograph of themselves as a baby or email a photo to the school office (office@downsway.w-berks.sch.uk) by Monday 15th September. We will be using these to focus on how we have changed from when we were born to starting school.



On **Friday 17th October** Little City role play will be visiting Downsway for the Foundation children to take part in a role play session in the school hall. This workshop will enable children to awaken their imagination and provide them with a wonderful, interactive and inclusive play opportunity linking to the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum and our topic Marvellous Me. Children will have the opportunity to transform into being a vet, builder, shop keeper, hairdresser, mechanic and many more! More information regarding the cost of the session will be sent out nearer the time.



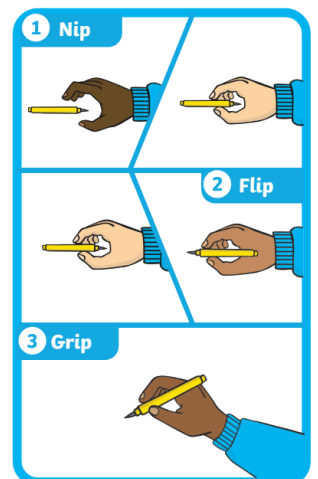
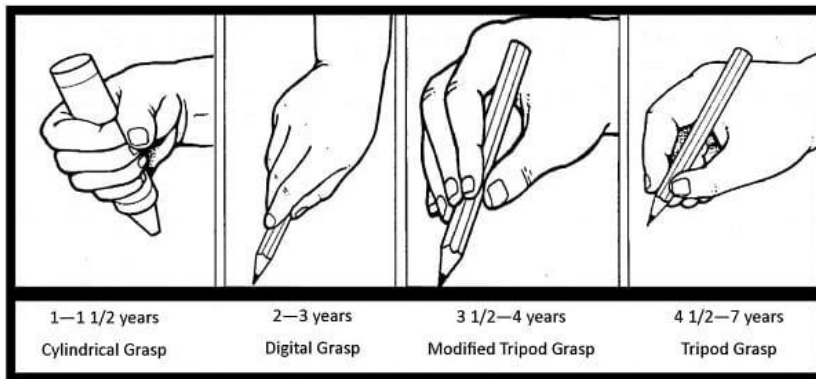
Dough Disco

Once we have all settled into school we will start daily Dough Disco sessions. Dough Disco is a fun activity which combines the use of Play-Doh with a series of hand and finger exercises designed to improve fine motor control in preparation for drawing and writing. The movements develop children's fine and gross motor dexterity, hand-eye coordination and self-esteem. The school will provide your child with their own pot of playdoh to take part in these sessions.



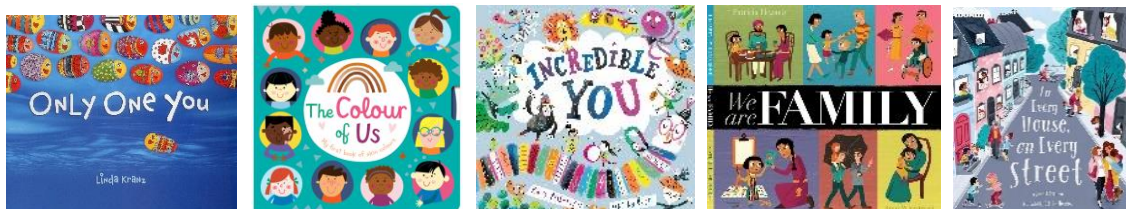
Literacy and Drawing Club

We will start the term focusing on developing our fine motor skills through lots of fun activities. The children will then build upon these skills and develop their pencil grip and begin to make marks using lines and shapes. We will begin to teach children to hold a mark making tool with a modified tripod grasp moving onto a tripod grasp using the following rhyme: nip, flip and grip (see images).

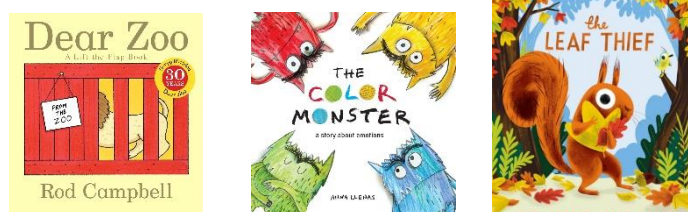


We will initially focus on forming shapes and patterns using different mark making tools before moving onto letter formation and focus on writing our names. In Foundation Stage we teach children print handwriting. We will be teaching children how to form the letters of the alphabet as they are taught in our phonics scheme. As the year progresses we will also learn about capital letters and how to form them.

We will be using fiction and non-fiction texts to support children's understanding of what makes us special, our families, different homes and feelings/emotions:



Later in the term we will start 'Drawing Club' in our literacy sessions. Drawing Club immerses children in the world of story and shows them the joy of drawing and writing. It enables adults to share a treasure trove of vocabulary with children. It also gives children age-appropriate drawing and mark making/writing practice that is highly engaging and grounds children in the joy of book snuggling. We will focus on a new story or animation every week and introduce new vocabulary (six new words linking to the text) with exciting actions to help the children remember the words. The children will then be set challenges to draw pictures to go with the story and add passcodes linking to phonics and maths concepts to make their drawings come to life.



We will also start using the school library once the children are settled into school. Children will visit the library in small groups with a member of staff from the Foundation Stage team. They will have time to look through the selection of age appropriate books and select one to borrow for a week. Our library slot is on a Monday morning. Once your child starts bringing library books home please ensure they are brought back in their bookbag every Monday so it can be returned for a new one.

Linking to our focus texts 'Only One You' and 'Incredible You' we will be celebrating how we are all different and how that makes us special. We will be sending an 'All About Me' bag home with your child to fill with three objects that represents their likes/dislikes and things that are important to them. Children will have an opportunity to share these with their friends and adults in school. We will then send the bags and objects home. We can't wait to see what everyone brings in!



Phonics

At Downsway Primary School we follow a scheme called A Flying Start with Letters and Sounds. A Flying Start with Letters and Sounds is a multi-sensory, systematic, synthetic phonics programme. It has been developed by early years and school improvement advisers, headteachers and teachers in West Berkshire. A Flying Start with Letters and Sounds enables children to:

- Develop good language skills and a wide vocabulary
- Foster a love of reading
- Acquire the skills to read independently as indicated by the phonic check
- Secure the physical skills to write in order to successfully record the graphemes they have learnt

The children will take part in daily phonics sessions to develop their reading (blending) and segmenting (writing) skills. We will also use fun interactive phonics games during the school day to help the children practise their phonics skills and build on their understanding. Here are the links in case you would like to access some of the free games at home.

- Phonics Play Games: <https://www.phonicsplay.co.uk/resources>
- Phonics Bloom Games: <https://www.phonicsbloom.com/>

Mathematical Development

Children will build on previous experiences of number from their home and nursery environments, and further develop their subitising (when you are able to look at a group of objects and realise how many there are without counting) and counting skills. We will practise oral counting and explore the sequence of events, such as the school day. The children will explore the composition of numbers within 5 and use numberblocks to develop their understanding further. They will begin to compare sets of objects and use the language of comparison. Children will also develop their understanding of comparing size, mass, capacity and simple patterns.

Reception Baseline Assessment

The reception baseline assessment (RBA) is a short, interactive and practical assessment of your child's early literacy, communication, language and mathematics skills when they begin in school. It will be undertaken by Mrs Clarke and Mrs Tipper and will measure your child's progress from Foundation to Year 6. The data will only be accessed by the Department for Education. Mrs Clarke and Mrs Tipper will spend quality 1-1 time with your child, getting to know them and if they need any further support in certain areas.

If you wish to read further about the Reception Baseline, then you can find a useful parent booklet here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reception-baseline-assessment-information-for-parents>

Seesaw

We look forward to strengthening the link between home and school. We greatly value your input and would like to give you the opportunity to share your child's achievements (Wow Moments) through the online communication platform, SeeSaw. We will then share these 'Wow Moments' in class and celebrate achievements outside of school. Log in's for SeeSaw will be sent out to you within the next few weeks.

Things to remember

- **Children are allowed to wear home clothes on the Friday after their birthday.**
- Please make sure all items of school uniform and PE kit are named as items of clothing can easily be mixed up.
- **Please bring in a named pair of wellington boots for your child to use in the mud kitchen, water play and in wet weather.**
- Please bring your child's book bag into school every day with their reading book/reading record (once these are given out later in the term).
- If you are providing a packed lunch for your child please remember that nuts and nut products are not allowed in school.
- Named water bottles should be brought into school every day filled with water (so squash please).

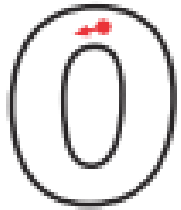
We are really looking forward to a fun and exciting first term in Foundation Stage. Finally, if you have any questions or wish to talk to us about any concerns, please do not hesitate to speak to us at the beginning or end of the school day.

Many thanks for your support,
Mrs Clarke, Mrs Tipper, Miss Green, Mrs Saunders and Mrs Wilks

Autumn Term 1 Timetable

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8.45 – 9.00	Busy Bee Activities (fine motor focus) and Self-Register				Books on Carpet and Self-register
9.00-9.15	Phonics Session				
9:15 – 9.30	Drawing Club Input	Drawing Club Input	Drawing Club Input	Getting changed for PE	Maths Input
9.30 – 10:15	Exploring Time Drawing Club Activity	Exploring Time Drawing Club Activity	Exploring Time Drawing Club Activity	PE	Exploring Time Maths Activity
10.15-10.30	Snack Time (whole class on the carpet)				
	Number of Week	Mini Maths	Mini Maths	Mini Maths	Introduce the new Drawing Club Story
10.30 – 11.30	Exploring Time Drawing Club Activity	Exploring Time Drawing Club Activity	Exploring Time Drawing Club Activity	Exploring Time Maths Activity	Exploring Time Maths Activity
11.30 – 11.45	Dough Disco	Poetry Basket	Dough Disco	Poetry Basket/Music	Mini Maths
11.45-11.50	Get ready for lunch				
11.50 - 1.00	Lunch Time				
1.00 – 1.10	Relaxation Time and Register				
1.10 – 1.20	Understanding the World Focus (Geography/History/Science)	Creative Focus (Art/Design Technology)	Mark Making Focus	Maths Input	RE/PSHE Focus
1.20 – 2.30	Exploring Time	Exploring Time	Exploring Time	Exploring Time Maths Activity	Exploring Time
2.30 – 3.00	Story and Home Time Routine				

Number Formation Rhymes 1-10



Around to my left to find my hero, back to the top, I've made a zero.



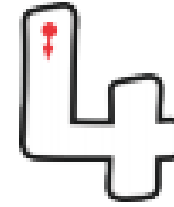
A downward stroke, my that's fun. Now I've made the number one.



Half a heart says "I love you." Add a line. Now I've made the number two.



Around the tree, around the tree, now I've made the number three.



Down and across and down once more, now I've made the number four.



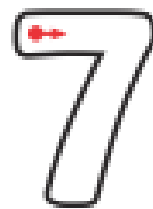
Draw the hat, the back and the belly. It's a five. Watch out, it might come alive!



Draw the hat, the back and the belly. It's a five. Watch out, it might come alive!



Bend down low to pick up sticks. Now I've made the number six.



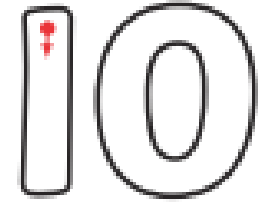
Across the sky and down from heaven. Now I've made the number seven.



Make an "S" and close the gate. Now you've made the number eight.



Make an oval and a line. Now I've made the number nine.



A downward stroke, that's my one. Add a zero, that's my number ten done!