



Spring Term in Reception

January 2018

We have lots of exciting things planned this term. We are pleased with the progress the children have made so far. This term we will be enjoying two whole school topics; 'Hocus Pocus!' and 'Home'.

Hocus Pocus (Spring 1st Term)

In this 'magical' topic we will be putting our scientist hats on and making some potions! The children will observe different chemical reactions and talk about what has happened. In Literacy we will be looking at a selection of traditional stories, including Jack and the Beanstalk and The Elves and the Shoemaker, enhancing our knowledge of rhyming with the story of The Night of the Magical Flight, and thinking about what things you might find in a wizard's kitchen. In Maths we will continue to learn about different 2d and 3d shapes, explore capacity, weight and distance, and will also start to do addition using practical resources. We will also continue to look at a range of festivals and learn about how they are celebrated.

Home (Spring 2nd Term)

In the second part of Spring term we will be thinking about ourselves and where we live. In Literacy we will be writing about ourselves, our families and our home, and will write a postcard to be sent home! In Maths we will be learning about length, height and subtraction using practical resources. Throughout this half term we will celebrate Easter, Mother's Day and Holi festival.

A reminder of our upcoming topics is below:

Spring 1st	Spring 2nd	Summer 1st	Summer 2nd
Hocus Pocus!	Home	Let's Go Lego!	The Living Planet

Morning Routines

We are pleased that most of the children are now entering the classroom independently in the mornings and we encourage them to continue these routines. It is therefore important to ensure that you arrive promptly at the gate each morning so that children continue to develop their independence. If you are late in the morning, please do ensure that your child walks down to the classroom independently, as there should be no parents coming into the classroom. The classroom is open from 8:40am each morning and all children are expected to be in their room by 8:50am.

Regular Arrangements

If your child is going to be picked up from school by a named person/or organisation as part of a regular arrangement, please ensure you have updated your regular collection form with the office. Please remember for any pick-ups that are not regular arrangements, or are not in the 'Going-Home book', the person collecting will need to provide the emergency password.

Personal belongings

Please ensure that all of your child's belongings are clearly marked with their name; clothing, water bottles, lunch boxes, book bags and peg bags. Show and tell is an opportunity to share exciting achievements or to share special memories or events from home. Please **do not** send your child to school with any toys from home.

Independence

We are really encouraging the children to do their own coats up and to use cutlery when eating at lunchtimes. Please support your child with this at home by practising these skills. This will enable them to develop their independence and speed up daily routines.

Speed Reading

We will continue to send home Speed Reads every Monday. Children are given sounds to practise, or simple words, which relate to what they are learning in phonics lessons. It is important that children are blending the sounds together. This will help them develop their skills for reading. On Fridays we get all children to read and write their Speed Reads, therefore it would be beneficial for your child to practise writing them at home too. If you are unsure of how to pronounce any of the sounds please do not hesitate to speak to a member of staff.

Library

Library books will continue to be changed every **Wednesday**. Please return your child's library book, in the named plastic folder, every **Wednesday** in order to borrow another book.

Phonics

As discussed in our meeting, we teach Phonics daily and the children learn new sounds and words each week. We use Read Write Inc. rhymes and flashcards to teach the sounds. We teach fun and active games for the children to develop a range of skills. It is really important for the children to be pronouncing the sounds correctly. There are videos on <http://mrthorne.com/> which demonstrate how to say the sounds correctly and Alphablocks (shown on the TV and on the internet) is another great resource for the children to hear sounds correctly and teach them the skill of blending (adding sounds together to read a word).

Resources

Below are links to some resources that you might find helpful at home to support your child with Phonics.

[Phase 2 sound mat](#)

[Phase 3 sound mat](#)

[Phase 5 sound mat](#)

[Letter formation sheet for right handed children](#)

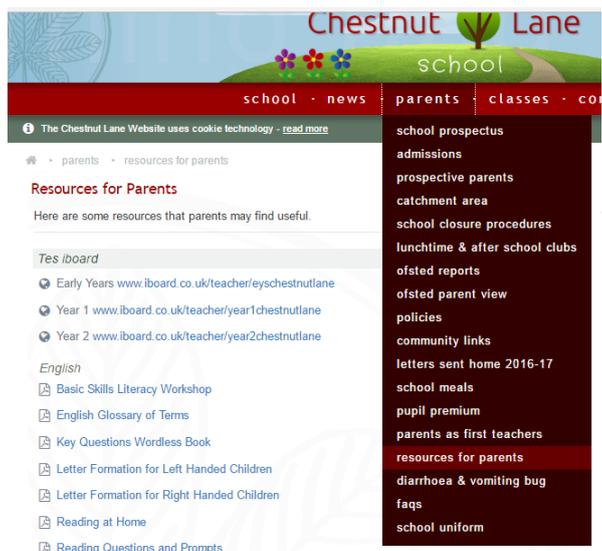
[Letter formation sheet for left handed children](#)

[Read Write Inc. rhymes sheet](#)

The above links can also be found on the school website as shown to the right.

We are looking forward to another exciting term!

Miss Vacher, Miss Holt and the Early Years Team



The screenshot shows the website for Chestnut Lane school. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'school', 'news', 'parents', and 'classes'. Below this, there is a 'Resources for Parents' section with the heading 'Here are some resources that parents may find useful.' This section lists several resources, including 'Tes iboard' with links for 'Early Years', 'Year 1', and 'Year 2', and 'English' resources like 'Basic Skills Literacy Workshop', 'English Glossary of Terms', 'Key Questions Wordless Book', 'Letter Formation for Left Handed Children', 'Letter Formation for Right Handed Children', 'Reading at Home', and 'Reading Questions and Prompts'. On the right side of the page, there is a vertical menu with various school-related links, including 'school prospectus', 'admissions', 'prospective parents', 'catchment area', 'school closure procedures', 'lunchtime & after school clubs', 'ofsted reports', 'ofsted parent view', 'policies', 'community links', 'letters sent home 2016-17', 'school meals', 'pupil premium', 'parents as first teachers', 'resources for parents', 'diarrhoea & vomiting bug', 'faqs', and 'school uniform'.

Questions asked at the Topic Meeting:

1. Should we time them when they do Speed Reads?

Speed Reads are to get the children practising their sounds quickly, however we are aware that some children do not like the pressure of being timed, so in Reception we do not insist that they are timed.

2. What are they doing for writing?

We do focused Literacy activities every week where we will have a different theme for children to write about. We use story books where the children have to sequence the story or retell the story and we will learn about different forms of writing such as writing instructions and letters. In particular we focus on letter formation, hearing and writing the sounds in a word and finger spaces.

3. What is being done in school for Maths?

In Early Years we focus on two aspects of Maths: Number and Shape, Space and Measure. In Number we focus on numbers 1 to 20 and learn about ordering, recognition, formation, simple addition and subtraction and, in the last term, will move onto doubling and halving. In Shape, Space and Measure we learn to name and describe the properties of 2d and 3d shapes, describe patterns and measure height, length, weight and distance.

4. What is the Phonics Screening?

The Phonics Screening is a government prescribed Phonics test that the children will have at the end of Year 1. It tests the children on their ability to sound out and blend both real and nonsense words.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

We have introduced different phrases to get the children thinking about how they are learning. Below are the posters that are displayed in the Forest and Hive classrooms.

