

St James' Church of England First School & Nursery
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Headteacher: Miss Jo Hudson
Assistant Headteacher: Mrs Kathryn Cousins



09 September 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

A very warm welcome back and welcome to Year Two, Fox Class!

It has been so lovely to welcome the children back and they have made a superb start to the school year. The children have shown such confidence, eagerness and enthusiasm and it has been wonderful to see so many happy, smiling faces. I am really looking forward to working with them and teaching them throughout this academic year.

This letter is to give you an overview of the routines and expectations in our class, so that the day-to-day running can go as smoothly as possible. I hope the information below answers any questions you may have at this stage.

Break/snack times

- Your child will have a morning snack break each day. The school will provide a piece of fruit for each child, but please feel free to send something in with them if they would prefer. Please ensure this is fruit or vegetable-based. We ask that you provide a named water bottle that can be refilled during the day if necessary.
- As you know, we are a nut-free school. We do have a child with a nut allergy, so please ensure there are absolutely **NO NUTS**.
- If you would like your child to have milk, you will need to order this directly. Please contact the office for information on how to do this.

Reading books

- Your child's reading books will be changed on Mondays and Thursdays. The books should be kept in their book bags at all times as children will be asked to read in school. Book bags must be brought to school every day as they help children organise their belongings and keep their school books safe and protected.
- Please try to read with your child as often as possible, at least three times a week. It is also helpful to ask questions and discuss the story and characters.
- Your child will move through coloured reading bands as I feel they are ready for the next level of challenge. Sometimes we may send two books (one from the old level and one from the new) to begin introducing your child to the next level of difficulty. Each child will receive a levelled reader matched to their phonics/reading group.
- You may find that the reading levels are slightly lower than where they left off before the summer. This is often the case after a long break, but with regular reading, the children will make rapid progress.
- I would like to take a moment to explain how we will be using **Reading Records** in our class. These books are intended to serve as a communication tool between home and school, helping us track your child's reading progress at home. When you read with your child, please write a brief note about how they have engaged with the book or particular sounds/words. This might include whether they struggled with particular words, sounds or concepts, or if they were particularly enthusiastic about a story. We welcome any observations you may have as this feedback will be useful in helping us support your child's reading journey.



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- Children will take part in regular library visits, during which they may choose a "love to read" book. A record is kept of all library books taken out by the children, and we kindly ask that these are looked after and returned to school so that your child can exchange them for another.

Home learning

- A knowledge organiser has been sent you, this includes information about the key knowledge and skills we will be teaching your child each half term. There will be one home learning project to complete as part of this.
- In addition to the home-learning project on the knowledge organiser, there will be either spellings to learn and maths skills to practise. This home learning will be shared electronically via Spelling Shed and Numbots. If you need your child's login details, please let me know and I will add them to your child's reading log.
- Home learning may also be set by your child's RWI (Read Write Inc.) teacher in the form of sounds to practise or words to learn. Your child will bring home the RWI book they have been reading in class that week to practise at home. This book is intended to be a challenge but children should be able to read it with varying fluency. It is important that reading at home feels enjoyable and not too difficult, as fostering a love of reading at this stage is our key priority.

Outdoor/Physical lessons

- Children will have PE on a **Wednesday afternoon with Mr Spinks and a Friday Morning with Miss Cole**. Please send your child to school dressed in their PE kit, with sensible footwear suitable for outdoor activities.
- We will continue to make the most of our wonderful forest areas to support learning and intend to use it every other **Friday afternoon with Miss Bowler**. Children will already be in PE kits but please do provide your child with a pair of wellies or "muddy" trainers in a clearly named carrier bag that can be kept in school for these sessions.
- Please send your child with suitable outdoor clothing for wet and cold weather. A waterproof coat, gloves, and a scarf will be needed this autumn/winter. We endeavour to take the children outside for break and lunch whenever we can.

Other

- We will be starting **Show and Tell** this term! Children are encouraged to bring in items that relate to our learning topics, something that has sparked awe or wonder for them, or even something they feel proud of as a personal achievement. Please note that we kindly ask for **no toys** to be brought in as part of Show and Tell. This will be a great opportunity for children to share and celebrate their experiences, as well as practice their speaking and listening skills.
- If your child requires a fiddle toy, please speak with me to arrange this. We kindly ask that no other toys are brought into school, as they cause distractions. Children do not need to bring pencil cases or pens as everything they need is already provided at school.
- School Bag Reminder: please can we ask that children do not bring large backpacks into school unless they really need to, for example, if they attend an after-school club. Children staying for the normal school day only need their book bag, which can be kept in their tray. Large bags take up space and can make it difficult for children to access their coats, wellies and other belongings. Snacks, books, gloves, scarves and spare underwear can all fit in their book bags. Please no large backpacks unless necessary.

It is very important to me that your child enjoys their time in Year Two. If you have any concerns or issues, please do not hesitate to contact me via the staff@alderholt.dorset.sch.uk email address. It is important to us as a school that we keep the lines of communication open.

Thank you for your support, and I look forward to working with you again this year!

Yours sincerely,

Miss Sarah Cole