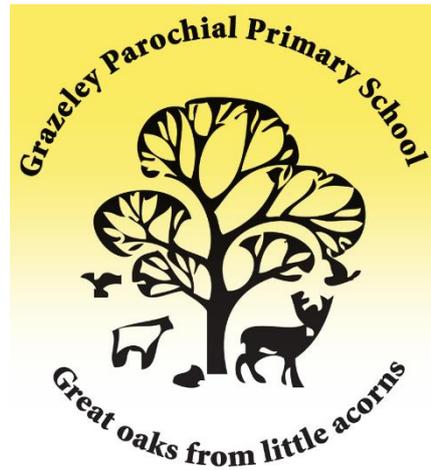


# Grazeley Parochial Primary School



Starting School in September 2020

All you need to know (and more!)



Great oaks from little acorns

## **A MESSAGE FROM THE TEACHER**

Hi! I am Mrs Clifford, the Foundation Stage Teacher here at Grazeley Primary School. We would like to offer you a warm welcome to the school whether you are a new or existing parent. The foundation class is called Chestnut Class. The Chestnut staff would like you to feel assured that your child's education and happiness is at the centre of all we do. We have an Early Years team who are extremely skilled and experienced. We hope that you find this booklet helpful and useful but if you still have questions please phone or email and we will do our best to answer your queries.

The Foundation Stage ethos is that children learn by playing, talking, observing, exploring, planning, questioning, experimenting, testing, repeating, reflecting and responding to adults and each other. Practitioners work together to plan learning experiences of the highest quality, based upon ongoing assessments of the children's needs and achievements. There is a balance of child initiated and adult led/focussed activities with both indoor and outdoor provision and a flexibility to our curriculum which is unique to Early Years.

We encourage parents to have a positive role in their child's learning and strive to develop an effective partnership with parents. Parents play an extremely important part in children's learning. We aim to develop a two-way flow of information, knowledge and expertise to maximise your child's development and learning. If you have any concerns, big or small about your child, please speak to us either at the start or the end of the day, put a note in their book bag or contact the school to arrange a meeting with the teacher or with Miss Thatcher.



## THE FIRST DAY AND WEEK

What your child will need on their first day:

- School Uniform - please **label** every item of clothing your child brings into school
- School book bag (from Brigade Clothing, leaflet enclosed)
- School PE kit (also labelled) in a drawstring bag
- Water bottle (named)
- Spare uniform including underwear, tights and/or socks (just in case!)
- **A big smile from you to see them into class**

School starts at 8:50am. During the first week you may wish to bring your child straight into the classroom and help them to find their coat peg. If your child is upset we would recommend that you leave as promptly as possible as the children will settle much more quickly. Although this may be difficult at first, on almost every occasion children brighten up as soon as the door closes! You are most welcome to telephone the school office later in the morning to see how they are getting on. After the first week or two we encourage parents to wait with children in the Hazel outdoor area and wave goodbye from there. Please allow children to hang up their own belongings from then on; they soon get the hang of it and it promotes their individual independence.

**Due to the current situation with COVID, the school arrival arrangements will be amended for September. Further details will be shared with you in due course.**

## PLAYTIME

Children are always supervised at playtime by staff on a rolling programme so there is always a friendly face for them to see while they find their feet. Playtime is a happy time when children can get some exercise through play. You may be surprised how many friends they make across the year groups too. We recommend that your child does not bring toys, including soft toys into school from home, just in case they get lost or broken. During the course of the morning the children will have the opportunity to have regular drinks of water. They are also encouraged to have a healthy snack of fruit at playtime. We are involved in the 'Free Fruit for Schools' scheme. (Flavoured water, fizzy drinks or juice are not permitted in water bottles).

**This may be subject to change due to COVID.**

## LUNCHTIME

Every child in Foundation Stage, Year 1 and Year 2 is entitled to a free hot meal every day. In the Summer term, there is also a school 'packed lunch' option. All lunches must be ordered using our ParentPay platform, further details including how to activate your account will be available to you ahead of your child starting in September.



The current term's menu can be found on the school website at [www.grazeley.wokingham.sch.uk/parents/school lunches](http://www.grazeley.wokingham.sch.uk/parents/school_lunches).

Allergy menus are available and where necessary allergy specific diets can be addressed with Caterlink to ensure all children are offered a free hot meal every day.

Children who bring a packed lunch should have a lunch box or bag, clearly labelled with your child's name and class name. Milk is available free of charge for children up to 5 years of age and for a small charge after that. Once children have finished eating they are supervised by lunchtime controllers who provide activities and games for the children to take part in. This may require them to change into trainers after lunch.

Guidelines for a healthy packed lunch should include:

\* **A portion of starchy food:** White or wholegrain bread, rolls, pitta bread or wraps, plain naan bread, bagels, cooked pasta, rice, noodles, couscous or potato salad.

\* **A portion of meat, fish, eggs, beans or other non-dairy sources of protein:** Sliced meat, chicken, fish, sliced egg in sandwiches, rolls or wraps, meat alternatives such as tofu or pulses.

\* **At least one portion of fruit and/or vegetable:** Fresh, frozen, canned or dried, these can all count towards 5-A-DAY. **Vegetables:** carrot, cucumber, pepper or celery sticks, tomatoes, grated carrot in sandwiches or wraps, sweetcorn, peas or pulses in salad. **Fruits:** sliced apple or melon, plums, grapes, strawberries, satsumas, chunks of pineapple, or dried fruit.

\* **A portion of milk or dairy foods:** Yoghurt or fromage frais, cheese in sandwiches or wraps, semi-skimmed milk.

It is recommended that foods from the high fat and/or sugar group (e.g. crisps and chocolates) should not be included in a packed lunch, and should be consumed away from the school site to encourage all to eat healthily.

**Please be aware that we have children with nut and kiwi allergies, so please avoid putting these foods or foods that may contain nuts (such as chocolate spread) into your child's lunch box.**

## **Staff List (2020/2021)**

**Headteacher:** Miss Thatcher

**Deputy Head:** Miss Easton

**SENCO/Inclusion Leader:** Mrs Didcock

### **Teaching Staff:**

Chestnut Class/Foundation Stage - Mrs Clifford

Hazel Class/Year 1 –Miss Hannington

Willow Class/Year 2 – Mrs Rose

Cedar Class/Year 3 – Miss Balchin & Mrs Hanson

Birch Class/Year 4 – Mrs Mullen & Miss Easton

Sycamore Class/Year 5 – Mrs Tiffin

Oak Class/Year 6 - Mrs Greer & Mrs Emes

### **Teacher Assistants and Lunchtime Supervisors:**

Mrs J Carter

Mrs A Kerr

Mrs J Clark

Mrs C Lowe

Mrs D Crowley

Mrs L Simpson

Mr J Driver

Mrs S Steer

Mrs J Greenwell

Mrs J Taylor

Mrs N Harding

Mrs K Tizzard

Mrs V Houldcroft

Mrs K Wright

### **Non-Teaching Staff:**

School Business Manager: Mrs Michele Teale

Office Manager: Mrs Lindsay Hoskins

School Administrator: Mrs Anna Allen

School Administrator: Mrs Ann Newell

## UNIFORM

### Girls

Bright yellow polo shirt  
(preferably with school logo)

Grey school sweatshirt or cardigan  
(preferably with school logo)

Grey skirt/pinafore dress or trousers

Yellow gingham summer dress/short-dress

White or grey socks or tights

Black shoes

Shoulder length hair should be tied back with plain hair accessories and be of a natural colour.

Plain stud earrings only.

### PE Kit:

White round neck t-shirt (preferably with school logo)

Black shorts / Track suit in winter

Plimsolls or trainers

### Boys

Bright yellow polo shirt  
(preferably with school logo)

Grey school sweatshirt  
(preferably with school logo)

Grey shorts or trousers

Black or grey socks

Black shoes

**Official School Logo uniform and Book Bags can be bought from Brigade Clothing (flyer enclosed)**

**ALL THESE ITEMS SHOULD BE NAMED – if uniform is not named, it makes finding & returning lost items much harder.**



We also ask the Foundation children to bring in a named suitable waterproof coat and a pair of welly boots to keep in school to enable the children to learn both indoors and outdoors. There is no such thing as bad weather!

We expect children to wear aprons when painting, playing with the water/sand and to wear wellies when working in the mud kitchen/digging pit, but accidents do happen when learning through play – we do our utmost to ensure that stains/marks on school uniform are avoided. Our resources are 'child friendly' and generally water based so hopefully most marks should be removed with a common household stain remover.

PE kits should ideally be brought in on Monday and taken home to be washed on Friday afternoon. If any spare PE kit or changes of clothing is borrowed, please wash and return as soon as possible as we only have a limited amount of spares available. During the summer months it is essential that children bring a named sunhat or cap into school and that sunscreen is applied before school every day, as the outdoor area is still in constant use during this time.

**This may be subject to change due to COVID.**

Children are encouraged to look after their own belongings **from the start of their school journey in September**. If any items have been lost, please check the lost property in the yellow box in front of the office. Named items are more likely to find their way back to the right owner.

## Getting ready for school

In preparation for starting school here are some questions which you may need to consider. Do not worry if your child cannot achieve all of them fully. This list provides a guide to areas where you can support and encourage your child.

### Independence:-

Can your child:-

Dress/undress without help?

Use a toilet unaided?

Use a tissue/handkerchief?

Use a knife and fork?

Do up their own coat?



### Social Development:-

Can your child: -

Tidy away toys they have been using?

Say what they like and dislike?

Play with other children cooperatively?

### Literacy and Mathematical Development:-

Does your child: -

Know any nursery rhymes?

Have a favourite story?

Look, listen and talk about the things they have seen?

Recognise/write their own name?

Orally blend and segment words e.g. 'c-a-t' ↔ 'cat'

Count to 10?

Recognise any numbers/shapes?

### Physical Development-

Can your child: -

Hop on one foot?

Balance on one foot?

Roll a ball?

Throw a ball?

Catch a ball?

Hold a pencil/pen using a tripod grip?



## THE BEGINNING AND END OF THE DAY

Due to the current situation with COVID the following arrangements will be amended for September, including introducing staggered start times. Further details will be shared with you in due course.

We provide supervision on the playground from 8:30am, when you may leave your child or wait with them on the playground, before walking them to Chestnut Class when the bell rings and waiting for the teacher to open the door at 8:50am. If your child attends breakfast club, they are taken out to the playground at 8:30am and supervised by a member of staff until school starts.

When you come to collect your child at 3:10pm we ask that you wait outside the Chestnut cloakroom entrance for the children to be sent out. Please make your presence obvious with a wave to the member of the Chestnut staff so we can return children safely, especially at the beginning of the term while we are getting to know which parent belongs to which child.

If a different person will be collecting your child please let the office and your class teacher know in the morning so that we can ensure that your child goes home safely. It is also useful to remind children if someone different is collecting them that day or if they are staying later for an after school club. If possible, please let us know if you are likely to be late. Children can become anxious if they are not collected on time.

### Car Parking

The school has a car park which is open to all parents to use. Please drive carefully and park only in designated spaces, parking in the 'drop off' zone can lead to 'traffic jams' in the car park. Please do not park in the staff spaces in the mornings, but you are welcome to park in them in the afternoons when collecting your child.

### Breakfast club

Get Active provide our breakfast club which runs daily from 7:30-8:30am in the school hall. Access to Breakfast club is via the side carpark gate from 7:30am.

All bookings can be made online at [www.getactivesports.com](http://www.getactivesports.com)

### After School Clubs

Daily after school clubs are provided by the school and Get Active. If your child is signed up for an after school club, you may wish to provide them with a snack to eat before the club starts.

A member of the Foundation Stage Team will escort your child to the relevant club, where they will be signed in. Please ensure you sign your child out of the club on the sheet provided when collecting them from wherever the Club is being held. Clubs are not held in the Chestnut classroom.

Due to COVID Club details are subject to change and will be reviewed in line with the current Government guidelines.

## THE SCHOOL DAY

During the course of the year, our timetable changes as the children develop. The amount of 'formal' learning and expectation for children to complete adult led tasks increases accordingly throughout the year to prepare them for Year 1. Our planning is flexible and driven by the needs and interests of the children but a rough guideline of a 'normal' day is outlined below.

This may be subject to change due to COVID

<p align="center"><u>Term 1</u> Phonics</p> <p>Carpet Time/input (am) (literacy or maths focus) Indoor &amp; outdoor child initiated learning 1 adult led group task per week 1 carpet input in pm Indoor &amp; outdoor child initiated learning</p>	<p align="center"><u>Term 2</u> Phonics</p> <p>Carpet Time/input (am) (literacy or maths focus) Indoor &amp; outdoor child initiated learning 1 adult led group task in literacy &amp; mathematics per week 1 carpet input in pm Indoor &amp; outdoor child initiated learning</p>	<p align="center"><u>Term 3</u> Phonics</p> <p>Literacy &amp; maths input (am) Indoor &amp; outdoor child initiated learning Group adult led task in both literacy and numeracy per week 1 carpet input in pm Indoor &amp; outdoor child initiated learning</p>
<p><u>A typical day for Chestnut Children - after settling in period</u></p> <p><u>AM</u> Super sentence writing Registration Calendar &amp; Magic Number Wake Up, Shake Up Funky Fingers Phonics Input Phonic activities 10:30 Break Literacy input/Mathematics input A variety of activities linked to the learning objective to incorporate all areas of the curriculum &amp; child-initiated learning. Tidy up, Wash hands</p> <p align="center">12:00 – 1:10pm Lunch time</p> <p><u>PM</u> Registration Afternoon input/circle time (PSHE, topic or RE): Children sit on the carpet for an input that covers all areas of learning. A variety of activities linked to the learning objective to incorporate all areas of the curriculum &amp; child-initiated learning. Tidy up time Story time &amp; VIP compliments</p> <p align="center">3:10pm Home time</p>		

### Super Sentences

Every day before the register we have Super Sentences! The children copy/or complete the sentences that are displayed on the board. This ensures that every child is practising 'writing' daily and gives us time to focus on sentence structure, finger spaces, punctuation, handwriting and capital letters. There are 3 different coloured sentences which stay the same all week. The expectation is that all children will attempt the green sentence (initially a CVC word like 'dog') and once they have completed that, they will be encouraged to challenge themselves to write the orange sentence and finally the red sentence. As the year progresses and the children's writing skills increase, so will the level of challenge of the sentences. Every Friday, two children will be selected as 'Super Sentence Writers of the week' and will be able to wear the Super Sentence Writer cape and mask all day. The idea is to encourage and reward children for 'having a go', persevering and really trying to improve their writing.

### Magic Number

Every day, the VIP chooses the magic number of the day (either a 1-digit number or (when ready) a 2-digit number). As a class, we count the magic number in steps/claps/stomps/bangs (VIP chooses) and explore how to write & tally the number, write a number sentence using the magic number and discuss concepts such as 1 more/1 less and odd & even.

### Funky fingers

These are planned group activities which help to improve children's fine motor skills, coordination and independence when working. The children complete a carousel of targeted activities each week. There is an expectation that the children will stay at & complete their designated task for an allotted time. The length of time and the level of challenge of the activity increase over the year as the children's skills develop.

### VIP

Each day a member of the class is chosen to be the VIP. The VIP gets to sit on a special chair and chooses the Wake Up Shake Up & magic number for the day. At the end of the day, the VIP receives compliments from the Chestnut staff, their friends and they even give themselves a compliment. It is a good way to develop children's confidence, self-esteem and thoughtfulness for their peers and the children are very excited when they are chosen to be the VIP!

## General Information:

### Attendance:

Please let the office know by 9:30am via phone or email if your child is going to be absent from school due to illness.

Authorised absence is granted by the Head Teacher for some exceptional circumstances. Permission for absences from school must be sought in writing using the Absence Request form which is available at the school office. Please note it is the policy of the school not to authorise holidays taken in term time.

### Medical Issues

If your child is unwell you will be contacted and asked to collect them. It is essential that your child is fit and well enough to cope with the busy school day. If your child has been physically sick or has suffered diarrhoea, we do not expect to see them back in school until 48 hours have passed.

Please can we ask that you carry out regular temperature checks at home and do not send your child into school if you suspect they have a temperature above 38°. Should your child show any symptoms of COVID please inform the school and follow the Government guidelines in relation to testing.

We can administer prescribed medicine to your child but you must fill in a **consent form** available from the school office. Exceptions to this are treatments for asthma, or any medication for children who have a condition that is with them for life or for allergies.



## Questions and Answers

### What to do if...

... your child is going to be late.

*Ring the school as soon as possible in the morning.*

... your child is ill.

*Ring or email the school as soon as possible.*

... your child needs to bring medication, prescribed by the doctor.

*Fill in a request form in the school office and notify the class teacher.*

... your child is away from school for any reason.

*You must contact the school or give an explanation to the class teacher.*

*Any unexplained absences will be recorded as unauthorised.*

... your child is going on holiday during term time.

*Please fill out an absence request form, available from the office.*

*This absence will always be recorded as unauthorised as per school policy and may incur a fine.*

... you are going to be late picking up your child.

*Ring the school as soon as possible.*

... your home circumstances change.

*Please let us know. We want your child to be happy. The loss of a pet, death in the family or family upset, such as separation or reconciliation affects us all – let us know so we can be aware and support your child.*

### What we shall do if...

... your child has an accident or is ill at school.

*We shall make every effort to contact you or failing that, your emergency contact. Please let us know if these numbers change, i.e if you move house or change your place of employment. Should we be unable to make contact for any reason, we will act in your child's best interests.*

... we have any concerns about your child at school.

*We will arrange a mutually convenient time to discuss any concern.*

*If you have any more queries or concerns, please share them with your child's teacher during the visits or at the beginning of term. We take all problems seriously, however minor. Please talk to us.*



## Learning at Grazeley



### Reading

In Foundation, children will be introduced to reading through a variety of books. These will include nursery and modern rhymes, chants, poetry, stories and non-fiction books. We want children to be enthusiastic, independent readers as quickly as possible, so children choose a reading book to take home to 'read' and share in their first week. Books will be changed weekly during term 1, twice weekly during term 2 & daily during term 3 and the title of the book will be recorded in their yellow reading record. If you want your child's reading book to be changed, please ensure it is in their book bag on that day. All of our reading books are colour banded according to a progression of skills and strategies. These books are designed to help children to practise their phonic and reading skills. A weekly reading target is stuck in their reading record. Targets become more challenging over the year as the children's phonic skills develop. e.g. hold the book correctly & turn the pages one by one, counting the number of words on each page, looking for specific sounds or punctuation, giving their opinion about the book, practising 'Fred in head' etc.

**We hope that by September, it will be possible to send books home but this might be subject to change due to COVID.**

### Reading Partnership

At Grazeley we encourage parents to play a part in teaching their child to read. Please try to read with your child every day for around 5 – 10 minutes – you will be surprised what a **huge** difference it makes to their progress.

Foundation Stage children reading books will be changed on **Mondays** (term 1) and **Mondays & Thursdays** (term 2). During term 3, reading books will be put in the Hazel outside area for you to help your child to change their book at the **end of the day**. If you wish to write a comment to let us know how your child has read, please do so in their reading record. Comments will be looked at when reading books are changed. If your child's reading book & record is not in their book bag, we will take this to mean you would like to keep the book for longer. For the last few weeks of the summer term, children are able to change their reading book in the classroom at the start of the day (if they wish to do so) to prepare them for this expectation in Year 1.

## **Phonics**

Children will be taught phonics through the Read Write Inc. programme. The sessions will take place daily and will usually consist of learning 3 new sounds per week, a session spent consolidating the new sounds and a session on red words. These are tricky words that are not phonetically de-codable e.g. the, go, to, we. However, phonics planning and provision must sometimes be adapted to meet the needs of the children. Parents will be invited to attend a phonics workshop in September. More information can be found on the Read Write Inc website: [www.ruthmiskin.com/en/find-out-more/parents/](http://www.ruthmiskin.com/en/find-out-more/parents/)

## **Phonics Books**

The children have a phonics book to practise/consolidate their phonic learning at home. A 'homework' sheet is added each week so that parents are aware of the new sounds covered and can support their child's phonics in different ways. Like the reading targets, the level of challenge increases in accordance with the children's increasing knowledge. The activities might include matching initial sounds to pictures, reading and writing CVC words, practising speed sounds and eventually reading and writing simple sentences. This homework is not compulsory, however, the difference in progress between those children who regularly complete their phonics homework and those who don't becomes increasingly noticeable over the year.

**This may be subject to change due to COVID.**

## **Read Write Inc Ditties**

When ready, children will complete a weekly adult led task using the RWI ditty books. There is a reading and writing focus within the activity. During the reading part of the task, the children will read the green words in the box and then move on to reading the captions with a partner. There are also some simple comprehension questions to ensure understanding. The sentences are repetitive to increase the children's confidence and independence when reading e.g. sit on a mat, sit on a hat etc. The writing task builds on from the reading with the children completing a word missing from the end of a sentence to completing most of the sentence and finally 'holding a sentence'. This is a sentence that they are told, hold in their heads and then write. E.g. I sit on a \_\_\_\_\_, I sit \_\_\_\_ \_\_ \_\_\_\_\_, sit on a pen (hold a sentence). Simple repetitive sentences such as these help to increase the children's confidence and independence when writing. After the children have completed their activity, the reading part will be sent home so that they can share their learning with you and consolidate through re-reading the words & captions and/or using the words to write simple sentences. This is not compulsory or additional homework and there is no expectation for the children to bring any writing to school (unless they wish to do so).

## **Writing**

Children practise their writing during adult-led activities and are encouraged during child-initiated time to write in all areas of the learning environment for a range of different purposes. We promote children's enthusiasm for writing by sharing good writing under the visualiser, with other members of staff, displaying 'WOW' writing, setting the expectation for children to write a note/name to accompany their model on the 'save it shelf', show & tell writing and challenging them to add words or even a sentence to their picture/work to 'blow Mrs Clifford's boots off!'

## **Handwriting**

In accordance with RWI guidance, children in Chestnut are taught to print their letters & focus on correct letter formation, rather than write cursively. Each letter has a handwriting rhyme that accompanies it to help children to remember how to form it correctly. e.g. m – maisy, mountain, mountain. Letter formation sheets are sent home with the phonics book so that children can practise writing the new sounds that they have learnt that week. Formal cursive takes longer to learn and places heavier demands on fine motor skills than printing: time that could be better spent learning to read and spell. Also, children can often find it harder to read what they have written if they have written it cursively.

<https://www.ruthmiskin.com/en/about-us/blog-news/article/ruths-blog-cursive-handwriting-reception-or-not/>

## **Mathematics**

We use the White Rose reception scheme of learning as the basis for our Maths planning. This is taught through whole class teaching and group work. Whenever possible, number, shape, space and measure Maths concepts are consolidated in a practical way during child-initiated time.

## **Topic Work**

All other aspects of the Foundation Stage Curriculum are planned into our topic work. Where possible we try to allow the children to learn through first-hand experience. This often means working outdoors, going on visits or having visitors into school.

## **School Learning Platform**

Your child will be given a user name and password to login to the school learning platform. The school subscribes to a number of games and online activities that they can access free of charge at home to support their learning.

## **Tapestry**

The adults at school spend lots of time observing the Foundation class, taking photos and recording information as the children are playing. This enables us to find out what and how the children are learning, as well as the next steps in their

development. We use a computer program on our iPads called Tapestry to do this. We chose this program because it allows parents to log in regularly and see what their child has been learning at school. We feel that parental involvement in children's learning is very important, and Tapestry allows parents to make comments about what the children have been learning and add their own examples of things the children have done at home.

### **Parent Workshops**

We want parents to be as informed about their children's education as possible. We run workshops throughout the year to advise parents on what children are learning at school (e.g. Phonics), as well as ways that they can support children's learning at home. You will receive more information about this in September.

**Parents workshops in school this year may be subject to change due to COVID.**

### **Parents/Celebration Evenings**

Parents Evenings are held in the Autumn and Spring Terms (usually October and March). These are an opportunity for teachers and parents to discuss how the child is progressing academically and socially at school. These meetings are fairly short, so if there are any ongoing issues teachers will endeavour to inform parents in the meantime so things can be resolved promptly. Parents are also welcome to book a short after school appointment with the teacher if needed.

In addition to this, a Celebration Evening will be held in the Summer Term (usually July) which is an opportunity for parents and children to come to school together and have a look through some of the work the children have produced throughout the year. Teachers are available informally during this time to talk to or answer queries.

**Parents meetings in school this year may be subject to change due to COVID.**

### **Helping your child.**

There are many different ways in which you can help your child to prepare for school. Many of these suggestions you will be familiar with however, there may be some new ideas you can try. Please look out for regular help/guidance for helping your child at home in letters from the class teachers.

### **General Activities**

#### **Talking**

Talk with your child, listen to them and ask questions. When travelling, walking, shopping, cooking and playing, talk with your child, making them aware of the world around them and exploring and explaining new words when they are encountered. This can be started at a very early age and continued throughout your child's lifetime.

‘Vocabulary at age five is a powerful indicator of how many GCSEs children will get at 16. Children who had good vocabularies at age six have been found at age 14 to be on average five years ahead in their reading comprehension, compared to those who had poor early vocabularies’

Jean Gross CBE, Primary Matters, Summer 2016

### **Listening**

Encourage your child to listen when you are talking and ask if he/she has understood what you have said. It is important that children should be able to listen to and follow instructions when starting school, therefore encourage your child to listen and follow simple instructions at home. It is equally important that you listen to what your child has to say giving him/her plenty of time to order his/her thoughts or formulate questions.

### **Observation**

Observation is an important skill which can be developed in young children. Encourage your child to observe street signs, place names, advertisements, etc this activity can often lead to spontaneous reading by young children.

Books will play a vital role in your child’s school life. To encourage an interest in books, let them look at picture books with you and by themselves.

There are many pre-school picture books found in local libraries. When looking at books with your child, talk about what is happening in the pictures, looking at people, animals, colours, shapes and sizes. As your child shows more interest, encourage him/her to tell you about it in his/her own words.

### **Getting ready for Reading**

There are many games to be played which will help your child to be ready for reading when he/she starts school.

Matching games.

a. Ask your child if he can find another like this one, e.g. flower, plate, toy, picture.

b. Memory training: Kim’s game. Place items on a tray and ask your child to have a good look at them, naming them as he does so. Ask your child to close his eyes and remove one of the items. Can your child name the missing item?

c. Feely Bag.

Place familiar toys/items in a bag and ask if they know what they are feeling. Let your child look to see if he is right.

d. Scrapbook

Help your child to make a scrapbook with pictures that interest your child.

e. Stories.

Tell stories to your child and discuss what is happening in each picture. Ask your child if he can guess what will happen next.

### **Nursery Rhymes**

The ability to rhyme is vitally important to the reading and spelling processes. Here are some you could sing with your child:

Humpty Dumpty, Jack and Jill, Three Blind Mice, Sing a song of Sixpence, Hickory Dickory Dock, Mary had a Little Lamb, The Grand Old Duke of York.

### **Getting ready for Numbers**

Encourage your child to practise counting and most importantly understand the number of objects they have counted. You can help by playing simple games with your child. Language is very important in Maths and is developed throughout the school. You can assist your child by helping to develop a simple vocabulary of number, size, shape and position using the following ideas: -

#### **Matching games**

Let your child help you lay the table, giving each person a knife, fork, spoon, etc. Playing with dolls or teddies, let your child share his sweets or biscuits so they get the same.

#### **Counting**

Count with your child as they play with their toys, having a bath, going upstairs, getting dressed.

How many? Ask how many towels, sweets, cars, fingers.

Sing number rhymes with your child.

E.g.: 10 green bottles, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, Once I caught a fish alive.

Size: Get your child to put things in order of size. Discuss the size with your child using the words *big/small, thin/thick, tall/short, narrow/wide*.

Positions: Talk about *before/after, in/out, up/down, over/under, first/last, back/front/side, behind/in front, next to/beside*.

Make repeating patterns with coloured beads, buttons etc:

1 red, 1 blue, 1 red, 1 blue

### **Getting Ready for Writing**

Many drawing and painting activities will help your child when they start writing in school. Let your child have a wide variety of pencils, crayons, chalks and felt tips and a large supply of paper.

Let your child draw and scribble as much as possible. You will be surprised how quickly your child will be able to draw a recognisable picture.

Make patterns and lines across the paper for your child to follow with their pencil. (Encourage left to right)

Help your child to recognise their name by printing it on pieces of card and placing them in appropriate places, e.g. their bedroom door, toy box, etc.

Please use **lowercase lettering**, not capitals (except at the beginning of each name), e.g. John Brown. Your child can practise writing their name by tracing over one you have written for them.

Your child should try to hold their pencil correctly from the outset. Let your child hold the pencil in the hand they feel most comfortable. Some children will not have

chosen a dominant hand at this stage. Allow them to experiment and encourage a good pencil grip whichever hand they choose.

If you should do any writing for your child to look at or copy, please use lower case letters, not capitals.

Let your child trace over lines/pictures drawn by you. Keep them simple. Use a yellow felt tip or highlighter pen to write letters. Mark the correct starting point with a biro and let your child trace over.

Helping your child to draw a circle correctly is invaluable as it is the basis for many letters of the alphabet e.g. a, d, g, etc.

### **A Last Word...**

Thank-you for taking the time to read our Starting School booklet. We hope we have answered many of your initial questions about starting school at Grazeley. We will do our utmost to ensure your child will be very happy here. If you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to ask any of the Foundation Stage adults. We hope you have a fantastic summer and look forward to seeing you all in September!

Mrs Clifford