

ST GEORGE'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL

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Welcome to Class 1

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Class 1. We are writing this letter to give you some key information about Class 1, including the curriculum, routines and homework. We are very much looking forward to this coming term and the year ahead. The children have all had a fantastic first few days and have really settled in well.

Firstly, let us introduce ourselves. We are Mrs Godfrey and Mrs Martin and we are the job-share teachers in Class 1. Mrs Godfrey teaches from Monday to Wednesday and Mrs Martin teaches on a Thursday and Friday. In class we will be supported by Mrs Ward and Mrs Carter during the mornings and some afternoons, as well as Mrs Cox and Miss Droba in the afternoons. Some children will also work with Mrs Hazeldine our Language Support Assistant.

Our key aims during this first term are to ensure a smooth transition from the Foundation Stage and to create enthusiastic, confident and, most importantly, happy learners. Mrs Weetch has informed us of all the wonderful progress the children made last year. We will endeavour to create an environment in which the children can build on this progress in a similar way. There will be a topic based approach to learning, which will allow the children to link their learning and knowledge across the curriculum.

The topic for the first half of the term is 'All About Me' Below is an outline of the learning in each subject. We are very grateful for all the support you can give your child at home to reinforce the work we do in school.

	Overview of learning:	How to help at home:
Literacy	Phonic progression, Sentence structure and basic punctuation. Writing lists, labels and captions Poetry linked to the senses	Help your child to use their Home Writing book (details below). Ensure your child practices the sounds they have been taught at school using the Read Write Inc. sound sheets. Listen to your child read their home reading book at least three times a week.
Numeracy	Counting, Properties of number and number sequences, Addition and Subtraction, 1 more and 1 less, Problem solving, 2D and 3D shapes.	Ensure your child completes any Maths homework sheets that go home. Regular counting practice incorporated into daily activities e.g. counting cutlery when laying the table etc.
RE	Families and Belonging (baptism/confirmation).	If your child has been baptised you could dig out the photographs and tell them all about the day e.g. who their Godparents are, show them the special candle/white gown etc.
Science	The body - parts of the body, our senses, how our bodies work and move, similarities and differences between people.	Help your child to practice using the names of different parts of the body especially the trickier ones such as ankles, elbows, knuckles, ribs etc.

ICT	Basic computer skills, Being safe with technology and password safety, multimedia and technology in our lives.	If possible: - Typing practice on a keyboard - Using a mouse or tracker pad on a laptop - Using an Ipad to swipe/tap etc.
Geography	Our School and local area.	Take your child out to look at the area where they live. Highlight any major landmarks, both old and new. You could take them to other points of interest in Taunton such as the museum, library, parks, theatre etc.
Art and DT	Self Portraits.	Paint and draw portraits of themselves and others at home using different mediums e.g. chalk, paint, pens, pencils, pastels.
Music	Exploring sounds, Exploring duration.	Practise singing simple songs in a high or low pitch, at different speeds or volumes. Play a range of music for your child to listen to. Discuss the sounds they can hear - can they identify any particular instruments?

Homework:

The children will be sent home with a Home Writing Book which they can use to record ideas and write about events in their lives, to develop themselves as independent writers. The Home Writing Books are a 'free writing' book where children can have choice and ownership over their writing. Not all children enjoy writing but, as they have ownership of the subject, these books can help to inspire reluctant writers. It can be used to write anything your child likes, but here are some examples:

- Copying favourite lines from a reading books
- A picture with a caption
- News writing
- Holiday/weekend news
- Lists, diagrams with labels
- Stories
- Handwriting practice
- Descriptive sentences about unusual objects
- Information about a hobby such as gymnastics or Karate
- Recipes/instructions of things they have made
- Design a junk model and write about how it was made
- Use a photo or picture or a piece of music to inspire poetry.
- Write a prayer relating to the work we have done in class during R.E sessions.

To begin with, your child might 'copy write' but the intention is that throughout the year they will become more independent in sounding out and writing their own ideas. We are not specifying a certain amount of entries that your child should make in their book each week, as the children are all at different abilities and developing at different rates. We also know that you all lead busy lives and so we would not want to put you under any pressure. The children are encouraged to get into the habit of spending some focused time at home reading and writing, to prepare them for Class 2 and Key Stage 2. It is up to you and your child to set the level of challenge.

Approximately once a term your child will come home with a weekend toy and a diary entry to complete.

Numeracy worksheets will be sent home some Fridays to consolidate class work.

There will also be the occasional topic related task in place of, or as well as, a Numeracy sheet.

The children have 'Show and Tell' on Tuesdays. This is a speaking and listening opportunity and helps to develop confidence in speaking aloud in front of an audience. During Show and Tell the children will be asked to share the entries they have made in their Home Writing Book. They may also like to bring in a special object of interest which they can talk to the class about.

We also have a Class 1 'Reading Challenge'. We will send home a separate letter with the details of this system

in the next few weeks.

Reading Books:

Your child will bring home a book from our school book boxes. The reading books are changed three times a week, depending on how much time parent helpers are able to give*. It has been agreed that if you have not yet had a chance to hear your child read, and therefore no comment is written in the home reading diary, we will not change the book, so that you can read with your child at a time that is convenient for you. We cannot stress how important it is that your child reads with you as regularly as possible. We simply do not have the time, with such a demanding curriculum, to hear the children read individually every day. Whilst we do hear the children read regularly in their phonics lessons, the time they get with you at home really does benefit them hugely, helping them to make that rapid progress that we are looking for!

* If anyone thinks they may be able to spare a little of their time to help with changing the reading books please pop in to speak to one of us. Ideally we would like the books to be changed on a Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

P.E.:

P.E. kit should be kept in school in a clearly named bag. The children have their P.E. lesson on Thursday at 2.30 with Mr Lake. The lesson finishes at 3.25. In order to maximise the learning time and ensure the children are still on time to leave school when the bell goes **they will be sent home in their PE kits with their uniform in their P.E. bag**. If we are rushed for time at the end of the day, we may put the bookbag boxes outside for you to help yourself to. Because we have a very busy afternoon on Thursdays, the children will change for P.E. before lunch. This means that they will go outside for lunchtime play in their P.E. shorts. You may want to pack a pair of joggers or leggings for your child to wear when the weather gets colder.

Other important information:

Please could each child bring in a **colouring/puzzle book** to use during wet playtimes. Also, if everybody could provide a **box of tissues** it would help towards comforting runny noses throughout the year.

Throughout the year it is common for the children to bring cakes in on their birthday to share with their friends. **If your child has an allergy, and therefore will not be able to eat any of these types of foods, please provide a suitable substitute which they are able to eat such as a packet of biscuits**. This way we can ensure that your child is not left out of these occasions.

May we also remind you that all children are advised to bring in a **bottle of still water** which they can keep in the classroom. The children do get very thirsty throughout the day and they are not permitted to drink squash/juices whilst at school.

Please ensure all equipment and their clothing, shoes and water bottles etc. are clearly named to avoid upsets and misunderstandings.

Finally, as part of our Topic work the children will be asking questions about themselves, their siblings and other family members when they were young. To enable the children to do this it would be really good if they could **bring in photographs of themselves as a baby, as a toddler and also pictures of other family members** for discussion and display. Please ensure that all photographs are named, and please do not bring any photos that are too precious - we will endeavour to look after everything as best we can, but we would not want anything to happen to photos that are very special/valuable to you.

We look forward to working with you and your child to ensure they have an enjoyable and successful year. Our door is always open so please feel free to pop in to see us should you have any questions.

Please note: We will also be sending home a separate letter about behaviour strategies in Class 1.

Kind Regards,

Mrs R. Godfrey and Mrs C. Martin