



## Reception Welcome Letter Autumn Term 2023

Dear Parents,

We are pleased to welcome your child to Reception where we hope he/she will enjoy the many exciting experiences and opportunities that are planned. We provide a learning environment of the highest quality for all the children. Irrespective of your child's previous setting, he/she will be following the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum where he/she will work to develop a wide range of skills and knowledge.

We wish to work with you to establish an effective partnership as this will have a positive impact on your child's learning and development.

During the admissions meeting the structure of the school day and routines of the Reception class were outlined. We hope your child will quickly settle into school and feel confident.

We would like to take this opportunity to reiterate points raised in the meeting to ensure a smooth transition from home to school.

- Please help your child to be prepared for school by bringing him/her promptly at 8.40am each morning via the side gate on Green chain walk, where you will wait on the main playground outside of the reception area. We will meet the children at the gate at 8.40am and they will walk into the classroom by themselves. Whilst we are confident that all of the children arrive at school happy and eager to begin the day, in the unlikely event of the odd 'bad day/school blues feeling' may we suggest a speedy, cheerful goodbye at the gate and we will take it from there. In the event that your child will not be attending school you must call the office and let them know on the morning of the absence. At the end of the day, please wait outside on the playground where the children will then be dismissed to you. Please be patient and mindful of the time it will take to ensure everyone's safety and for us to learn the faces of all the adults. Please wait in a line. Your child must wait for us to say their name and dismiss so please do not beckon them.
- Being punctual will establish good routines and also help your child to feel more secure, so please let us know of any changes to arrangements, especially if someone else is picking up your child. You must also let the office know as we are unable to dismiss your child to anyone who is not named on the collection list. Please keep the office updated with the current contact details of yourself and those collecting your child.
- PE day for reception will change each half term. We will remind you of this via class dojo before the end of each half term. For the first



half of Autumn term we will be doing outdoor PE and this will be on a Thursday, although we will not start this straight away, so we will let you know when children need to start coming in in their kits. Autumn 2, Spring 1 and Spring 2 will be indoor PE on a Tuesday. Summer 1 and Summer 2 will be back to outdoor PE on a Thursday.

- On PE days your child will need to **come to school dressed** in their PE kits, no uniform to be worn on this day. Please refer to the school PE kit list sent out with your admissions document. Without an appropriate kit, your child will not be able to participate in this important aspect of the curriculum. Indoor PE is shorts and T-Shirt only, but children can come with black jogging bottoms over the top of their shorts and will remove them before PE. For outdoor PE, please wear the listed kit but be mindful of the weather.
- If you feel your child may need it, please send in a named drawstring bag with an appropriate change of clothes in the event of a toileting accident.
- Outside Learning- The outside area is part of the learning environment which children have access to all day and in all weathers. The weather provides exciting opportunities and enhances learning e.g. to feel the wind and make kites, explore snow, observe paint in puddles etc. so ensure your child has appropriate clothing i.e. sun/woolly hat, scarf, gloves. It is also an option to provide a named pair of wellington boots and raincoat/cagoule to be kept in school for rainy days.

**No jewellery**, including watches should be worn to school at any time for health and safety reasons. Please tie back long hair using plain bands in line with school policy. Because of the continuous use of the outside area and climbing equipment, please refrain from heavily beaded hair styles.

**Reading** – Once your child is settled we will assess their phonics/reading ability and group them. Once phonics teaching begins, children may bring home a phonics levelled book based on their week's learning. Children not yet at a level where they can recognise sounds and blend independently will not bring home a phonics levelled book. All children will bring home a 'free reader.' This is a book they will choose from the reading area and can be shared at home. Books will be changed on a Monday. We will always aim to hear your child read in school on a 1:1 basis each week and as part of the home school agreement, we ask that you hear your child read a minimum of 3 times per week. Reading at home will be monitored by the class teachers. Please share the phonics levelled book with your child regularly to develop early reading strategies. Encourage your child to turn over the pages, identify objects/characters, talk about the pictures, use story language to tell the story, look out for sounds learned at school and key words. Encourage your child to talk about the story, e.g. favourite part/character, discuss feelings, what might happen next etc. The free reader story book can be read to your child to develop their enjoyment and knowledge of story structure and language.

Once phonics teaching is under way we will also be sending out a 'Fred book mark' at the end of each week. These will have a few key words on them, containing the weeks focus sounds. We



encourage you to practice sounding out and blending these words with your child and, hopefully, children will begin to recognise these words on sight to increase their reading fluency. At the end of the following week we will collect the book marks back in and send the next weeks one, so please ensure they are back in book bags on a Friday.

**Homework** – Support videos for phonics will be posted each week on the whole school dojo page. You will need to know which phonics group your child is in and only access the links provided for this group. We will also use Tapestry to update you on what your child has been learning in class and ways you can support this learning at home.

Please Note: If you are unsure about the letters/sounds we are learning in phonics please don't hesitate to ask.

**Praise and Rewards** - In each class there is a Class Charter outlining children's rights. In Reception we focus on children's right to an education, the right to play and to a safe and accepting environment. Our behaviour management policy links to this. What the children will see in Reception is a visual representation of the behaviours and attitudes we'd expect to see so that every child can learn and play safely and effectively. Children's names will start on these positive behaviours and hopefully stay there. If our behaviour management strategies of positive reinforcement and reminders are not helping children to regulate their behaviours or an incident occurs which we feel is slightly more serious, then a child may have their name moved down to the 'think about it' area of our display and children will be given some time to reflect and will have a discussion with a staff member about what they should be doing. If further intervention is needed parents may be contacted.

Children are awarded dojo points for their efforts towards their learning and behaviour and each week a certificate is awarded to those who earn the highest amount of dojo points.

## Parental Involvement

**Tapestry** - We will keep you updated on your child's learning journey through our online learning tool Tapestry, where you will be kept fully informed about your child's experiences in school. This will include photos, videos, assessments and progress. This is your tool for sending us work completed at home and any other relevant experiences and achievements e.g. swimming certificate, days out.

**Class Dojo** – ClassDojo a vital tool for communication between school and home. We will use Dojo to send reminders about trips, special events, changes to our usual timetable etc. There is also a private message function to allow private messages between yourselves and your class teacher. Please be aware that teachers will only be responding within normal working hours. Dojo will also be used to award children with positive dojo points when they demonstrate good



behaviours and are adhering to the Class Charter that we will design together in line with the school's policy.

It is imperative that you are signed up for and regularly using **Tapestry, Classdojo and the My Child at School apps**, so that you remain fully informed about events in school and your child's education and well-being. Please check with the office about BROMCOM and the My Child at School app.

**Book bags** – to be in school every day, please **only** keep your child's books and learning prompts we send home in the book bag. Water bottles often leak and ruin books so please hold these. There is no need for children to bring any pens/ pencils or anything else unless asked. Please check your child's book bag on a daily basis for letters, accident forms etc.

Can we also remind you that if your child has an illness, allergy or any other medical need, that we, and the school office need to be informed of this. Their prescribed medication, if they have any, needs to be clearly labelled and given in to the office.

We will be sending a 'foods' permission letter out to you. This letter needs to be read, considered and signed as soon as possible. We often use foods to aid play and learning e.g. homemade playdough contains flour and salt, pasta and rice in trays for sensory play, and we love cooking/baking and tasting. Your child will be unable to participate in these food related activities without us having this signed permission form.

**Activity money** – We kindly ask that you consider contributing activity money to help cover the costs of extra activities such as cooking ingredients, playdough making and specialised art & craft resources. This may be contributed via the My Child at School app. If you choose to support us with these contributions, you can pay in increments for the equivalent of up to £5 per term.

We look forward to a successful, rewarding and fun time with your child. We hope that if you have any concerns, or you would like further information about supporting your child, you will not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Dixon  
Durrent

Mrs Taiwo

Miss Avery

Mrs



Headteacher: Mrs Y Bishop NPQH  
Executive Lead: Mrs S Young NPQEL

admin@castilion.bexley.sch.uk  
Tel: 020 8311 5177  
www.apat.org.uk

To Mrs Dixon, Mrs Taiwo, Miss Avery and Mrs Durrent - Castilion Primary School.

I have read your letter and agree to support my child and adhere to the school's policies and procedures.

Child's full name

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Signed .....Date .....