



# Early Years Newsletter

## — Spring Term —




Welcome back to school for the Spring Term. We hope you all enjoyed the Christmas and New Year break. Thank you to everyone for their kind messages, Christmas cards and gifts, and for everything you do to make sure your children are prepared for their time in Early Years. It has been a long first term but they are such an amazing group of children and are really settling into their class and school now.


Over the next few weeks we will be reminding the children of our school and class expectations. You can help at home by reminding them of the classroom expectations for being 'Super Stars':


- We're **SAFE** in and around our classroom.
- We're **RESPECTFUL** to each other and things in and around our school.
- We're **READY** to learn as best as we can.


Your child may also mention some of the other standards we have in class that we work on every day:

- Super Listeners (empty hands, not talking over others, focus on speaker)
- Super Sitting (on our spot, empty hands, crossed legs, quiet mouths)
- Top Tidiers (tidy as we go, helping others, putting things back correctly)

 The door will be open between **8.40am and 8:45am**. If you arrive after that time and the gate to the playground is locked, please enter school via the office. Children should now be coming into school as quickly as possible by this point. Please **drop them quickly and still remember to not enter the cloakroom**, this is for school staff and children only. **Top Tips for starting the day:** Let them know who is collecting them, reassure them we are here to look after them, keep goodbyes predictable and fast (long goodbyes can increase anxiety and make separating difficult).

 If your child is staying for a **packed lunch**, please put their lunch box on the **trolley** in the playground by the hall, at the start of the day and collect it from there at home time.

 The menu for school dinners can be found on the school website <http://lordderamores.com/information-for-parentscarers/lunches>

 At home time, the classroom door will be opened at 3.15pm.



## P.E. - Friday Afternoons

Friday afternoon is Mr Sharpe's planning and preparation time so the children will be taught by the school PE consultant, Mr Holmes (or another member of Total Sports if he is away). The children will have a PE session in the afternoon and will access provision in the classroom at the end of the session. **PE kits should now be in school**, so that the children are equipped for their lesson on Friday.

Their PE bag should contain:

- White t-shirt
- Black shorts
- Black jogging trousers
- Black sweatshirt or jacket
- Trainers (with Velcro fastening)
- Spare socks (particularly for girls who may have tights on)
- Spare pants (in case of accidents)

**All items including bags, shoes and anything you don't want to lose should be named.** It would help enormously if your child can change into their PE kit and back into uniform as independently as possible. We are always happy to help a child who is struggling, but as you can imagine, helping a class of 30 children would take a very long time.

PE kits remain in school for the whole half term. We will send them home at the end of half term for washing.



## Forest School - Wednesday Mornings

Your child will need to wear waterproof trousers, coat and wellies. Please send your child with their **forest clothes over their school uniform** as we will go out as soon as we have completed our morning routines and visited the toilet. They will need to **bring their school shoes** to change into following forest schools in a **large named bag** to bring their forest clothes and wellies home at the end of the day. As the weather gets colder, you may want to send your child in more layers also - scarves, gloves, hats are essential! We have spare wellies and waterproofs if you happen to forget. Please send any bags sent home back in. In the colder months it is essential that they have **lots of warm layers. Gloves, hats, scarves and extra socks** are so important to keeping them happy and able to survive the long forest sessions.



## Uniform

It is lovely to see the children looking so smart in their school uniform. Please make sure that **all their items** (including bags, all items of clothing, shoes and coats) are **clearly labelled** with their **name**. If your child has an accident and is sent home with **school spare clothes please send them back when washed**. We have limited supplies and

can dwindle rapidly if they aren't returned. **Please remember that footwear should be plain black shoes or trainers.**

## **Reading Books**

Reading books have been introduced over the first term. There will still be some children that are not quite ready for a proper reading book yet. If your child is still unable to blend, please spend at least **5 minutes every day practising** the sounds they have been taught and putting these into words to blend back to you. In the car, on a walk, or over breakfast are great times to get some extra practice for their ears to tune into words. Please try to read every night with them and get them to read their reading books to you at least 3 times a week.

**Book bags must be sent into school every Thursday.** Regular forgetting of books has a **major impact** on children **across the whole school** as all children access the books and we have limited supplies. It is essential that **if you have forgotten them that you return them by the end of the day or the next day.**

## **Fruit, Milk & Water**

Water and cups are available at all times in the classroom and the children will be encouraged to drink whenever they need to. **Please do not send in water bottles.** We also provide a full fruit bowl every day so that they can help themselves as and when they are hungry throughout the day.

If your child is under 5, they will be offered a drink of milk. Once your child is 5, you will need to arrange this through the Cool Milk scheme if you wish your child to continue to have it. (Please register at [www.coolmilk.com](http://www.coolmilk.com) two weeks before your child's 5<sup>th</sup> birthday).

## **Communication**

We operate a paperless system at school. The majority of letters will be sent to your email address via Parentpay – our payment and email system. However, if a letter requires a response, we will send a paper copy home. You should have now accessed your Parentpay account (a letter was sent home in the first week). Please ask if you need more help or information about this.

Each week there will also be information about what we are doing in class as you may want to talk about it at home. This information will also be sent via Parentpay.

## **Homework**

In Phase 1 (Early Years and Year 1) we send out a termly homework menu. There are a number of different activities on the menu for you to do with your child. The activities are mostly practical and support the learning we are doing in the classroom. There is no need to hand anything in but if your child wishes to share something they have done, you can via Tapestry.

## **Observations**

Once we have got to know the children, we will introduce focus observations. Each week we will do in-depth observations of a number of children. You will be informed at the beginning of the week that we observe your child. The following week, there will be an opportunity to come in for a short meeting for us to chat about your child's learning. \*Please keep in mind that these run all the way up until the Christmas break\* You can add any of your own observations to **Tapestry** once you have set up your account. We look at these uploads every day and it is such a fantastic opportunity for them to share what they have been up to outside of school. This is one of the children's favourite times of the day.

## **Topic**

Our topic this term is **Community Adventures**. We will be looking at the local area of Heslington a bit closer, the city of York, and all the people who may help us here. We would love to hear from you regarding any special jobs you or your family members do that benefit our community. Please send me an email with any details/photos or even to come in for a chat with the children about the role.

## **Phonics**

We follow the phonics scheme from **Little Wandle Letters and Sounds**. We have learned all the Phase 2 sounds now and will be spending this term learning the Phase 3 sounds and reading and writing words containing these. For more information on Little Wandle, please visit: <https://www.littlewandlelettersandsounds.org.uk/resources/for-parents/>

## **Maths**

We follow the maths scheme structure from **Power Maths**. Sessions follow a little story or hook that draws the children into their learning. Across the Spring term we spend time exploring the **numbers to 10**. We embed this deeply and the children learn lots of routines and approaches that they are normally unfamiliar with. Discussion and partner talk and sharing is a big part of the lessons, so this takes time to properly embed. The sessions follow a set structure over the week based around one primary objective. We use lots of hands on materials with children developing independent skills along the way. We also bring these resources into their play time for them to explore further if they wish to.

## **Handwriting**

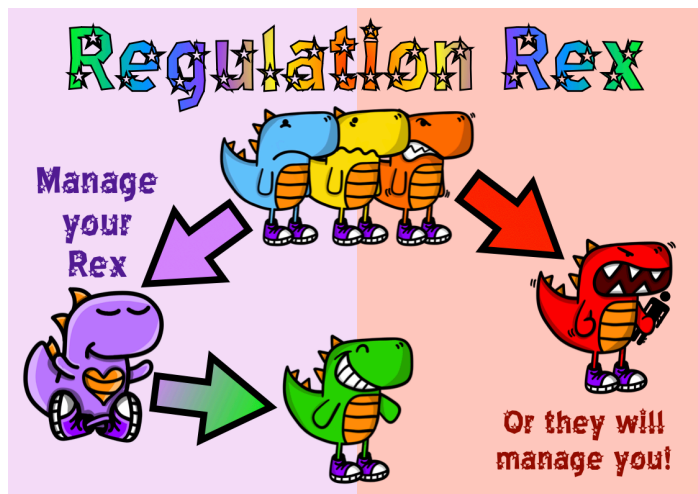
We follow the handwriting scheme **Pen-Jitsu**. This is based on research that helps build children's whole body awareness of writing, starting with big motions (gross motor) and developing that down to fine motor handwriting on white boards. The scheme is made up of 10 moves that fit into every letter in the alphabet. This term we will be learning to **correctly form all the lower case letters and numbers**

## Regulation-Rex (Self-Regulation)

Last term we were introduced to the character Regulation Rex. This is based on the Zones of Regulation and helps children to identify how they are feeling and then build strategies to bring themselves back to 'Green' (Ready To Learn and Listen). Being able to control impulses and self-regulate is an essential Early Learning Goal.

We follow a set routine in school that helps children to start the journey to independent regulation. We talk about all of our emotions being valid but how we deal with our emotions (our Rex) is the important part.

You may find the Emotion Coaching script useful to use at home too. I am always so impressed with how quickly a child's mood can change by just having their emotional state labelled and recognised.



## Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE)

We follow the PSHE scheme **Jigsaw**. Each module is approximately 6 weeks and covers an umbrella focus which is broken down into small steps each week. Our first puzzle piece is '**Dreams and Goals**' where we will explore what it means to be resilient and set ourselves challenges to achieve. The second half term will cover the jigsaw piece '**Healthy Me**' where we look at the impact of exercise, sleep and healthy eating on our body and mood.

## Religious Education (RE)


We teach the RE syllabus using our **Children of Faith** characters. Children are exposed to lots of different cultures and beliefs along the way and we learn of the similarities and differences between them. This is a lovely way to teach acceptance of others and it's always so wonderful to see the children grow in confidence as they talk about their own beliefs and experiences.

 **Writing**

We will be introducing children to **Drawing Club** this term and **Me-in-a Story**. These give the children opportunities to tell their own stories and build their own writing skills.

**? Think Its**

Each week we have a particular focus normally linked to the Book Cooks theme that week or our topic. During our Think Its time we look at these themes in more detail. This could be admiring art or music linked to it, exploring the science behind it or even the geography or history linked to it. These are short sessions at the end of the day that involve lots of discussion.

 **Poem of the Week**

Over the term we will be listening to and learning poems from the **Poetry Basket** and other poems and poetry anthologies. We tend to have one poem a week that we learn with actions and expression to go alongside them.

 **Music**

We follow **Sing Up's** early years music curriculum. This is a fantastic resource that brings so much music and knowledge to the children to form the foundations of our whole school music curriculum. Some weeks even involve playing instruments, some involve learning about musicians and composers or listening and appreciating their music. We also sing every day as we get ready for lunch.

**! Reminders**

- School starts at **8:40am**. The cloakroom door will close at **8.45am prompt**. A member of staff will be at the door to welcome children.
- **Book Bags** in school every **Thursday** with **all books returned**.
- Children have access to fruit or vegetables during the morning and afternoon so there is no need to send snacks to school.
- Water is provided so please **do not send in water bottles**.
- School finishes at **3:15pm** and children will be handed over to the appropriate adult by a member of staff.
- If your child is going home with someone who is not on your list of adults collecting please ensure a member of staff knows at the start of the day.
- Please let us know if you wish to add adults to the list of who can collect your child.
- Our weekly update will be sent out each Friday and will give information about what is happening in class that week.
- Quick messages can be passed on when you drop off or pick up your child, but if you have any questions or concerns, you can email me and I will respond as soon as I can.
- Any messages to be asked at the end of day must be given after all the children have gone home. **Please do not come to the door at pick up until the classroom is empty** as this can cause issues with handovers.

## **Important Dates**

<b>Tuesday 21st January 3:30-5:30pm</b>	FoLD Bingo
<b>Friday 14th February</b>	Break up for Half Term
<b>Monday 24th February</b>	Return to school
<b>Tuesday 25th February</b>	Parents invited in for school maths workshop
<b>Thursday 6th March</b>	World Book Day
<b>TBC</b>	Phase 1 trip to Lotherton Hall
<b>Thursday 3rd April</b>	Early Years end of topic celebration (families welcome for 8:40-9:30am)
<b>Thursday 3rd April</b>	Easter Egg decorating competition
<b>Friday 4th April</b>	Break up for Easter holidays

Once again, if you have any questions or comments about your child or about something we do, please come and ask or contact me via my email [asharpe@lordderamores.com](mailto:asharpe@lordderamores.com)

### **Mr Sharpe and the Early Years Team**

Don't forget to follow us on Facebook and Twitter  
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