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Maple Class Newsletter – Autumn Term 2019

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to a new school year! I hope that you have all had a wonderful summer. It has been lovely to welcome lots of new, eager faces into Maple Class. I am really looking forward to getting to know everybody and to a great year of learning opportunities.

I'd like to begin by thanking you all for being so organised during our first week and helping your children with their transition to "Big School". They are quickly adjusting to the classroom routines and school rules, and I am incredibly proud of how well they have taken on their new responsibilities and their developing independence. I would also like to thank you for being so supportive during the morning drop off and allowing the children to enter the cloakroom independently after the bell has rung. I understand how difficult it must be to put on a positive face and wave them off, especially if they are feeling a little nervous or teary! I would like to reassure you that within minutes of being in the classroom and sorting out their things, they are always absolutely fine!



Daily Arrangements

I would kindly ask that parents and children do not enter the classroom/cloakroom area in the mornings unless a member of staff is present. If your child needs to use the toilet before the morning bell, or after you have collected them at the end of the day, they should use the toilets outside the hall.

At home time, we will only release a child on to the playground when an adult is there to receive them, so please ensure that we know who is collecting your child. If there are any changes to your usual routine, please let us know in advance if possible – we have 'end of day arrangement' slips just inside the cloakroom door. Alternatively, you can phone/e-mail the school office with any last minute arrangements.

Staffing Arrangements

Our usual weekly routine is that Mrs Leonard will teach Monday to Friday. Mrs Rotherham and Mrs Thorne will be our teaching assistants and will support the learning in Maple Class throughout the week. On Friday mornings, the children will take part in an outdoor learning

session and a fine motor skills session, led by Mrs Rotherham and Mrs Thorne. Fridays will also include Music Time with Mrs Rotherham. We are all committed to the care and education of your children and the 'Maple Class Team' meet regularly to plan and discuss children's progress and share information.

Outdoor Learning

Maple Class will have regular Outdoor Learning sessions throughout the term, and they will take place come rain or shine (or snow!). We have a class set of "Muddy Suits" (all-in-one waterproofs), so all your child will need is a pair of wellies (named!) in school every day and a coat as the weather becomes colder.

P.E.

P.E. will usually take place on Tuesday afternoons. However, it is essential that children have their P.E. kit in school every day. We will send P.E. kits home at the end of each term so that they can be washed.

Please make sure that all kit and uniform is named – young children really don't recognise their own clothes!



Homework

Homework is intended to allow school and family to work in partnership to promote children's learning and progress by providing opportunities for them to become more independent learners and practice the skills they have learnt at an appropriate level. We hope that offering a range of open-ended Maths, Literacy and Topic tasks for the term, as well as a selection of online activities, will make it easier for children to select homework that can 'fit' around other family activities each week.

Homework will be posted on the Maple Class area of the school website on **Friday 13th September** (If you require a paper copy, please let me know) and a pink homework book will be sent home in your child's book bag. We ask that one activity is completed each week and should be **handed in by the following Wednesday**. The green homework box is located just next to the classroom door. Homework books will be checked and returned each Friday ready for the next task!



Homework is not meant to be a test or too much like hard work – let your child be creative! Hopefully, they will find the activities fun rather than a chore! Please help your child to complete homework tasks if they need it, but as far as possible let the work be their own. It is really useful to know how the children get on with the tasks they select (e.g. they found something very difficult, or really enjoyed something) so please feel free to write a brief comment about the task in their homework book. **If you don't have chance to complete any homework, or your child is not willing one week, please don't worry!**

Contact

I am very much looking forward to working in partnership with you to ensure that your children reach their full potential. I am aware that for our new children (and parents!) this can be a challenging time, so I will always try to make myself available outside the classroom before the morning bell and at the end of the day. However, these are often busy



times of day, so you are very welcome to email me directly at leonard@chesterton.oxon.sch.uk with any questions or messages. Don't think that any query or concern is too small – we would much rather put your mind at rest, than have you worrying. Please be aware that any emails sent may not be seen until later in the day or after school. In all cases, I will endeavour to reply to you within three working days. Obviously if the matter is more urgent, for example about attendance or changes to the routine of collecting your child, then you should contact the school office or speak to another member of the Maple team at the start of the day.

Events:

- Curriculum Evening: We would like to welcome you to our Early Years Curriculum Evening on **Tuesday 8th October at 6pm**. This is an informal meeting, held in the classroom, where we hope to give you more of an insight into the strategies that we use for teaching Literacy, Maths and Phonics in school. There will also be a few ideas about supporting your child's learning at home. We would suggest that children do not attend the meeting on this occasion.
- Parents Evening: There will be formal parent / teacher meetings on **Monday 11th and Wednesday 13th November** to discuss how your child has settled in and their progress so far. Please look out for further details and appointment slots nearer the time.
- Christmas Nativity: All of the children in Lower School will be taking part in the school Christmas performance at 2pm on the afternoons of **Tuesday 10th and Wednesday 11th of December**. More information about tickets will be sent out closer to the time.
- Class Worship: You may notice that Maple Class are not leading a Celebration Worship this term. We feel that at this time of year it is important to give the children plenty of time to settle in (and gain the confidence to present their work in front of the rest of the school and parents!). Maple will lead their first Celebration Worship in the New Year. In the meantime, please keep checking the Maple Class page on the school website for lots of photos of what we are getting up to.
- Open Classroom: Although we are not quite ready to lead a Celebration Worship, we know that the children would love the opportunity to share all of the learning that has gone on during their first term at "Big School" with you, so we would like to invite you into Maple Class on **Friday 18th October at 2:45pm**. The children will take you on a guided tour of their classroom, point out their pieces of work that are on display and share their Learning Journey folders with you. We do hope that you can join us.



For a full list of events taking place at school this term, please refer to the "Dates" tab on the 'Parents' section of the school website.

Here's to an exciting and productive year!

Kind regards,

Mrs Leonard and the Maple Class team