



# Grange Infant School

Grange Infant School  
Delamere Drive  
Stratton St Margaret  
Swindon  
SN3 4XE

Tel: 01793 822357

[www.grange-inf.swindon.sch.uk](http://www.grange-inf.swindon.sch.uk)

Date: 09.09.19

Dear Parents/ carers,

Welcome back to the new school year. We hope you have had a fabulous summer and your child/ren enjoyed getting their postcard over the holidays. Last week we enjoyed a range of activities to get to know your child/ren, introduced our first value of 'Kindness' and buried a time capsule that we will dig up at the end of the year to see how much we have changed. This is quite a long letter but we wanted to ensure you have all the important information regarding your child's first term.

During term 1 we will be spending time ensuring the children are confident, learn the routines set in school and feel safe and happy in the school environment. This won't happen overnight and some children will take longer than others but your child's class teacher is working with them on a daily basis to support this. So far, the children have been brave enough to come into school by themselves, have lunch in the hall, take their plates and cups up once they have finished and have playtimes with the older children at lunchtime. We really are incredibly proud of them.

### **Key dates for your diary**

10.9.19 - Reception baseline testing will start in school

26.9.19 - Height and weight checks - a separate letter will come out to you regarding this

8.10.19 - Pupil Photos in School

15.10.19 - Flu vaccinations in School - separate information will be sent out to you regarding this

23.10.19 - Last day of term - normal finish time

4.11.19 - start of term 2

### **Morning Routine**

We know this can be a nervous and anxious time when dropping off your child at the gates or entrance to the EYFS classrooms and some children aren't as confident at leaving their parents as others and may get upset. Once inside the classrooms, they really are fine and their class teachers always have a quiet activity to start the day off with before moving into taught sessions or chosen



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learning by the children. As the children become more settled, they will come into calm music and a 'morning job' where they will practice letter formation and name writing.

## School Pickups

We know these have been an issue over the last few days and we are working to try and get these right for you. The teachers and TA's have to learn a new 30+ faces each year but we are working on this daily to make sure all children are out on time. We know you are incredibly excited to see your child, but please can we ask you not to crowd the entrances when picking up your children as this does make it incredibly hard for teachers to see all parents. Miss Ottley's class will enter and leave through the white side door. Miss Nesbitt's and Miss Murrary's will enter and leave through the green gates. To ease the process, please can we ask that Miss Nesbitt's parents are standing on the nursery side of the walk way and Miss Murrary's on the school building side. This will help teachers locate parents quicker. As soon as you have your child, please can you then move away to allow us to locate other children's parents. If you do wish to speak to your child's teacher, please can I ask that you wait until all children have gone and they will be more than happy to see you. If you have children in different classes and are finding it hard to pick up both on time, please fill in the slip below and we can have siblings picked up together at one classroom to ease this.

## EYFS classrooms

Before this year started, the EYFS classes were in three completely separate areas in the school and as such were under resourced and inconsistent in practice. By moving them together, this means all children will have the same high expectations set by all teachers; the use of resources and the inside and outside space will be more effective as teachers and TA's can work in a collaborative way; teachers can support each other and develop their teaching strategies; children's needs can be met more effectively through the use of smaller groups and tailored teaching. Year 1 and year 2 are also now able to be situated together making it easier for children and teachers to collaborate together. Towards the end of the year, all children were then using the outside space for their learning so that this could be consistent in the approach. The new design will offer a dedicated EYFS unit that has a centralised learning space inside and outside and teachers will be able to collaborate together to plan, teach and assess their pupils. Where the classes were separate, the



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continuous provision did not effectively support independent learning for the children. By moving the classes together the continuous provision will be more effective for the children as staff will be more able to zone these effectively which we had begun to incorporate into the EYFS classes last year. Teachers will also still be able to use the additional classroom (what was Mrs Clarks classroom) so some sessions will be taken within that classroom as well. Once formal teaching starts we will be able to give you an up-to-date timetable of what your child will be learning and when.

## Show and Tell

We will be having 'Show and Tell' on a Friday starting from next week. A list from your child's class teacher will go out inviting your child to bring something in to share with the class on the theme being taught in school. They will be asked to tell the whole class about it; what it is and why they've brought it in. This is a great opportunity for children to develop their speaking and listening skills.

## PE

PE will take place on a Thursday morning. Each class will have their own individual session with Mr Hicks from Premier Sports which will at first be based around teaching children the basics of movement and control. Each class will then supplement these sessions with a 'Golden Mile' run each week. Please leave PE kits in school for the whole term and the children will bring them home on the last day of each term. Please don't forget to return with your PE kits on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of each term.

## Baseline Testing

This year we are taking part in the baseline testing set by the government. The purpose of the baseline testing, which will be mandatory by 2020, is a test of the maths and language skills of four and five-year-olds as they start school in Reception year. The test will take about 20 minutes. It will consist of a set of tasks using objects such as plastic shapes and picture cards. The children's results will be recorded online by their teacher. These results will then be used by teachers to set the correct provision for the children in their class. Once the baseline testing has been completed formal teaching will start.



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## Reading

All children will come home with two reading books. One is a wordless book for them to read by making up a story with you and another will be a picture book. We intent for all children in reception to read at least 50 books within the school year for them to develop a love for reading. Both books should be read several times to reinforce story language, improve upon and generally build on developing a love for reading and the different story vocabulary you can learn. Please speak to your class teacher if they do not have these by Friday. Once your children are ready and are learning their phase 2 phonics, they will begin to bring home books with words it them suitable to their stage of learning.

## Wellies

We will endeavour to go on weekly wellie walks and have forest learning sessions in school. They are such a useful learning tool for the children as they build confidence and independence; promote social skills through group games and activities; enable children to better communicate with others and develop positive friendships and relationships. Please can you make sure your child has a pair of wellies (which are named) in a bag to keep in school.

## Attendance

It really is important for your child to be in school learning their curriculum during term times to reduce the risk of them having gaps in their learning. If your child is sick or has an appointment, please make sure that you phone the office to let us know. If you wish to apply for a term time holiday, you will need to ensure you fill out the form 'Application for absence in term time' which can be collected in the office. Please be aware that if an absence is not authorised you will risk a £60 penalty notice per parent.

As always, if you have any concerns or worries about your child/ren, please see your child's class teacher at pick up or drop off times or phone the school on 01793 822357. If you would prefer to speak to me, my door is always open. Alternatively, you can to book an appointment or email me directly at [erushen@grange-inf.swindon.sch.uk](mailto:erushen@grange-inf.swindon.sch.uk). We really do welcome any comment you have to help improve the school.

Thank you for your continued support

Mrs E Rushen-Gough and the EYFS team



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If you would like your children to be collected at the same classroom to ease pick ups at the end of the day, please fill in this slip and return it to the school office. We can then confirm which classroom both children will be picked up from.

Sibling 1

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Sibling 2

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_