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Reception Curriculum Information Letter – Autumn 1 2026

Dear parents and carers,

Welcome to the Autumn Term at Brackenbury School! We hope you all enjoyed your summer break and that you are looking forward to the new school year ahead. The children have made a great start to the school year and have settled into their new classes brilliantly.
We are looking forward to seeing you at the 'Meet the Staff' morning on **Wednesday 16th September** when you can come and see the classrooms, and meet the adults who will be working with your child over the next year.

Over this term we will be learning about;
Communication & Language-
As we welcome the children into their new school, we will have a number of circle time sessions where children will be encouraged to listen to each and express their thoughts and feelings clearly. In this first term, we will be discussing topics that are familiar and important to the children and we can't wait to hear about all of their individual interests! In structured sessions, the children will practise listening to each other during carpet times as well as listening to adults share stories, poems and songs on a daily basis. They will practise following simple instructions, through games and play.

Literacy-
This term, our literacy learning will be inspired by a range of much-loved traditional tales, including *The Little Red Hen*, *Jack and the Beanstalk*, *The Three Little Pigs*, *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* and *The Three Billy Goats Gruff*. Through sharing and exploring these stories, children will develop their vocabulary, listening and comprehension skills and become increasingly confident at talking about characters, settings and key events. They will join in with repeated phrases, sequence and retell familiar stories and bring them to life through role play and small-world play. Children will also begin to use their growing phonics knowledge to make marks, form letters and have a go at recording initial sounds and simple words.

The children will be introduced to reading and writing through phonics in our dedicated daily phonics sessions. They will begin with exploring Phase 1 activities, which includes identifying animal sounds and making music with our bodies. As the first half term progresses, we introduce Phase 2 sounds using the Essential Letters and Sounds Phonics scheme (ELS), where children will learn to recognise and correctly annunciate sounds, and then apply this knowledge through reading and writing words and then phrases/sentences. Children will also apply their phonics knowledge by reading books sent home each week. In terms of writing, children will be encouraged to mark make in a range of ways and contexts, such as creating lists, labels, cards and drawings. Please support us by using lower case letters as standard e.g. capitals for the first letter of your child's name only when name writing.

Mathematics-
Mathematics in the early years requires a hands-on approach so children will be encouraged to explore concepts in their play, for example counting how many bricks high a tower is and comparing the heights of their respective towers. We begin the school year investigating pattern and shape; using manipulatives in order for children to begin to sort according to attributes e.g. big and small acorns or sorting leaves by colour. There will also be the opportunity to identify and create simple patterns, through experiences such as transient art and bracelet making. Importantly, we will focus on the important skill of subitising (recognising an amount without counting) by using the natural world around us, identifying the number of petals on a flower or the number of crunchy leaves on an autumn walk. At this early stage of exploring number, we will also focus on comparing amounts, using both subitising and correspondence skills.

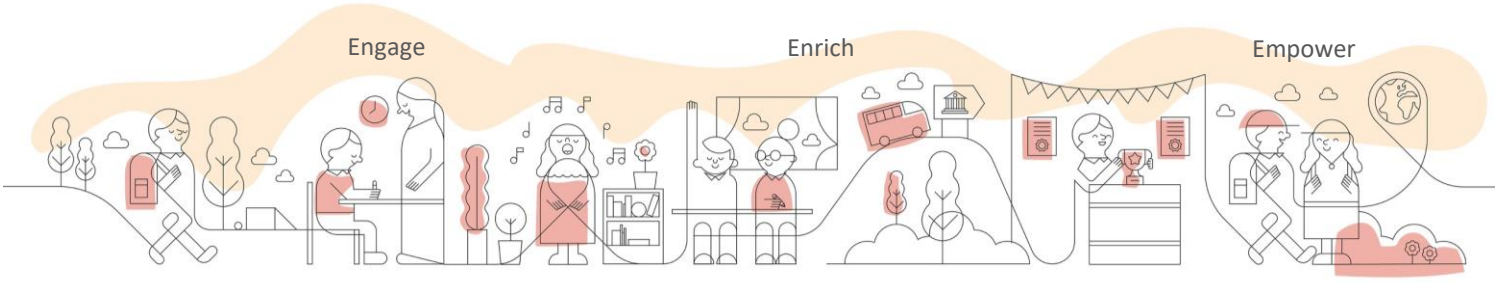
Expressive Arts and Design-
As part of our continuous provision, the children will always have access to a 'workshop' area that includes a mass of different creative resources such as paints, collage materials, paper, etc. All donations of junk modelling/ art resources will be gratefully received! The children will be encouraged to use the materials freely to create things representing their own interests. We will be exploring music in class by sharing our favourite songs and learning some nursery rhymes. This term, the children will also begin their weekly dance sessions 'Wiggle Waggle' where they will follow instructions, moving and grooving using some exciting resources!

Understanding the World-
As part of our 'All about Me' topic, we will be looking at similarities and differences between the children, including exploring and celebrating our unique cultures and backgrounds. This will be especially important as we lead up to special festivals in the calendar, including black history month and Diwali. We will also be learning about our school environment and our new school family! We will also be learning about maps and exploring our local area.

The children will have the chance to explore a range of everyday technology such as CD players, torches, remote-controlled toys, etc. They will also be able to use computers and the interactive whiteboards to explore a range of age-appropriate software, at selected parts of the week.

Personal and Social Development-
The main focus for this term is around settling into school. This includes learning the names of class members and the routines and rules of the class. We will be creating a Reception class charter together, encouraging children to become familiar with the concept and language of 'respect' toward each other and our environment. Using circle-time and class discussions, the children will be encouraged to be independent and work together as part of a group, taking turns and sharing fairly. They will be encouraged to try new activities, initiate ideas and speak in familiar and unfamiliar groups. The children will be encouraged to respect both their own needs as well as others.

Physical Development-
The children will be developing their skills by exploring our indoor and outdoor environments, which will provide the children with lots of opportunities to develop their fine and gross motor skills. The children will be able to explore a range of climbing, balancing and sliding apparatus, wheeled toys, bats and balls, hoops etc. They will learn to safely and appropriately negotiate a space with other children in it. To develop fine motor skills, children will be encouraged to participate in activities such as threading, peg boards, play dough, using tweezers, etc. as well as using a range of mark-making equipment (pens, pencils, paintbrushes). We also have weekly dough disco sessions, where children will develop their hand muscles by manipulating their playdough in different ways to the sound of the beat!



PE day is Friday. All children should come to school wearing their PE kits on this day.
PE kit is;

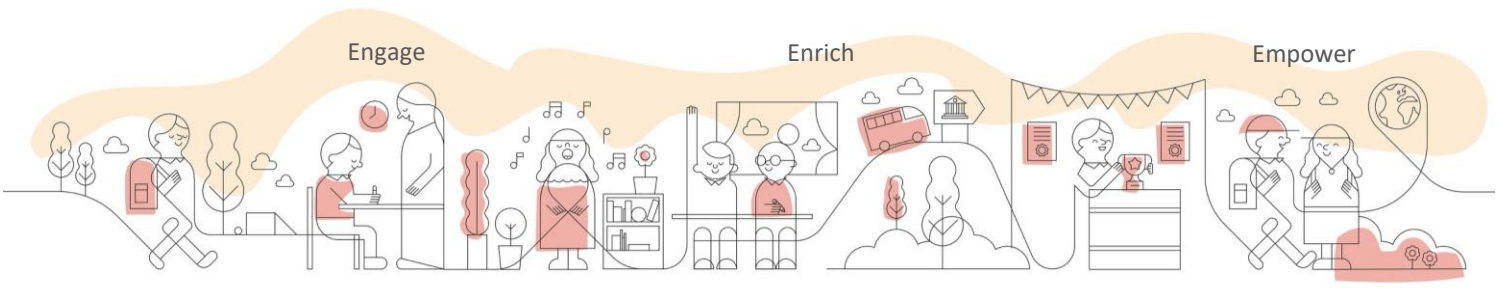
- red t-shirt with logo
- black shorts or leggings/tracksuit trousers
- black trainers

Please note that children with long hair should have a hair band so this can be tied back.

Homework
As the children are introduced to new sounds each week, they will be sent home phonics books to practise sounding out and blending at home. Reading records will be sent home alongside these books, and parents are invited to comment in the reading record to share any useful notes or simply confirm that their child has read their book during the week. **Please ensure phonics books and reading records are returned to school each Wednesday**, so that children can be read with at school. They will bring home their new books on Friday.
Children will also bring home a library book each week to enjoy and share with you. These books are designed to develop a love of stories and reading for pleasure, so children are not expected to read them independently. **Please return library books for renewal on Tuesdays**; books returned after Tuesday will not be renewed until the following week. We also encourage you to continue sharing favourite books at home, particularly books in your child's home language.
Each Friday, we will also send some home learning ideas linked to that week's learning in a homework book. This gives families an opportunity to find out more about what has been happening in the classroom and to talk about and build upon this learning at home in fun and practical ways. **Home learning books will need to be handed in on Thursdays to be marked and refreshed for the week ahead.**

Please note that home learning and reading books will not be sent home during the first few weeks of term, as our initial priority is helping the children to settle in, getting to know them and establishing positive classroom routines.

Reminders
Children should bring in a **named water bottle** to be used in class.
Fresh fruit and/or vegetables, as well as milk are provided in the class each day. You may also bring a snack for your child, which should also be **either fruit or some vegetables** e.g. chopped cucumber, carrots, celery. Please note that grapes should be sliced for young children.
Please do not send in any nut products to school.

School uniform
Please ensure that all items belonging to your child are clearly marked with their names, including coats and hats as we move into the colder weather. More detailed information about the school uniform can be found on our school website; https://www.brackenbury.lbhf.sch.uk/information/uniform/ Please also mark your child's snack and lunchbox.
We are confident that your child will have a happy, productive and enjoyable term but should you wish to discuss any aspects of their experiences at school, please do not hesitate to pop in and speak to us or make an appointment through the school office.
Many thanks for your continued support. We look forward to working with you throughout the incredible year ahead!

The Early Years Team