



Alvaston Infant & Nursery School
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Headteacher: Miss Allen

3rd September 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Firstly, I would like to begin by thanking our wonderful children for making the first few days back so magnificent! It has been a real pleasure to walk around the school and see so many children happy, smiling and freely able to express themselves.

I would like to warmly welcome all of our new parents and children into our school family and I want to remind you all that my door is always open... if it matters to you and your family, it matters to us (no matter how small it may seem). We strive to make sure that our wonderful little people get the very best experience, education and provision here. Many improvements have been made as a direct result of the excellent child and parental feedback that we receive. Children have been invited to share ideas regarding how to improve the school via the 'Plant Your Ideas' display. If you would like to make any suggestions, please do so via our online suggestion box. Every half term, suggestions will be formally responded to. <https://www.alvastoni.derby.sch.uk/school-improvement>

Dates for your diary will be sent out early next week.

Book Bags:

Many parents have asked about book bags and how these are ordered, paid for and delivered. There is an option on School Money, under the 'shop tab'. These are £3.50. Once you have paid for a book bag, please collect it from the school office. Please do not send rucksacks with your child - we do not have room to store these in the classrooms.

School Photos:

Class photos, from July 21, have been ordered. These will be handed to children in the next few weeks. If you have ordered a digital copy, this will be sent to you via the email address, which is registered to school money. Individual photos will be taken on Wednesday 6th October.

Reading:

Reading is an incredibly important aspect of the educational provision that we offer to children here. Our vision is that every child leaves school a reader and a lover of books! We are always reflecting on our reading approaches and we have made some key changes to ensure that our reading offer to the children is the best that it can be. There will be a reading information session on Monday 4th October at 10:00am (via zoom) and 5:30pm (in school) to explain this process. This will be open to every family in the school and more information will follow, shortly.

Individual Reading Books Reception, Year 1 and Year 2:

So that each child can continue to make outstanding progress in their reading ability, we carefully select a reading book which is closely matched to your child's reading ability. This means that we consider the sounds that each child is currently learning, and choose an appropriate book. From September, we will be changing the process of listening to individual children read in school, as we will be following the **three-step model** (as shown below). These steps may not necessarily relate to the number of days spent on a book and this may vary between each child. We know this is a change but please trust that this will enable your children to grow into confident readers who love to read!

Step One: A member of our staff will select an appropriate text for your child. This text will be closely matched to your child's needs as well as their interests (where possible). When the child receives this book in school, a

member of our team will begin to 'set the scene' for your child. This means they will consider what your child needs to know to be able to successfully read, and understand, the text. Here, we will consider the sounds which may be introduced in the text, as well as any Common Exception Words (CEW), any key vocabulary and any essential knowledge that your child may need to know to understand what they are reading.

Step Two: Your child will now start reading the text. They will be empowered by the knowledge and skills that they have previously developed. At this stage, the children will be focussing on using the phonics skills to read each word carefully. Attending the workshop on 4th October will help support your child with this. We will also check that the children understand what they are reading.

Step Three: This step is all about developing the child's confidence, fluency and pace. The children will have the opportunity to re-read parts of the book. During this step, we will be focussing on asking the children questions. We may decide that your child may only need to re-read certain parts, or, we may decide that they would benefit further from reading the whole text.

When we believe that your child is ready to move on to a new text, it is important that we spend a session carrying out the activities from step one. Therefore, we will not send a new book home until this step has taken place. This new process will mean that your child will spend longer reading each book instead of reading a larger range of texts. **We will continue to ensure that every child is heard read, individually, at least 3 times per week. Please appreciate that re-reading the text is a vital part of the reading process - it is not about rushing through as many books as possible.** At present, children are being assessed and a reading book will be sent home next week.

Treasured Texts

There are so many special books that we have at school, both in class and in the library. Each child and teacher has their favourites and we love sharing these with one another. As a school, we have carefully selected our most 'Treasured Texts'. Our aim is that by the end of each year, the children will develop a bank of cherished books, which they will come to know inside out.

This will take place by introducing each year group to a set of 10 'Treasured Texts' each year which will follow them throughout their time at Alvaston Infant and Nursery School. This will start from September and for each year your child is with us, they will be introduced to a further 10 books. These books will be shared with you in due course.

Library

With COVID-19 restrictions hopefully lifted for good, we will be able to recommence with our regular visits to the school library! Each child will have the opportunity to visit the school library on a fortnightly basis. They will be able to explore the range of books that we have, sample some themselves and listen to a story being read. If you would like your child to borrow one of these books, they will be able to after signing our school Library Pledge. This letter will be sent out in the near future.

Bug Club

We have decided to invest in the Bug Club online reading program for this year. Bug Club allows easy access to a range of books, which can be remotely accessed through internet enabled devices. We have found that many children have loved using technology as a tool to read and this has motivated many to read more and more. There is also a handy 'read to me' function which allows the children to listen to each story being read. When the book has been read, there are yellow bug icons spread throughout the text which give access to a range of comprehension questions. Details for Bug Club will be sent out again, next week.

Wishing you all a lovely weekend!

Kind regards,
Miss Allen
Headteacher