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16th September 2021

Dear Parents,

A warm welcome to all our new families. We are excited to begin our partnership with you, which will ensure that your child's start to their school journey here at Hiltingbury is a positive one. Firstly, we would like to thank you all for your support and commitment in reading all the communications that have been sent out and ensuring that the first few meetings and stay and play sessions have run smoothly! As a team, we are very impressed with how well the children have begun their journey with us, entering the classroom independently and beginning to learn the new routines and expectations, thank you for your cooperation and support.

This letter will give you some important information about your child's first half term at school. There will be further information at the Year R Welcome Meeting on the 6th October about what the rest of the year will look like.

Books and Reading

The children will select a book from our class book boxes on a **Tuesday** and a **Friday**. Your child will be supported in changing their books at the start of the year and will then be encouraged to do this independently. Please can you ensure that the books are in their book bags on these days.

We hope you will enjoy sharing and discussing these books with your child at home. These opportunities are fundamental in developing your child's language and vocabulary and will support them in developing their early reading and phonic skills. We have listed some ideas for you to use when sharing books with your child below. Children should also be re-reading and discussing books as this will build up their growing repertoire of stories, language and vocabulary.

- Look at the pictures – can you describe them? Where do you think the story is set? Who was in the story?
- Making predictions about what is happening and what might happen next.
- Explaining new vocabulary and language choices.
- Identifying rhyming words – Can your child think of other words that rhyme?
- Can you find me a word that starts with the same sound?

Once the children are settled into school, their classroom and routines, we will begin to assess their phonics. At this stage, children will be provided with a colour banded reading book that will be matched to their reading ability. Your child will read to their teacher and will be moved onto different colour book bands as and when they are ready.

Your child will be given a blue reading record book which should be kept inside their book bag. Once the children start bringing home a reading book from the banded book boxes, it will be in these blue reading records that class teachers will write when your child is moving to a different book band level and which book band level that is. You can record any books that you have shared with your child in the blue reading record, you do not need to write comments in there, however, it is useful for us if you record any key developments, successes or areas for development.

P.E.

Our PE days are **Tuesdays** and **Thursdays** (from week commencing 20th September) On these days, please send your child into school in their PE kits, they will stay in them all day. Please ensure the children wear a pair of long black/navy blue/grey jogging trousers/leggings when the weather gets

colder and a comfortable pair of trainers. School jumpers are to be worn over their PE t-shirt. Long hair needs to be tied up on these days please and earrings removed or taped up.

Welly Walks

The children will need their wellies throughout the year for outdoor learning and we also like to have the opportunity of 'welly walks' throughout the year. Please could you send in named welly boots that will be stored at school throughout the year.

Outdoor Clothing

As the weather is very changeable, we would also like children to have a warm and waterproof coat available each day. We will be spending lots of time outside and so it is important that they are suitably clothed. If you are buying a new coat, please ensure it is easy for your child to manage e.g. single zip and not a coat with a detachable fleece.

Water and Fruit

Please ensure your child brings a **named** bottle of **water** to school each day (no squash or juice). Please do not put the water bottle in the book bag as leakages can cause the books to be damaged. Each day there will be a piece of fruit/vegetable provided at snack time. They do not need, therefore, to bring a snack.

Tapestry Learning Journal

As you will be aware, we are creating an on line learning journal through Tapestry for each child. You should receive an email soon to activate your Tapestry account. We look forward to seeing contributions from home uploaded.

Statutory Reception baseline assessment

The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) is a short, interactive and practical assessment of your children's early literacy, communication, language and mathematics skills when they begin school, using materials that most children of your child's age will be familiar with. It is statutory for all schools from September 2021. We will be carrying this out within the first 6 weeks of the children starting school.

The assessment will provide an opportunity for your child to have valuable one-to-one time with their teacher at an early stage, so that the teacher can get to know your child better. It will provide a helpful snapshot of your child so that they can be supported in the most appropriate way.

You do not need to do anything to prepare your child for the assessment. Your child is unlikely to even know that they are doing an assessment when they are completing tasks and activities.

Reminder - please ensure that **all** clothes are labelled clearly.

If you do have any questions or concerns, then please phone or email the office and we will endeavour to get back to you as quickly as possible. We look forward to working in partnership with you throughout the year.

Thank you for your continued support.

Katie Davies and the Year R Team.
EYFS Lead