

# Welcome to School

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Dear Family,

## Welcome to Turtles class!

As we begin our school year together, we would like you to know that we want the children to feel really welcome. We want them to begin (and to continue) feeling that their classroom is a place where they are valued for who they are - with their varied interests, strengths, differences and weaknesses and with all the good potentials we hope they will realise.

Of course, during the first few days the children will focus on becoming familiar with the materials, the parts of our school day, the schedule and the people in their new classroom and school. Some children will feel shy or insecure as they enter this new situation. This is another reason that we try very hard to establish a calm, reassuring atmosphere that fosters self-confidence, as well as an interest in learning. We hope you will tell us how we can make this transition more comfortable for your child.

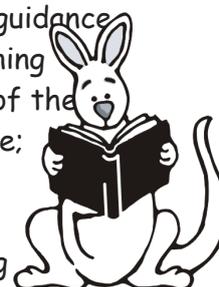
In helping them grow into a group of children who care about one another, who are increasingly interdependent and who work out their differences in a climate of concern about feelings, we will be giving the children the following messages.

1. Just as we expect other people in the classroom - adults and children - to speak to, and treat, you with respect, we expect you to treat others respectfully.
2. The materials in our classroom are for you and everyone else to use, to explore with and to learn from. Take care of them so that you and others can use them throughout the year.
3. This classroom belongs to all of us, so we all need to keep it tidy and safe.
4. Just as we won't let anyone hurt you, we won't let you hurt anyone else in our classroom.
5. Everyone makes mistakes, including teachers. We are all learning and helping each other to learn.

The beginning activities will allow the children to become comfortable with each area of the classroom together. It is through repetition and reinforcement that the children feel at ease and successful in their new environment. The activities during this week will help establish routines so that new concepts and skills can be taught effortlessly in future themes.

## Curriculum and Homework

At St. Cedd's, we use the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021 statutory guidance to inform and support our planning. The guidance sets out the early learning goals which the children should achieve by the time they reach the end of the reception year. There are three prime areas (communication and language; physical development; personal, social and emotional development) and four specific areas (literacy; mathematics; understanding the world; expressive arts and design) which are covered through the early learning goals.



Alongside this, we follow the KinderCorner curriculum which consists of 16 fortnightly themes which introduce a wide range of engaging, exciting concepts, the first of which is 'Welcome to School'. Themes build knowledge and vocabulary essential for successful comprehension in Key Stages 1 and 2. During each new theme, you will receive an overview letter sharing what we will be learning and discussing, so that you can reinforce the learning at home. There will be short tasks for your child to complete, many of which help to develop your child's vocabulary. For those which involve writing, we ask that you use the homework book provided to record your child's work and leave this in your child's book bag so we can share the children's successes with them.

We also ask that you take time to read with your child every day and sign their reading diary. Feel free to write a comment telling us what your child enjoyed about the book or the things that they discussed. This helps us to create a log of your child's progress in reading. Reading books will be changed twice weekly and will increase in difficulty as your child progresses. The children will also bring home a library book each week. This is a book of their choice and is for you to share and enjoy reading together.

### **Baseline Assessment**

During the first weeks of school, we will be completing the reception baseline assessment with your child. This became a statutory assessment in September 2021. The assessment is a short, activity-based assessment which will be carried out on a one-to-one basis with your child. It will allow us to understand your child's starting point at school and support us with planning and resourcing the classroom. This will be completed in a very relaxed manner and your child will not know they are being assessed.

### **PE**

Your child will have PE every Tuesday with our Sports Coach, Mr Finch. Please ensure your child arrives at school wearing their full PE kit. The children will have PE outside, weather permitting, so please ensure they are dressed suitable for the weather.

### **Forest Schools**

Your child will have Forest Schools every Thursday with Mrs Bott, our Forest Schools Lead. Please ensure your child arrives at school wearing suitable clothing and shoes which you do not mind getting muddied. These should be long sleeves and full-length trousers. Please provide your child with a named pair of wellington boots, that will remain in school. **Both the Forest Schools area and the Reception garden are prone to mosquitos so please apply your child with insect repellent, where possible.**

### **Water Bottles**

Please provide your child with a named water bottle every day. The children will be encouraged to drink regularly to help keep them hydrated.

### **Clothing**

Please ensure that you write your child's name in all of their jumpers and cardigans. We will do our best to ensure they come home with them each day!

**School Meals**

You will have received a school dinner menu, which rotates on a two-weekly basis. The menu is also available to view on the school website. Please discuss the options with your child ready for the register each morning. Feel free to send us a note each week with your child's options for the week if you are worried they may forget. Your child receives free universal school meals so please encourage them to try what we have on offer. You will be surprised what they will eat in school that they would not attempt at home! Eating with their friends is a lovely time for socialising and making new friendships.

**Snack**

Your child will be provided with fruit each day, for their morning snack. You will also have received a leaflet in your welcome pack inviting you to order milk for your child.

**Class Dojo**

You will receive an invitation inviting you to join Class Dojo. This will be our form of communication with you, where we are able to send messages to you and you to us. The children are able to earn dojos for their efforts in class and you will receive alerts to tell you which dojos they have received so you can celebrate together at home.

We look forward to getting to know you and your child throughout this school year, and hope that you will feel as welcome in our classroom, as we shall try to make your child feel. We will work closely together to ensure your child enjoys all that school has to offer, supporting them to achieve the skills and knowledge needed to ensure they are ready for Year 1. Please do keep in touch with us and if you have any worries or concerns, be sure to let us know and we will do our very best to reassure you.

Yours sincerely,

Lyndsey Wood, Mary Marshall, Kalitsa Elia (EYFS Team)

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## Home Link Activities

**Day 1:** See how many classmate's names you can remember.

**Day 2:** Draw a picture and write anything about school (in your new homework book).

**Day 3:** How many objects can you find that begin with the first letter of your name?

**Day 4:** Cover your eyes while tea is being prepared and see if you can work out, by listening, what things are being used.

**Day 5:** Play 'I spy' with someone at home using letters or colours.

