Monday 19th September 2022

Dear Parent / Carer / Guardians,

Welcome to Blakehill Primary School!

We have really enjoyed meeting you all at the welcome sessions and are looking forward to the year ahead with your children. We have lots of exciting things planned! This half term our theme is ‘Incredible Me!’ The children’s first term at school is such a special and exciting one. To complement this new chapter in their lives and to promote their personal, social and emotional development we will be reading lots of stories about starting school, new experiences, family and friends, learning class rules and routines, sharing stories about ourselves, learning about our feelings and learning how to keep ourselves safe and healthy. We will also focus on developing their listening skills to enable them to respond appropriately and follow instructions. We will support and model at every opportunity.

We will also follow children’s interests – at every possible moment. Children who are inspired are avid learners! We will celebrate their strengths and passions and focus on every small step of improvement that is made.

We understand that all children start school at different starting points and we will ensure that we build on these foundations. We want them to LOVE learning and be the best that they can be…now and always.

Please see the table below for further information for this half term:

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| ***Area of Learning*** | ***Focus*** |
| Personal, Social and Emotional Development | Now that the children are all in school we will be focusing on supporting their wellbeing and mental health and we have a lovely story to support this. Children will be taking part in weekly circle times. They will have the opportunity to talk about their family and be encouraged to take turns and listen to each other. |
| Communication and Language | We will introduce the children to our circle time rules, taking turns to share our thoughts and ideas. During this time the children will be encouraged to listen carefully and express themselves through the new vocabulary they have been taught. |
| Physical Development | There will be many opportunities for children to play and develop their gross motor skills in our outside provision during this half term. In class we will focus on developing our fine motor skills (hand strength and coordination) through lots of exciting activities including ‘Dough Disco’ to help develop muscle strength and control. We will also be developing awareness of how to keep healthy. Our weekly PE sessions will be on a Friday morning with Mr Lumb. |
| Literacy | During this half term, we will begin focused phonics teaching every day. To begin with, we will focus on listening and speaking skills, rhyme, looking at instruments, alliteration and environmental sounds.  When the majority of children are secure in these skills we will begin to teach the individual letters (graphemes). We aim to teach one new grapheme each day. The children will learn the sound that the grapheme makes (phoneme) using songs and actions. The first set of graphemes we will learn are, s,a,t,p,i,n, m and d. When the children know these sounds they will start to blend them to make words.  Children will bring home a story book for you to share at home. They will have a reading record book for you to add any comments and sign to let us know it has been read at home.  When focussed phonics teaching begins this will become a phonics based reading book which the children will be encouraged to read independently to you. – More information to follow. |
| Mathematics | After our initial baseline assessments are completed we will have a daily maths input where we will focus on accurate oral counting and 1:1 correspondence.  We will support the children in matching, sorting and comparing amounts. We will also be comparing size, mass, capacity and exploring patterns. |
| Understanding of the World | This half term we will be talking about features within the immediate environment and discovering what our school environment is like by going on a ‘Sensory Walk’. We shall be identifying similarities and differences between ourselves and others. We will be talking about our own lives and that of family members and also begin to know that some things have happened and some things are happening now – focusing on how time moves on.  Our Religious Education focus question is: Where do we live and why is it special? |
| Expressive Art and Design | Children will have the chance to work creatively in our continuous provision on a daily basis. There will be weekly music session with Mrs Marsden. This half term children will be singing familiar songs and nursery rhymes. They will be exploring sounds and will have the opportunity to use different musical instruments. |

Your child will need the following:

**Book Bags**- Please remember that your child needs to bring their book bag to school every day.

**Water bottles**- Please make sure that your child has a clearly named water bottle in school every day. Please don’t transport your water bottle in your book bag as the water can damage the reading books if they leak.

**PE kit:** Please ensure your child’s PE kit is in school every **Friday morning**. Indoor kit is navy blue shorts and white T-shirt. PE kits should be in a clearly named pump bag, these are available from the school office.

**Attendance and punctuality**

We would like to emphasise the importance of excellent attendance and hope that you and your child will make every effort to make sure that you are on time and ready for the school day. The school doors open for 08:45am and your child’s class teacher will meet them every morning in the Reception playground to bring them into school. Our school day finishes at 3.15pm and we will hand your children to you through our classroom doors. This may initially take a little while as we get to know your faces, please be patient at this time.

If you have any questions, please feel free to speak to any of us at the end of the school day.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Wardell, Miss Stocks and the Reception Team