Hedgehogs Class Newsletter

Autumn 2 2026

Learning, growing and celebrating together

This half term, we will continue to build on the strong foundations established during Autumn 1, developing children's confidence, independence and enthusiasm for learning. Through a range of carefully chosen stories, practical experiences and seasonal activities, children will explore new ideas, develop important skills and learn more about themselves and the world around them as we begin our build-up to Christmas.

TALK, STORIES & PHONICS

Communication and language will continue to underpin our provision, with adults modelling language, introducing new vocabulary and encouraging children to share their ideas, explain their thinking and develop their confidence in conversations.

Our learning will be supported by a range of carefully chosen stories, including The Gingerbread Man, Pumpkin Soup, Peace at Last and A Squash and a Squeeze. These stories will provide opportunities to explore new vocabulary, develop comprehension, retell familiar events and make connections between stories and our own experiences. As we approach Christmas, we will also explore the Nativity story and enjoy seasonal stories, including The Lion for Christmas.

Phonics will continue to develop through Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised, with teaching matched to each cohort. Nursery children will begin their formal Foundations for Phonics sessions, developing listening skills and awareness of initial sounds through activities such as Bertha the Bus, alongside listening walks, environmental sounds, songs, rhymes and oral blending.

Reception children will progress through the Little Wandle programme, learning further grapheme-phoneme correspondences and digraphs. They will develop their ability to read and spell words using the sounds they have been taught and begin reading decodable books closely matched to their phonics learning.

EARLY MATHEMATICS

Nursery children will continue to build their early mathematical understanding through number rhymes, songs and practical counting experiences. These familiar activities will support children in hearing and using number names, recognising quantities and developing confidence with the counting sequence.

Reception children will follow the NCETM Autumn 2 Mastering Number programme, developing a deeper understanding of number through practical activities, mathematical talk and carefully planned teaching. Sessions will focus on strengthening children's number sense, helping them recognise relationships between numbers and develop secure foundations for future mathematical learning.

MOVING & DEVELOPING

Physical development will continue to be supported throughout the day through purposeful fine and gross motor activities, construction, creative experiences and active outdoor play.

Children will develop their fine motor control and coordination through activities such as manipulating resources, using tools, drawing, cutting and developing pencil control. As we begin our Christmas preparations, children will have opportunities to develop their scissor skills and cutting accuracy while making Christmas cards and seasonal crafts.

Handwriting will progress from pre-writing shapes and patterns towards formal letter formation, with Reception children beginning the curly letter family.

Reception children will take part in taught PE sessions on Monday afternoons, continuing with Multiskills activities to develop balance, coordination, spatial awareness, agility and confidence in movement.



HOME LEARNING

We believe that some of the most valuable learning at home happens through talking, playing, sharing stories and spending time together.

Each week, your child will bring home a reading for pleasure book to share and enjoy with you. We encourage families to make sharing a story part of their regular routine, helping children to develop a lifelong love of reading.

Reception children will also bring home a decodable reading book matched to their current phonics learning. Their phonics learning will be shared through their home learning book, helping you to practise the sounds and words they have been learning in school.

FEELINGS, FRIENDSHIPS & INDEPENDENCE

This half term, our Jigsaw theme is Celebrating Difference. Through stories, discussions, play and everyday experiences, children will explore how we are all unique, recognising similarities and differences between ourselves and others.

We will encourage children to appreciate what makes each person special, develop positive relationships and understand the importance of kindness, respect and including others.

We will also continue to develop children's independence, confidence and ability to manage their feelings and behaviour. Stories such as A Squash and a Squeeze will provide opportunities to explore problem-solving and perseverance, encouraging children to keep trying when things feel difficult rather than giving up.

PLAY, PROVISION & THE SEASONS

Our carefully planned continuous provision will continue to provide opportunities for children to explore, investigate, practise skills and develop their own ideas through play. Adults will observe, interact purposefully and provide enhancements and challenges appropriate to children's individual stages of development.

This half term, our provision will reflect our stories, seasonal changes and the build-up to Christmas. Children will enjoy exploring spices and gingerbread-themed activities, making their own pumpkin soup and developing practical food preparation skills, including chopping. We will also explore winter and how some animals hibernate during the colder months.

As Christmas approaches, children will have opportunities to develop their creativity and fine motor skills through card making, cutting and a range of seasonal crafts. Through our exploration of the Nativity story, we will also learn about the Christian celebration of Christmas and the birth of Jesus.