

# Reception Curriculum Blog

## Spring 1 2024



Dear Parents and Carers,

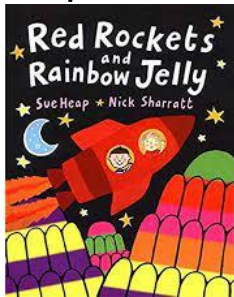
Happy New Year. Our theme this half term is Farmyard Fun! This is one of our favourite themes. We have an exciting visit planned to Barlylands Farm in week 5. This is a great opportunity for the children to see and smell the animals that they have been learning about. Hopefully, we will be lucky enough to see lambs and piglets too. We continue our transition journey by progressing from daily dough disco sessions to a handwriting lesson very similar to Year 1 handwriting lessons. During this half term we expect the children to complete the maths area challenge as well as a writing area challenge every day in addition to their name card that they already complete.

If you have any questions, please feel free to ask us on ClassDojo.

Wishing you every happiness in 2024,

*Mrs Wade, Miss Donaldson, Miss Roberts and Miss Payne*

### Personal, Social and Emotional Development



No Outsiders, Everyone Different, Everyone Welcome. Our No Outsiders book this half term is Red Rockets and Rainbow Jelly by Sue Heap and Nick Sharratt. The learning intention is for the children to understand that it is okay to like different things. The children will know that other children may like different things to them and that is okay, they can still be friends.

**Self-regulation objectives:** We will be following the social norms of the classroom, the outdoor classroom and the school.

**Managing Self Objectives:** We will be working with the Thurrock Borough Council Road Safety Team inviting our families to attend a road safety awareness workshop with their child.

**Building Relationships Objectives:** Our focus this half term is for the children to remember the names of their peers. Additionally, we will be working on sharing, respect and resolving conflict.

### Communication and Language



We continue our work from our WELCOMM screenings into the Spring term. Week by week we have a different vocabulary focus. Please find below the focus of each week, and an example of how you can explore the focus at home.

#### Week 1- Understanding emotions from facial expressions.

Read a simple story together. Choose favourite books, about animals perhaps, or favourite characters (e.g. 'Harry and the Bucketful of Dinosaurs').\*

Ask questions about the story (e.g. for 'Snow White and the Seven Dwarves', ask:

- ★ 'Where did the dwarves go to work?'
- ★ 'What were the dwarves digging for?'
- ★ 'Why did Snow White go to sleep?'
- ★ 'Who gave Snow White the poisonous apple?'

- ★ 'How did the dwarves feel when Snow White went to sleep?')
- If the child doesn't answer or answers inappropriately, try:
  - ★ Offering a choice of answers (e.g. 'Where did the dwarves go to work? Was it in a shop or down the mine?').
  - ★ Re-read part of the story where the answer is and then repeat the question.

#### Week 2- Understand question words using stories.

Gather together a selection of pictures showing familiar actions. These could be cards or cut out from magazines. Place a few of the cards (e.g. six) face-down on the table.

Choose a card but don't show it to the child.

Look at the card and make a sentence about the picture (e.g. card shows 'cat chasing mouse' – you say 'cats like to chase mice').

- Ask the child 'Can you remember what I said?'
- If the child responds correctly, show the card and reinforce by repeating the child's efforts straightaway.
- If it is difficult or only one or two words are recalled (e.g. 'cats chase mice'), repeat the sentence emphasising the missed words (e.g. 'cats *like to* chase mice').
- Take it in turns to copy each other's sentence.

### Week 3- Learning to remember and then say 5 things.

Gather together a selection of pictures showing familiar actions. These could be cards or cut out from magazines. Place a few of the cards (e.g. six) face-down on the table.

Choose a card but don't show it to the child.

Look at the card and make a sentence about the picture (e.g. card shows 'cat chasing mouse' – you say 'cats like to chase mice').

- Ask the child 'Can you remember what I said?'
- If the child responds correctly, show the card and reinforce by repeating the child's efforts straightaway.
- If it is difficult or only one or two words are recalled (e.g. 'cats chase mice'), repeat the sentence emphasising the missed words (e.g. 'cats *like to* chase mice').
- Take it in turns to copy each other's sentence.

### Week 4- using superlatives: "biggest" and "tallest"

- Gather together groups of objects (e.g. toys that vary in size). You will need at least three of each object – one small, one medium and one large, e.g.
  - ★ Small, medium and large cups
  - ★ Small, medium and large pencils
  - ★ Small, medium and large dolls
- Put out a set of three items (e.g. the three cups).
- Point to each corresponding cup in turn, saying:

- ★ 'This cup is small, this cup is big and this cup is the...'
- Can the child fill in the gap and say 'biggest' when you pause?
- Now starting with the biggest cup say:
  - ★ 'This cup is big, this cup is smaller and this cup is the ...'
- Continue with the other sets of items – the pencils can be 'short'/'long', the dolls can be 'short'/'tall', etc.

### Week 5- Understanding which day comes next.

Make a chart together. Put the days of the week across the top. It may be helpful to do Monday–Friday in a different colour from Saturday–Sunday. Encourage the child to draw a picture of something he/she does each day (e.g. swimming, PE, assembly, music). Talk about the activities in relation to the days of the week, e.g.

- ★ Adult: 'On Monday you go swimming, and the day after Monday is ...?'
- ★ Pause to see if the child can fill in the missing day. Prompt him/her by using his/her pictures (e.g. 'You do PE on this day').
- ★ Child: 'Tuesday' and adult repeats: 'So the day after Monday is ...?'

### Week 6- Understanding passive sentences.

Gather together some toys and everyday objects, e.g.

- ★ Two favourite dolls such as Batman, Barbie, Bob the Builder.
- ★ Cup, play food, sponge, brush, car, ball.

Ask the child to listen to the instruction and then do the action, e.g.

- ★ 'Batman is fed a banana by Spiderman.'
- ★ 'The car is washed by Bob the Builder.'
- ★ 'Barbie's hair is brushed by Dora.'

## Physical Development



Physical development is split into 2 different areas, 'Fine Motor' and Gross Motor'.

The gross motor skills we will be continuing to develop this half term include moving equipment safely and riding a bike with pedals. We will be teaching the children the correct posture for sitting at a table while writing and we will continue to enjoy our yoga Fridays.



The fine motor skills we will be working towards securing this half term include using scissors to cut a straight line and using a tripod grip with our pens, pencils and paintbrushes. This half term we will begin our handwriting lessons. We look at a different letter family each week starting with the long ladder family, followed by the one-armed robot family, then the curly caterpillar family.

**Literacy**

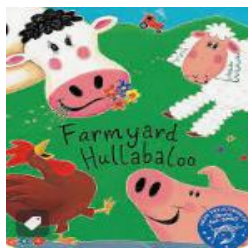
This half term, the focus is Farmyard Fun and we have chosen five high-quality texts that explore the farmyard.

Through these stories we will be introducing the children to exciting new vocabulary, developing children’s awareness of story structure and writing stories as individuals and groups.



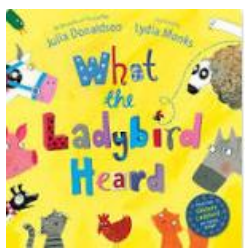
**Week 1: Little Red Hen**

In this Ladybird tale of 'The Little Red Hen,' children discover the journey of a hardworking hen aiming to bake bread. Despite seeking help from her fellow farmyard friends – a lazy dog, a sleepy cat, and a chatterbox duck – they all refuse. Undeterred, the Little Red Hen perseveres, completing every task independently. When the bread is ready, her lazy companions want to share, but the hen teaches a valuable lesson about hard work, perseverance, and sharing by enjoying the bread with her chicks. This timeless story instils the values of diligence, cooperation, and the joy of reaping the rewards of one's efforts.



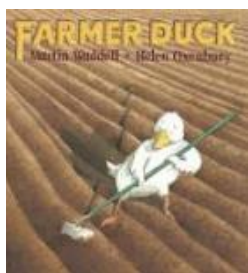
**Week 2: Farmyard Hullabaloo**

"Farmyard Hullabaloo" by Giles Andreae is a lively and engaging children's book that takes readers on a fun-filled adventure around the farm. The story follows a group of farm animals as they create a joyful and noisy hullabaloo, each expressing themselves with unique sounds and movements. From the mooing cows to the quacking ducks, the book captures the vibrant and bustling atmosphere of a busy farm. With its rhythmic text and vibrant illustrations, "Farmyard Hullabaloo" is a delightful read-aloud book that introduces young children to various farm animals while celebrating the joyful cacophony of life on the farm.



**Week 3: What the Ladybird Heard**

"What the Ladybird Heard" by Julia Donaldson and Lydia Monks is a charming and clever children's book about a tiny ladybird who overhears a plot by two thieves planning to steal the prize cow from the farm. The ladybird quietly listens and then cleverly orchestrates a plan with the other farm animals to foil the thieves' scheme using their unique sounds and actions. The book celebrates teamwork, cleverness, and the power of using one's strengths to outsmart troublemakers. With its engaging rhymes, colourful illustrations, and a delightful story, "What the Ladybird Heard" is a captivating read for young audiences, encouraging them to embrace teamwork and ingenuity.

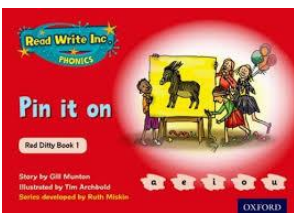
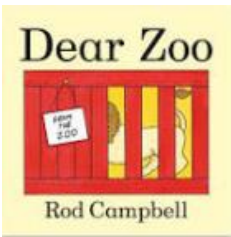


**Week 4: Farmer Duck**

"Farmer Duck" by Martin Waddell and illustrated by Helen Oxenbury is a heart-warming and thought-provoking children's book that tells the tale of a hardworking duck and a lazy farmer. The story revolves around the duck who tirelessly works day in and day out on the farm, doing all the chores while the lazy farmer lounges around. The other animals notice the unfairness and decide to take action, rallying together to help the duck and bring about a change. Through its beautiful illustrations and powerful storytelling, "Farmer Duck" conveys important messages about cooperation, fairness, and standing up against injustice. It's a touching and memorable story that teaches valuable lessons about empathy and teamwork to young readers.

**Week 5: Barlylands visit focus.**





Our Literacy this week will focus on our Trip to Barylads farm. The children will be invited to form and write sentences that explore what they saw, heard and could smell during their visit to the farm. We will also focus on what a map is, and how we can use a map to help us find what we need by using the map key.

### Week 6: Dear Zoo

"Dear Zoo" by Rod Campbell is a beloved classic children's book that follows a child's journey in search of a perfect pet. The story begins with the child writing to the zoo asking for a pet and receiving various animals in return. Each animal sent by the zoo has a particular issue, too big, too fierce, too jumpy, and so on, prompting the child to send them back. Finally, the zoo sends the perfect pet, making the child happy. The book engages young readers with its interactive flaps that reveal the animals and their traits, encouraging participation and interaction. "Dear Zoo" is a delightful and engaging story that introduces children to different animals while emphasizing the concept of suitability when choosing a pet.

### Reading

The Set 1 sounds will be reviewed with your child every day. Your child has now been introduced to sounds with 2 letters. These are called di-graphs and in school we call them special friends. Watch the video to find out how to help support your child with learning to read di-graphs. We will read the Word Time words from 1.1 to 1.7. You can help by practising at home with the handwriting sheets, you now have the full set.

- How to say the sounds  
<https://schools.ruthmiskin.com/training/view/kCOblepF/kkR85YVs>
- Reading the di-graphs with your child  
<https://schools.ruthmiskin.com/training/view/Rn8QMRbz/RB9VPS2Z>

### Reading at home

Book change over day is Tuesday. However, please bring ensure your child brings their book bag to school every day, 'Every day is book bag day' is our mantra. Your child will bring home a book they have chosen. This book is for an adult to read to your child and talk about the story. Please record these shared reading experiences as well as any other bedtime story sessions you have with your child on your Boom Reader App.

Once your child is confident in recognising and saying the sounds we will send home sound blending books. These books have words that contain the sounds your child can recognise and say. Encourage your child to read these daily to you and record them on the Boom Reader App.

- Sound blending  
<https://schools.ruthmiskin.com/training/view/Ok7hENea/pSNn8d8K>
- Sound blending books  
<https://schools.ruthmiskin.com/training/view/luDW3RqY/7J0QTLzw>

The next stage in your child's reading journey is to move onto Red level books. These books have very simple phrases for your child to read. Encourage your child to frog talk then read the word to you. Your child will also meet what we call 'red' words in these books. Red words are words that do not follow the rules and cannot be frog talked words like **the I put**. We teach the children to recognise the shape of these words and read them from memory.

- Red Level books  
<https://schools.ruthmiskin.com/training/view/k3o3zaxG/1eFp3fP1>

You will also now have access to a personal e-book library for your child which is carefully matched to their phonic knowledge. This is through the Oxford Owl website and your child's login details will be sent home to you. Your child will be assigned additional Read Write Inc books in their e-book library that they have previously met in school. There are also additional phonics quizzes to support your child within this resource. This extends the opportunity they have to apply their phonic knowledge and continue to grow in confidence when reading. We understand how they become quickly bored with their book bag book. This e-book library allows for variety and additional practice. Please remember to log their e-book reading on Boom Reader so they can earn their important gems and contribute to the class reading totals for the weekly competition.

## Mathematics



In weeks 1 and 2 of Spring 1, children are introduced to the concept of zero. They will already have some practical understanding of 'nothing there', 'none' or 'all gone'. During this time, they learn that the number name 'zero' and the numeral 0 can be used to represent this idea. The children will use their knowledge of zero to find an amount to five, including zero. The concept of subitising zero objects is introduced, as well as the instant recognition of up to five objects. The children will be encouraged to represent their subitising by showing the numeral '0', showing no fingers or an empty five frame. This will consolidate their understanding that when the five frame is full, this represents 5, and when it is empty, this represents zero. The children build on their knowledge of '1 more' to work with the numbers to 5, including zero. They recognise that zero can be a starting point for counting and the number after 0 is 1. The children will also build on their knowledge of '1 less' from 1-5 to work with the numbers to five including zero. They recognise that when counting back, we can include zero after 1 In the same way as for '1 more'. The children are then guided to explore the composition of numbers from zero to five. The children will continue to develop the understanding that all numbers are made up of smaller numbers and that this can include zero.



In week 3, we will explore Mass and Capacity. The children will become more familiar with using balance scales and distinguish between the different quantities on either side. We will explore measuring different objects to see which one's balance and encourage the children to say why. The children build on their understanding of 'full' and 'empty' to further investigate different capacities and how they relate to each other. The children will be encouraged to make direct comparisons by pouring from one container to another. During activities and in provision, the children will be prompted to use smaller pots or ladles to make indirect comparisons by counting how many of one container it takes to fill another. The children can then order the containers from the smallest capacity to the greatest capacity.



In weeks 4 and 5, children build on their learning of finding the numerals and quantities of 6, 7 and 8 by making their own representations. The children are introduced to the concept of '1 more' when working with numbers up to and including 8. They begin to understand that as they count forwards beyond 5, each number is 1 more and the numbers still increase by 1. Following this, the children are introduced to the concept of '1 less' with numbers from 0-8. The children will begin to understand the relationships between these numbers and notice that, as we count backwards, the numbers get smaller, because we are taking 1 away. Then, the children build on their earlier work matching numerals to quantities by now finding and making pairs. They begin to understand that a pair is two. The children are introduced to the concept of doubling, and they learn that this means 'twice as many'. There will be opportunities provided to see a range of visual representations of doubles and to find them in patterns, in pictures and in arrangements of manipulatives. We will then focus on the



word 'altogether' and combining two groups of objects to find out how many there are altogether.

In week 6, we will explore Length, Height and Time. Children begin this process by exploring and describing two objects so that children can see 'long' and 'not long', and 'short' and 'not short'. The children are encouraged to explore objects and begin to use the language of length to describe them. The children will then build on their explorations of length to now make comparisons. The children are encouraged to use more specific vocabulary to describe an object, such as 'longer than' or 'shorter than' something else. We will be using practical resources such as cubes, blocks and playdough to help demonstrate and explore these terms. The children build on the skills they have developed when exploring and comparing length by now exploring height. The children will be supported to understand that height is a type of length. We will introduce the children to the language of both 'short' objects and 'tall' objects through experiences. Following on from exploring height, children move on to using the language 'tallest', 'shortest', 'taller' and 'shorter' to make comparisons. Our next step is time. In previous steps, children will have already begun to understand simple time differences, such as night and day. We will discuss what is happening tomorrow, next week or at the weekend to support children to talk about the more immediate future.

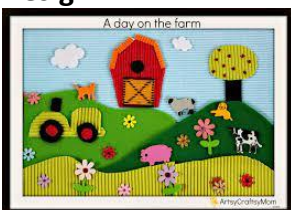
### Understanding the World



Our focus this half term is to use simple maps and study the world around us. We will be looking at farms and farm animals. We will be comparing farm, jungle and polar habitats and the animals that live there. We are excited about our upcoming visit to Barlylands farm where we will see and smell the different animals we have met in our stories this half term. During our visit we will also see the old farm machinery in the Barlylands farm museum.

During week 2, we hope to welcome visitors into our classrooms to talk about the jobs that they do in our Aspirations week. In week 6 we will be celebrating Shrove Tuesday and the Lunar New Year, 2024 is the year of the dragon. We will continue to look at the seasonal changes in our environment, looking at changes in winter and eagerly awaiting the first signs of spring.

### Expressive Arts and Design



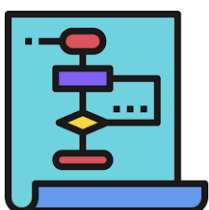
We will enjoy three different role play areas this half term. The first 2 weeks will be a bakery. We will be baking bread in week 1 just like the Little Red Hen. Week 3 and 4 will see the role play area change into a Veterinary surgery. Finally, for week 5 and 6 we will have a Chinese restaurant. During our creating with materials curriculum, we will be exploring joining methods and using split pins to make animals. We will also be using different media to create a farm scene as well as several different 3D models of farm animals.

### Religious Education



This unit begins with a focus on the natural world. The children are encouraged to experience the nature around them and reflect upon the natural world for themselves. This provides a basis for thinking about how the world was created and understanding that many religious people believe that God designed and created it. The creation story from Genesis is introduced alongside two stories from Islam focusing on care for Allah's creation.

### Computing



We will revisit our e-safety message this term using the Jessie and Friends resources. We will be discussing with the children what to do if they see something on the internet that makes them feel funny in their tummy. We start our foundation work into algorithms and coding this half term. This begins with sorting. We will be teaching the children to sort small world farm animals and we will then progress on to sorting animals from different habitats. We will sort farm and jungle animals and we will sort farm and polar animals. In addition to this we will be looking at sequencing and placing or doing things in

the right order, for example, following the instructions when making bread during our Little Red Hen week.

### **Ideas to support your child's learning at home linked to our areas of learning this term:**

Remember to share and upload your own observations of your child's learning at home on their Tapestry account. Observations such as riding their bike or helping to lay the table and cook a meal for the family are all wonderful learning experiences you might share at home that we would love to see in school.

### **Supporting videos and read aloud versions of Weekly texts:**

Week 1: Little Red Hen, Mr Tumble signs: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HEJSPNv3Do>

Week 2: Farmyard Hullabaloo: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O7yDALmPZ-I>

Week 3: What the Ladybird Heard: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lckjgm91LCk>

Week 4: Farmer Duck: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HFUp3QK-Io4>

Week 5: Barlylands Website: <https://www.barleylands.co.uk/>

Week 6: Dear Zoo, Mr Tumble Bedtime Story: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UywEnHKTMXk>

### Helping your child to read at home

- How to say the sounds

<https://schools.ruthmiskin.com/training/view/ANkIMIMn/6DEqzb3W>

- Reading the digraphs with your child

<https://schools.ruthmiskin.com/training/view/7eKT7Pyx/90yELLMZ>

- Sound blending books

<https://schools.ruthmiskin.com/training/view/gvImI9sN/SGOJmCBL>

- Red ditty books

<https://schools.ruthmiskin.com/training/view/IBtO1xoA/wizkiDfK>

### Helping your child with fine motor skills at home

<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/blog/supporting-your-child-at-school-with-fine-motor-control>

<https://mylittlelearner.co.uk/blogs/blog/activities-for-fine-motor-skills>

<https://www.iow.nhs.uk/Childrens-Therapies/Childrens-OT/Handwriting-and-fine-motor-skills>

### Making homemade playdough

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/tiny-happy-people/homemade-playdough/z4tdd6f>

### Activities to try at home

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/tiny-happy-people/4-to-5-year-old-child-development-activities>

### **Homework Project** – Children are asked to complete the project below.

Please complete and upload Homework projects **by Friday 9<sup>th</sup> February**. Homework projects will be celebrated and shared in class **from 12<sup>th</sup> February 2024**.

This half term our homework project is called Travelling, Out and About. As before, this will be a Tapestry planned activity. Please link your observation and comments onto your child's Tapestry account learning journal.

We would like you to experience a different way of travelling with your child instead of by car. This might include a bike ride, or travel by bus, train, underground train or boat.

Ferry information <https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/ferry-services/tilbury-to-gravesend-timetable>