



Welcome to Foundation Stage

Curriculum information

Staffing

Teachers

- RR – Miss Ronja
- RC – Miss Caswell

LSAs

- RC – Mrs Heasman and Mrs Harding
- RR – Mrs Maytum and Miss Lambert

Mrs Cooper will be working with both RR and RC

Important information

- Your children will need wellie boots and waterproof coats as all children go outside in all weather
- They must bring in a named water bottle with water and no juice
- Please be sure to name **everything** that your child brings into school, and keep checking that it can still be seen after every wash
- Our PE day is a Thursday. Children will come into school wearing their PE kits. Children are allowed to wear trainers
- We are happy to have any items returned to us that have inadvertently been taken home!
- The DFE have introduced a statutory baseline assessment, it is a short, interactive and practical assessment of your child's early literacy, communication, language and maths skills when they begin in school. This will be completed within term 1. They will not need to prepare for this, please do not worry, the children will not know that they are completing it

School uniform

- Please make sure that the children are in correct uniform with appropriate hairstyles (examples of uniform on next slide)
 - Terms 1, 5 and 6 is summer uniform
 - Terms 2,3 and 4 is winter uniform
- Shoes must be black, no slip on shoes and no open toed sandals, ideally Velcro to support children's independence
- No jewellery is to be worn in school
- Bags must be appropriate school bags or backpacks or book bag, no handbags or suitcase style bags
- Hair longer than collar length must be tied up, extremes of fashion such as shaved patterns / lines or partings, colours, very short hair on one side with longer on the other etc. are not allowed
- Girls can wear white socks or navy blue tights
- Boys socks must be grey
- Summer dresses must be navy blue, not light blue. In the past some girls have opted for a summer dress playsuit, we ask that they do not wear these as it makes it more challenging to use the toilet independently

School uniform examples



Winter uniform

Summer uniform

PE

- PE will be on a Thursday morning
- Your children require a named school PE kit

PE kit

- T-shirt (house colour)
- Navy shorts and navy tracksuit bottoms
- Sweatshirt – navy with no zip or hoodie (please no fashion labels)
- Trainers



Phonics

- We introduce phonics to the children by playing listening games and working on attention and focus. This aspect of the phonics scheme lasts until around October half term. After October half term, we will begin to introduce sounds.
- The children will be getting an electronic sheet summarising the sounds they had learnt that week. These will be uploaded onto Class Dojo. Please practise these at home with your child and encourage them to look out for these sounds in their story books and begin to segment and blend simple words e.g. p-i-n – pin. A digraph is when two letters are together to make one sound, such as ee, ai, ll, th.
- A trigraph is when three letters are together and they make one sound such as air, igh, ear.
- A phonic workshop will be held this year to support parents, more information on this will come at a later date.



Fine Motor Skills and Handwriting in Foundation Stage

In Foundation Stage, children will focus on mark making and developing fine motor skills through a range of activities.

Teachers will also support them to use the correct seating position to form their letters. Throughout the year, children will develop their fine motor skills and trace patterns, learn to form the digits 0-9 and practise writing their name with a capital letter at the beginning followed by lowercase letters.

Children will be taught to **print** their letters and form them in the following letter families:

Curly Caterpillars

c a d e s g q o

Ladder Letters:

l i u t

One-Armed Robots

n m h k b p r

Zig-zag Monsters

z v w x

Begin to understand how to form more complex letters

f j y

Maths

- We follow the White Rose scheme for maths
- The children will have a daily maths lesson initially learning number songs and gradually building up their knowledge of number and number pattern
- Please see the school website for our termly maths coverage



Reading Diaries

- Reading diaries must be in school every day (they came home with the children today). Please use them to record any messages to your child's teacher and to inform us as to which books your child has been reading
- Any notes can also be written in there that you would like us to know about your child, alternatively, you can upload messages onto Class Dojo as this is checked daily
- If you would prefer to catch us in the morning, or afterschool, please wait until the majority of children have gone or are in school before doing so

Reading books



- Children in Reception will receive two reading books each week, one book will be a phonics reading book, the other will be a reading for pleasure book of their choice. Reception will change their books on a Wednesday. The phonic book which will be sent home with your child will be specific to their level of phonics and they will be fully decodable. Children are free to choose their own books, therefore they may choose the same book more than once – this is ok, repetition builds fluency.
- Books will not be sent home until children have been taught an appropriate amount of phonics for the children to be able to recognise some sounds. We will update you on this within the next few weeks.
- If books are not changed on the given day due to absence/bank holiday, they will be changed at the next best available time.
- You are welcome to log on to Oxford Owl online to access more reading material.
- Oxford Owl –
- Username – stmfs
- Password – Thomas22



Reading Books

- What are decodable books?
- Decodable books are books a child can read independently once they have been taught the phonics at that level.
- Why should my child read decodable books?
- Decodable books consolidate the phonics taught in your child's classroom. With step-by-step progression, the child succeeds at each level while learning the phonics needed to become a fluent reader. This approach develops confident readers with reliable reading strategies. Your child should know around 80% of the sounds within the phonic reading books which are sent home.



Why only 1 or 2 books a week?

- The more a child reads, the larger their vocabulary becomes. When a child reads or hears the same book multiple times, they become familiar and comfortable with a greater number of words.
- Hearing favourite stories read aloud helps children become aware of the pattern and rhythm of text. Language is more than just words — it's how words sound and connect to each other. Parents can model the rhythms of reading for children who are just learning how language works.
- Fluency is the ability to read text “accurately, quickly, and with expression.” Repetitive reading allows a child to read without stumbling or stopping, and reading time becomes more pleasant for everyone. Once a child masters one book, it makes moving on to another more appealing.
- Reading comprehension is the ability to understand all the components of a story — from plot to character development to symbolism. Comprehension is “the essence” of reading. Each time your child reads or hears a book read to them, they learn more about the story itself. Each pass through the text or illustrations allows them to dive deeper into the story's meaning, preparing them for more complex narratives later on.
- With fluency and comprehension comes greater reading confidence. Children who can follow a story and don't stumble over words are more self-assured about their abilities and more likely to enjoy reading.

Class Dojo

- Our main source of communication this year will be on Class Dojo
- You will be able to see your child's learning through teacher observations and you can comment on this
- We also encourage you to post your child's home learning/wow moments that they do with you for us to comment on
- Please check your Class Dojo account daily for observations, updates and messages
- If you need any support using the app, please come and see a member of the team
- If you have not yet activated your account, please do so as soon as possible

Barnaby Bear

- We have a special teddy called Barnaby Bear that will be sent home with one child a week on Friday as a special treat. It would be lovely for you or your child to write in the book what they did that weekend, rather like a diary. You could scribe a picture that that they have drawn, they could try to write their name, or you could simply make a note that Barnaby came to your house. Please write and draw in pencil
- Barnaby will not start going home until the children are in full time
- Some parents in the past have uploaded their child's adventures with Barnaby onto Class Dojo as opposed to writing it in the book. This is absolutely fine too! 😊



Forest School

- After Christmas children will begin Forest School. Children go out in class groups into our Forest School near the pavilion. The children follow very strict Forest School rules, and this allows them to take part in the activities and explore the wooded area safely, until they become more familiar with the rules.
- Please bring in wellies, hats and gloves for your children to ensure they are wearing appropriate clothing as we go out in all weather
- We go into the forest on a Thursday as the children will already be in their PE kits

Outdoor Learning



OPAL

At St Thomas More, we have adopted the OPAL Primary Programme (Outside Play and Learning) to promote freedom for children to explore play in their own imaginative ways, using found and gathered resources in the natural outdoor environment during lunch times. Our grounds are fantastic but have been significantly underused during the winter /spring months due to the wet field area. As a result, we have decided to open up specific areas of the grounds during the winter months as long as children have the correct outdoor wear.

Please ensure that your child has a pair of wellington boots in school, which can be kept here permanently. Suitable coats/ rainsuits are also recommended as the weather changes.

If you have any old wellies you would be willing to donate, we would be grateful for them too.

Mrs Baxter and the Play Team are looking forward to :

- Children accessing more areas of the school grounds during the winter/spring months
- Children exploring, building dens, running, hiding, having fun and getting dirty
- Children involved in activities other than those with a sports focus
- Children taking responsibility for themselves, their games, each other, the environment and their resources

If you would like more information on OPAL, please visit their website at <http://outdoorplayandlearning.org.uk>

Muddy Puddles

We also follow The Muddy Puddle Approach, which is a type of outdoor learning that allows the children to be outside whilst still embedding and learning academic curriculum linked subjects. So, rather than only doing number work in books we will also take the learning outside.

For example, we could make number ladders from sticks and jump up the ladders counting in 10's!

The Muddy Puddle Teacher ideas are all really fun and make the children feel as if they are playing whilst learning at the same time.

You can find out more and get free resources for home at:

www.themuddypuddleteacher.co.uk



Discover and Explore

- Throughout the day, your children will have plenty of opportunities to 'discover and explore' the environment around them
- During this time, we will carefully plan activities to meet the children's interests and needs in order for their learning to progress – a copy of development matters alongside the ELG's are on a table at the back of the room.
- Discover and Explore time will also allow the children to access other curriculum areas, for example geography and history, in the EYFS curriculum, these come under the heading Understanding the World
- There are 7 areas of learning in the EYFS Development Matters curriculum which we follow, these are:
 - Communication and Language
 - Personal, Social and Emotional Development
 - Physical Development
 - Literacy (we have some examples of end of year expectations on the tables, please take a look at the end of the session)
 - Mathematics
 - Understanding the World
 - Expressive Arts and Design
- Your children will be assessed on all of these areas at the end of the year.

Dates for your diary

Inflatable Afternoon – Thursday 28th September – 3.30pm until 5.30pm

Individual School Photos for children – Thursday 12th October – in the morning

Phonics Parent Workshop – Thursday 12th October – 2.30pm until 3.15pm

School shut for children - Friday 13th October

We will be adding story time dates to the diary. Parents and children will be invited into school in the morning at 8.30 to share stories and settle into school. This will be on a monthly basis but will start when the children are confident and settled.

Thank you for your continued support

