



Northchapel Primary School
growing kind and curious children who aspire to succeed

Caterpillar Class



Autumn term 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

Hello and a very warm welcome to Caterpillar Class to our new reception children and welcome back to the Year 1s. We hope you all had a good summer, and your children are ready to learn and make new friends. Our Year 1 topic this half term is 'Me and My Home', and we will be spending time learning about traditional stories and rhymes, our senses, how homes have changed over time, and lots of play supported by adults! In the latter half of the term, we will be exploring 'Bits and Pieces' such as animals around the world and honing some art and design skills, as well as preparing for the holiday season. Please see our year group specific curriculum maps for more information.

Communication

We believe that children develop best when parents and teachers work in partnership for the benefit of the child and we will include lots of pictures in the Monday Messenger each week. Please feel free to email in with photos or video clips of adventures and fun your child has enjoyed outside school which they would like to share with the class, but regretfully we ask that **no toys** are brought into school.

Each term we will invite you to discuss your child's progress at a meeting after school. In the meantime, if you would like to discuss any concerns relating to your child's wellbeing, learning or development, please email me on nmoore@northchapelprimary.co.uk. If it is something that will need more time to discuss, we can book a suitable time to have a longer meeting before or after school. You may also use this email address to let us know if your child is upset at home for some reason so that we can support them upon arrival.

Please ensure that any absences due to illness are reported to the School Office on office@northchapelprimary.co.uk, and if your child will be absent due to a medical appointment or other advance reason, there are request forms available from the office.

Home reading

We love books in Caterpillar Class! Reading helps children in all areas of learning so please support them by giving them time to read as part of their daily routine, talking about the pictures, questioning them to check understanding and helping them with any tricky or new vocabulary.

We advocate at least 10 minutes, four times per week reading at home together. Your child will be coming home with two books. Firstly, an appropriate, decodable Oxford Reading Tree (ORT) book for them to read to you, covering graphemes they have learned and are secure with. Secondly a book to share together, which is at roughly the same stage, but which might expose your child to unfamiliar graphemes and vocabulary. You are, of course welcome to also supplement this with home books, longer stories which you read to your child and discuss.

Parents are asked to record in the reading diary every time your child has read and whether they need their book changed. To minimise disruption to lesson time, books will ONLY be changed on Mondays and Thursdays, and only if the book in question has been read three times. The rationale behind this is that on the first read, children are decoding and blending, the second they are becoming more fluent and by the third, they should be reading the book fluently, and answering comprehension questions about the book.

If you have any queries regarding the reading level your child has been given, please write comments in their reading diary. If you feel your child would like to do additional reading beyond that set out above, you can find additional e-books to read here: <https://home.oxfordowl.co.uk/reading/free-ebooks/>

Phonic sounds and key words

Reception

At Northchapel Primary School, we use the 'Floppy's Phonics' scheme to learn to read. Children will have daily phonics lessons where we revisit past sounds and introduce new sounds. Your child will be sent home with phonics sound cards and matching pictures for each new sound they have been learning that week, as well as tricky (or non-decodable) words for the phase they are working in, and some words which they need to be able to read on sight, and then write. Please practise these with your child for a few minutes each night. These cards will accumulate as we add new sounds

through the year. If you are new to phonics, Oxford Owl has some useful information and videos which you may find helpful: <https://home.oxfordowl.co.uk/reading/reading-at-home/>
<https://home.oxfordowl.co.uk/reading/phonics/>

Year 1: Children will continue to have daily phonics sessions and will be sent home spellings each week, consisting of 5 phonics-related spellings, and two unrelated, but commonly used words. Children will be assessed on their home spellings the week after they have been sent home. They can continue to use their green phonics books to practice spellings and consolidate graphemes they are not secure with. To support this, we will reassess their phonics understanding early this term and routinely through the year and write these into the green phonics book to focus on.

Water bottles

Please ensure your child has a named water bottle in school every day.

Covering all weathers

We will be playing outside every day! As the autumn term is subject to variable weather, please ensure your child has a pair of wellies which they keep at school, a waterproof coat, and a school jumper. If the weather is due to be hot and sunny, please apply suncream to your child before school and ensure they bring a sun hat to school.

PE

PE days will be on **Thursdays**. Please ensure your child comes to school every Thursday in their school PE T-shirt, school jumper or cardigan, white socks, suitable trainers and plain navy/black/dark grey shorts or skort. As the weather gets colder, your child may wish to wear a plain black/navy/dark grey pair of joggers over their shorts.

Swimming

Year 1 will be swimming on **Thursday afternoons** commencing 3rd September until further notice. Please keep an eye on the school calendar (website) and Monday Messengers for updates. Please can they bring in their swimming costume, towel, and swimming hat in a named bag. A reminder that swimsuits need to be dark in colour, and close-fitted one-pieces for girls and trunks for boys. No loose/board shorts. These policy requirements are for health and safety reasons.

Reception will have their swimming sessions in the Summer Term.

Sharing Assemblies

These whole school assemblies are held on *some* Friday mornings at 9am and parents will be invited in to share our learning. Please check our newsletter and school calendar for details. Our planned Autumn term sharing assemblies are: 18th September, 16th October, 6th November.

Advance notice that our Church Harvest Festival service will take place in the morning of Friday 2nd October at 9:30am.

We are very much looking forward to working in partnership with you and your children.

Mrs Nikki Moore
Class Teacher