



DONALDSON CLASS

Nursery and Reception 2025 - 2026

Early Years Teacher: Mrs Nelson

Teaching Assistants: Miss Gaston and Mrs Stokes and Mrs Routledge



How to help your child make the best possible progress!

Dear Parents and carers,

Welcome to the beginning of you and your child's journey through nursery or reception with us in Donaldson class this year. This document has been written as a guide to help you to support your child to make the best possible progress throughout their time with us.

Please remember, every child is unique and develops at their own pace. Be patient, encourage and celebrate achievements, no matter how small! Your support and involvement are hugely important to helping your child flourish during this exciting time.

PHONICS



We follow Little Wandle Letters and Sounds phonics scheme. You will receive weekly updates sharing which sounds (phonemes) we will be learning so that you can also practise them at home!

We will begin sending library books home for you to share with your child quite soon after starting the autumn term. Your child will have the opportunity to change their library book weekly. Quality time with your child sharing a story will provide opportunities to; recognise familiar letter sounds and patterns, spot rhyming words or ask questions and predict what may happen next. All of these skills will help to build your child's confidence and the beginning of a lifelong love of reading for pleasure!

Once your child is confident with their sounds (phonemes), they will receive a reading book, which will be changed weekly. It is important that your child reads their book daily as it will build their vocabulary, increase their focus and further support their confidence and reading development. Your child will bring home a reading record for you to sign each time that they read with you at home.

Remember, reading is the key to lifelong learning!





DONALDSON CLASS

Phase 2 Sound Mat											
s	a	t	p	l	n	m	d				
g	o	c	k	ck	e	u	r				
h	b	f	l	j	v	w	x				
y	z	qu	th	sh	ch	ng	nk				

OPTIONAL HOME LEARNING

Each term, your child will be given a grid with some suggestions of things to do at home. There is no pressure to complete all of these tasks. They will be linked to our term's topics; it would be lovely to see any photos of them being completed uploaded to the class Dojo! There are lots of wonderful ideas contained in this letter too for you to try at home!

PHONICS ACTIVITIES

Phonics activities that you can enjoy at home!

Singing Songs: Sing songs and rhymes that focus on letter sounds. Many nursery rhymes are designed to help children recognise and remember phonetic patterns.



Play Word Games: Engage in word games like "I Spy" where your child has to identify objects that start with a certain sound. This enhances their phonemic awareness.



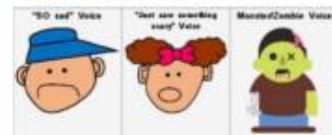
Make Letters: Create letters and words using a range of resources such as chalk, pasta or nature!



Letter Recognition: Point out letters in everyday life - on signs, labels, and in books. Encourage your child to identify and name letters and their corresponding sounds.



Practise Letter Sounds: Use flashcards or interactive apps to practice letter sounds together. Make it fun by using different voices or creating silly sound combinations.



Build Words: You can use clay, play dough, Lego or magnetic letters to physically build words!



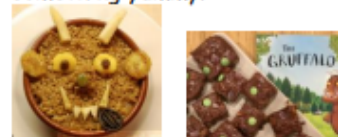
Encourage Questions: When your child asks about words or sounds, take the time to explain and explore together. Their curiosity can lead to valuable learning moments.



Snowball Spellings: Write simple words on a piece of paper and then scrunch it up. The parent throws a 'snowball' for the child to catch, read the word quickly and throw it back!



Purposeful Writing or Reading: Get your child to write or read a simple shopping list or recipe. Then spend quality time together creating something yummy!





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MATHS

We will be providing many opportunities for your child to develop their counting, composition of number and subitising skills. We will be following the Mastering Number programme and White Rose maths.

Numberblocks are a great resource to support this development.

Below is a link to a Numberblocks website:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/shows/numberblocks>

Here are some ideas for math's activities you can try at home. Maths is all around us!

Counting Adventures: Turn everyday activities into counting games. Count how many socks you have, how many steps to the door, or how many strawberries are on their plate.



Number Line Dance: Create a number line on the floor with tape or chalk. Call out a number, and your child can jump to that number while counting.



Pattern Play: Use toys or objects to create simple patterns (e.g., red-blue-red-blue) and ask your child to continue the pattern.



Cooking Math: Involve your child in measuring ingredients while cooking or baking. They can count cups, spoons, or pieces of fruit needed for a recipe.



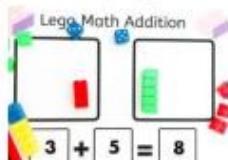
Indoor Bowling: Set up a bowling game with empty water bottles and a soft ball. Label each bottle with a number, and your child can add up the points they knock down.



Nature Math: Collect leaves, stones, or flowers. Ask your child to sort them by size or shape and then count how many of each type they have.



Building Blocks: Use building blocks to practice addition and subtraction. Your child can stack or remove blocks based on math problems you give them.



Coin Counting: Play "shop" using play money or real coins. Your child can practice counting and making change.



Number and Shape Hunt: Write numbers on sticky notes and hide them around the house. Your child can find the numbers and put them in order. You could do the same with shapes and get them to describe the properties!





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PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Physical activity is important for the development of children in nursery and reception. It provides great opportunities for social interaction, problem solving, thinking creatively, taking risks and learning about the world around us.

Obstacle course: use cushions, hoops and other things you can find at home. This encourages movement, problem-solving and develops coordination.



Nature walk: explore your surrounding area, talk about what you see, let your child touch leaves, find bugs, listen to the sounds that you can hear.



Dance party: put on some music and have a dance. Dance improves motor skills, coordination and provides opportunities for self expression.



Bubble fun: blow bubbles and encourage your child to chase and catch them. This will help with the development of their hand-eye coordination and their motor skills.



Sensory play - create a sensory area/box with things like rice, sand or water. Add things such as scoops, sieves, containers and toys for tactile exploration.



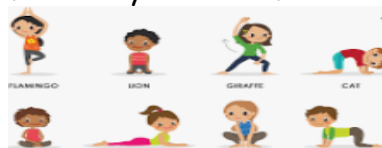
Ball games: play catch, kick a ball, or roll it back and forth. Ball games improve hand-eye coordination and motor skills.



Simon Says: Play "Simon Says" with actions like jumping, hopping, and clapping. It promotes listening skills and following instructions.



Yoga for Kids: Guide your child through simple yoga poses like downward dog, tree pose, or butterfly pose. It promotes flexibility and mindfulness.



Colour Hunt: Give your child a specific colour and ask them to find objects around the house that match that colour.





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OTHER INFORMATION

Items that your child will need to have in school every day:

- ✚ A water bottle
- ✚ A book bag
- ✚ Welly boots
- ✚ A coat
- ✚ A change of clothes (in case of accidents/getting messy)



Your child **WILL** get messy through the activities that they explore both inside and outside. We encourage the children to investigate various materials and activities, providing them with first hand experiences and ensuring their learning promotes risk taking, problem solving and opportunities to develop activities further using their imagination.

Please ensure that all items belonging to your child are named - either stitched in or written on.

COMMUNICATION

Communication is key to ensure your child progresses well at school. The school will send the Weston News (fortnightly), which contains important dates and information about what has been happening throughout the school.

Our class page on the school website will also contain all of the important information that you need: <https://www.weston.herts.sch.uk/donaldson-reception-nursery-mrs-nelson/>

We will continue to use the online app Dojo which connects parents and teachers in a virtual classroom hub. It will keep you updated with key vocabulary and information; in case you would like to explore a topic further at home. Dojo points will also be awarded for good behaviour which helps to support daily discussions on how to be a kind friend. Throughout the year, we will be learning about the importance of teamwork and understanding how we can work together as a class community to earn lots and lots of points!

Contact us through the school admin email if there is an emergency or you need to arrange to speak to us at the end of the day about anything, no matter how small at: admin@weston.herts.sch.uk

We look forward to the year ahead with you and your child,

Mrs Nelson, Miss Gaston, Mrs Stokes and Mrs Routledge

