



'Spurring each other on with love'

School Drive, Woolwell, Plymouth PL6 7JW

☎: 01752 301837 Email: admin@bickleighdowndevon.sch.uk

Headteacher: Mrs Tameka Hue Hamilton

Monday 21st September 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

Starting this week, we are looking forward to spending a full day with the children! They are likely to be very tired by the end of the week.

The children enjoyed staying for lunch last week. We were so impressed with how they remembered their orders, carried their plates carefully, settled at the tables and used a knife and fork. Please encourage them to do this at home as well.

Literacy

This week, we will be reading rhyming stories and thinking of rhyming strings. The children will also be talking about what they like and dislike about some of the stories they have heard. Using their increasing vocabulary to explain why.

We will also be reading, 'My Family, Your Family' by Laura Henry-Allain. The children will be encouraged to tell us about their families and who they live with and noticing that not all families are the same. Thank you for the family photos that have been sent in.

Phonics

We will be spending time playing listening games. Being able to hear sounds in the environment is the first step in being able to hear sounds in words. The children were introduced to Fred Frog last week. They really enjoyed working out what Fred was saying ie: Fred likes to s.k.i.p - skip. We call this blending. We will be continuing with this during this week's phonics sessions. The following link is for a short phonics activity that we have had a go at this week.

<http://schools.ruthmiskin.com/training/view/gwnhvJmm/bSQbmfCg>

<http://schools.ruthmiskin.com/training/view/MXnl9ORe/lVOLvm3n>

Numeracy



In maths, we will be focusing on noticing what is around us, subitising and spotting when we can see a group of 3. Young children's brains are able to instantly recognise up to 3 from a very young age. We will be playing a game called 'Three or not Three'. The children have a couple of seconds to say if what they see shows a group of 3 or not. This is a great game to play at home or when you are out and about but don't count! 3 or not 3 game - [What can you see? 3 or not 3? - True or false \(wordwall.net\)](http://www.wordwall.net)

What is subitising? The children will be asked what they



can see, what they notice and how they can see it. This isn't about counting. It's about noticing groups and patterns. Being able to subitise is a key maths skill. The following video briefly explains subitising.

[Math tips: What is subitizing? - YouTube](#)

We will also be matching, sorting and comparing items and groups of objects.

Other areas:

- In PE the children will be playing a variety of listening games. Our PE slot in on Friday. To start with the children will take off their shoes and socks rather than changing into their full PE kits, as this takes quite some time with 30 children! Please may we remind you that children are not allowed to wear earrings in PE, these will need to be removed before school. If they have earrings in they will unfortunately have to sit out of the lesson. This is for health and safety reasons.
- Writing names.
- Dough Disco - this helps to improve their fine motor control and arm muscles.
- Painting portraits.
- Talking about the importance of washing our hands.
- Making faces using a variety of loose parts. Eg: nuts, bolts, ribbon, wool, pom poms etc.

Reminders:

- Please make sure all uniform, coats and book bags are named, including shoes. There have already been a few mix-ups due to unnamed belongings.
- The children should not be bringing toys into school. They easily get lost and broken.
- Please personalise your child's book bag. A keyring or large name label really helps your child to quickly find their bag. Some of the boxes have 9 bags in!
- Earrings must be small gold or silver studs.
- Merits - These are awarded on Class Dojo. You will receive a notification when your child has been given a merit. Merits are awarded for doing their best and trying hard to achieve a target. Once your child has received 10 merits, they will get a certificate, (bronze, silver, gold and then headteacher's award). We will message you when they have reached their first and subsequent multiple of 10. We have a Key Stage Awards on a Tuesday, where certificates are presented. You can come and watch your child get their certificate. Your child can also take in their medals, trophies or certificates that they were awarded outside of school so that we can spur them on with love and celebrate their successes.
- Your child should have brought home a library book today. These are for sharing together. Please ensure that they are returned every Monday, so that they can be changed.
- The children can bring in their own fresh fruit or vegetable snack if they want. They can have this in addition to the snack provided in school.
- Please ensure that the children aren't running around by the school carpark, in the mornings and at the end of the day. The carpark is in use all day and it's not safe for them to playing on the paths near the carpark.
- All children under five years old are entitled to free school milk. This is sent into school for your child unless you have opted out. Some of the children are telling us they don't like milk or don't want it. For these children we are sending the milk home, so you are aware that they don't want it. Your child can be taken off the school milk list. Please contact the school office if you would like this to happen.



- If someone other than yourself is collecting your child, please let us know by phoning the school or messaging on class dojo. We won't let your child go with someone we haven't been told about or already know is allowed.
- The children should only have water in their drink bottles. It has been noticed that quite a few of the children have juice.
- PPA (planning, preparation and assessment time) happens on a Thursday afternoon. During this time, Mrs Vanstone and I are not in the classrooms but are working elsewhere in school. Miss Freeman and Mr Harden will be teaching RE and computing or music in class.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to come and see us!
Best Wishes from the Foundation Stage Team

Red Bears - Mrs O'Toole, Mrs Bond and Ms Whatley
Blue Bears - Mrs Vanstone and Mrs Greenslade

The Nothing Poem

When children come home
At the end of the day,
There's a question they're asked
As they're rushing to play...
"What did you do in school today?"
"Nothing! I did nothing today!"

But nothing can mean that I played with blocks,
Tied my own shoes or found beautiful rocks,
Maybe the butterflies hatched today,
Or maybe I found a new friend to play.
Maybe today was the very first time,
My scissors followed a very straight line,
Perhaps I learned a new song
And sang all the words,
Or stroked the feathers of a beautiful bird.

When you're in school and your heart has wings,
'Nothing' can mean some wonderful things!

