

White Bridge Primary School

Moving on to Year 1 - A brief guide for parents.

As the children move from Foundation stage into Year 1, they will need to adjust to a curriculum that is not play based. In the Foundation Stage, often there is no distinction between 'work' and 'play' for the children. They are able to do many activities that they choose for themselves, as well as activities that are teacher led and directed.

In Year 1 and Year 2, the curriculum gradually becomes more 'formal' with much more of the time directed by the teacher, and a steadily increasing requirement for work to be written down. The children will spend more time at a desk, although we try very hard to maintain lots of practical work too. Listening during whole class, group and individual teaching times remain very important.

In Foundation stage, children work and play for much of the day in small groups or independently. They are rarely all doing the same subject at the same time, although this will have happened more during the summer term. In Year 1 we work towards everyone working on the same subject at the same time for the majority of the time, for example if it is a maths session, everyone will be engaged in maths related work at this time.

We have a transition period at the start of year 1, when the children are gradually moved towards this—we do not expect them to work like this from day 1. This transition time will allow the children to continue to have some play time each day in class (usually in the afternoon), and gradually this will get less and less as the children get used to the different style of the day. Some children cope with this very well, and in fact are very ready for the more formal approach; others find it hard at first and will tell you that they want to play more.

The teaching is based on the requirements of the National Curriculum, but we organise this into termly topics to make links between subjects and to make it as interesting as we can for the children. Within this we identify the key elements in each subject that will be taught. We try to include practical activities as much as we can.

Optima continues for reading, and moves on as the children improve in their skills. We still ask parents to read every day with their child at home, and to sign the reading diary. Individual reading in school is organised a bit differently, with the teacher planning to read with a group of children each day so that over the course of a week each child usually reads once with the teacher. Our experienced teaching assistants also read with children individually at times. This does mean that if your child is away on the day their group is reading, they may be missed that week (by the teacher).

There will be more writing, and for some children they will find this a challenge. The demands of the new curriculum which has been in place since September 2014 are challenging, with high expectations of what pupils need to learn, and it does require much more written work than the reception children are used to. We continue to teach handwriting and letter formation as a skill. It is usual to find that children's handwriting is much better in these set

handwriting exercises than it is when they are writing independently. We hope that this will develop as they move through Year 1. Children will begin to learn formal grammar, and there is a real focus on spelling.

Maths builds on what the children can do, but much more has to be recorded.

For PE, once a week, the children will have a sports coach who takes them for an hour. They will soon get used to this, and it ensures high quality input from a specialist for this subject. Their other PE lesson will be taken by their teacher.

They will have less time outside, although we do still do some learning outdoors when this is appropriate.

In Year 1, there will be a wider range of clubs for them to choose from. For example football, gymnastics, construction, science, pyjama drama in the Autumn term only....all subject to sufficient demand. Clubs are usually popular, and are often oversubscribed. I try to ensure that over the course of the year, children will get the opportunity to do a club of their choice. As all of these clubs are led by outside providers, there are clear rules about behaviour which need to be followed, and if there is not enough demand for any particular club the provider may decide it cannot run.

Many children cope with the move to Year 1 well, and take all of the changes in their stride; a small number find it harder work at first.

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