



## Reception & Year 1 Newsletter- Summer Term 1

This half term we are very excited to begin our new topic “Reduce, Re-use, Recycle - Caring for Our World.” Through this theme, the children will explore how we can look after our planet and make thoughtful choices that help protect the environment. We will focus on the three R’s: Reduce, Reuse and Recycle, helping the children understand simple ways they can care for the world around them both at school and at home.

### Science

In Science we will be learning about Uses of Everyday Materials, linking our learning to how we can reduce waste and make better choices for our planet. The children will explore a variety of materials and think about how they are used in everyday life. They will:

- Identify and name a range of materials, including wood, metal, plastic, glass, brick, rock, paper and cardboard.
- Understand that everyday materials are chosen for particular purposes.
- Discuss why some materials are better suited to certain jobs, for example why houses are often made from bricks because they are strong and durable.
- Explore how materials have different properties, which make them useful for different things.
- Carry out simple investigations to test materials and think about which materials are best for different uses.

As part of our topic, we will also explore how understanding materials helps us reduce, reuse and recycle. For example, we will explore single use plastics and discuss how we could reduce waste, such as by using reusable containers instead. This will help children make connections between their science learning and everyday choices that help protect our environment.

We will also create a “Reuse Invention Station”, where children will use recycled materials to imagine and design new objects. For example, a plastic bottle might become a watering can, a cardboard box could turn into a storage container, or a jar might be reused as a pencil holder. This encourages children to think creatively about how objects can have a second life instead of being thrown away.



As part of our science learning on materials, we will carry out an experiment to see which material is best for making a bag. The children will test different materials for strength, flexibility and durability. This will lead us onto researching the project 'Morsbags'- an amazing environmental project created by one of our very own Hindon parents!

Morsbags are free, handmade, reusable shopping bags created from upcycled, unwanted textiles such as old curtains or sheets. The project is run by a non-profit organisation with the aim of reducing plastic bag pollution.

Founded in 2007 by Claire and Joe Morsman, these bags are made by "pods", which are volunteer groups, and are often given away in a "guerrilla" fashion to encourage people to adopt sustainable shopping habits. The purpose of Morsbags is simple but powerful: to replace single-use plastic bags with durable, sustainable, and free handmade alternatives.

As part of our learning this term, we will be making our own Morsbags! This will give the children a hands-on experience of reusing materials to create something useful, while also seeing how science and creativity can come together to help the environment.

### **Design & Technology**

One of our most exciting projects this term will be our "Trashion Show!" Throughout the year, the Robins class have been fascinated by designing their own outfits using the fabrics and materials in our role play area. They have loved experimenting with different combinations, textures and styles, so we thought this topic would be a wonderful way to capture and extend their interests.

The children will design and create clothing using recycled materials such as paper, cardboard, fabric scraps and packaging. They will explore the design process by:

- Designing their own outfit
- Selecting suitable recycled materials
- Creating and evaluating their designs

We will take inspiration from the famous fashion designer Vivienne Westwood. In her later years, her work became closely linked with sustainability and protecting the planet. She encouraged people to buy less, choose well and make things last. Vivienne Westwood was also known for her creative and unconventional designs, often featuring deconstructed tailoring, bold shapes and unusual combinations of fabrics and materials. Her work showed that fashion can be imaginative while also raising awareness about environmental issues. The children will explore how designers can reuse and transform materials to create something entirely new.



## **PSHE - Being My Best**

Our PSHE focus this half term is "Being My Best." We will be learning about how to keep our bodies and minds healthy.

- **Healthy Eating**

Recognising that people may have different tastes in food.

Selecting foods from the Eatwell Guide to make a healthy lunch.

Understanding which foods we should eat more of and which we should eat less of to stay healthy.

- **Staying Healthy**

Learning how illnesses and diseases can spread.

Using simple strategies such as "Catch it, Bin it, Kill it" to help stop the spread of germs.

- **Dental Hygiene**

Understanding why looking after our teeth is important.

Learning simple routines for keeping our teeth clean and healthy.

- **Healthy Minds**

We will also talk about ways to keep our minds healthy, including sharing our feelings, staying active and showing kindness to ourselves and others.

- **Growth Mindset and Learning**

We will explore the idea of having a growth mindset, helping children understand that:

Learning something new takes practice and perseverance.

It is okay to make mistakes because mistakes help us learn.

Challenges help our brains grow stronger.

## **English & Phonics**

Our Year 1 children are beginning to prepare for the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check on June 8th. This is a short word-reading check that helps us see how secure each child is with their phonics knowledge. The check allows teachers to understand where each child is in their phonics journey so we can continue to support their reading development as they move into Year 2.

Our Reception children will be moving on to Phase 4 phonics (Green phonics). In this phase, children learn to read and write words containing consonant blends, where two or three consonants sit next to each other in a word. These blends can make words slightly more challenging to read and write. Examples of these words include slug, tent and pond.

Alongside our phonics learning, the children will also be developing their story telling. This term, all of the Robins will be writing longer pieces using our much-loved Drawing Club approach in our English lessons.

We call it Drawing Club because we want to bring excitement, creativity and imagination into our English lessons. In Drawing Club, we value the children's drawings just as much as their writing, as drawing helps children to visualise their ideas and build their stories. The children know that whatever they draw goes through our magic portal and comes to life in Story Land- a magical place where all of our stories exist!

Now, as we get nearer to the end of the year, each week we follow a clear structure in Drawing Club to help children build their own stories:

Monday - Character: exploring who the story is about  
Tuesday - Setting: describing where the story takes place  
Thursday - Plot: thinking about what happens in the story  
Friday - Fix-it Friday: fixing the plot!

This simple structure helps children confidently create their very own stories over the week. Each week we use a focus story to inspire our ideas. Our first story will be "The Messy Magpie," which links beautifully to our topic on recycling. In this story, the main character is a magpie called Morris. The children will use Morris as inspiration for their own stories, imagining new settings, adventures and story plots for him.

At this stage, the Reception children write what we call "codes." These are short phonics sentences that are carefully matched to their reading and writing level. The children write these codes as the magic key that brings their drawings to life in Story Land. For example, a code might be "A cat is on a mat." or "A frog is in a pond." Interestingly, the sentence does not always relate directly to the drawing they have created- the magic portal makes the story come alive in surprising ways! Our Year 1 children take this a little further. They still write their codes, but their codes begin to develop into full story sentences, helping them build the actual narrative of their story. This supports them in becoming more confident writers while still keeping the sense of creativity and magic that makes Drawing Club so engaging.

We are very excited to see the wonderful creativity that comes from the children's storytelling this term and cannot wait to read the fantastic stories the Robins create!

We are really looking forward to an exciting half term filled with creativity, curiosity and learning about how we can all help care for our world, and what a perfect time to explore this topic, as on 22nd April, it is Earth Day! The Robins will celebrate by thinking about how we can reduce, reuse, and recycle in our daily lives, putting all of our learning into action to make a difference for our planet.

Best of wishes, Miss Gill

