

Great Chesterford C E Primary Academy
Class 1 Newsletter
Autumn Term 2026

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to Class One, I am delighted to be teaching your child this year, and I look forward to building strong relationships with them. I appreciate that you and your child may be experiencing a range of emotions regarding the start of a new academic year so please do not hesitate to contact me if you feel some additional support is required.

Our topic this term is 'Toys' which I am sure will be popular amongst the children, especially when they are introduced to 'The Everywhere Bear' (Julia Donaldson). Some curriculum subjects will be taught through this theme and we hope to have lots of creative fun whilst the children continue their academic journey. The subjects covered in the theme are in line with the Primary National Curriculum and can be seen in the accompanying topic web. If any parents, carers, or grandparents can help to enrich our topic in any way e.g. participating in a class visit to show us some childhood toys or providing photographs and information about toys from the past we would be most grateful.

Staffing and support in Class One

I will be teaching Class One every day, except on Tuesday morning when Miss Walker will teach the class. Mrs Mosley and Mrs Hinds are the teaching assistants working in Year One this year.

P.E/Active learning/Learning outside

P.E. lessons will usually take place on **Wednesday and Thursday** this term so children should come to school in their P.E. kit on these days. For safety reasons, jewellery and watches/fitbits should not be worn. In line with Essex Health and Safety guidelines, earrings must be removed. If a child is unable to remove their earrings, we must have your written consent that school is not liable for any incidents relating to wearing this item of jewellery. Should your child be unable to take part in P.E. due to injury, please inform me in writing. Navy blue skins or tracksuit bottoms may be worn as required during colder weeks. However, no hooded tops can be worn. When PE is taught inside, children should wear clean trainers, plimsols or bare feet.

Class One will aim to visit the school nature space every Monday and will need appropriate clothing for the changing seasons. Please send your child's nature space clothes (Wellingtons, waterproof trousers/splash suit) into school every Monday morning in a named bag, which will be returned each Tuesday afternoon. You may want to keep their nature space clothing in school. In colder weather you may wish to provide an additional layer of clothing including warm socks and gloves.

Phonics and Reading

All children will continue to read aloud a carefully chosen phonically decodable text in school **3x per week**. As a celebration of the progress made each week, children will bring home the book that they have been reading in class to share with family over the weekend. We hope that you enjoy the opportunity to hear your child read aloud fluently on a weekly basis. **It is essential that this book is returned on Monday morning so that phonics teaching can continue.**

In addition to the phonically decodable book, on **Monday mornings** children will be encouraged to choose a book from the class library to take home and enjoy throughout the week. This book will not be matched to your child's reading level, or the phonics taught in class. The purpose of this book is to foster a love of reading and develop vocabulary. **Class library books should be returned and swapped every Monday morning.** Please feel free to comment on your child's engagement with reading in their home school link book.

Homework

Children in Year One are expected to complete 15 – 20 minutes of homework each week. In order to facilitate this your child will be given a homework book to structure their learning and create a record of tasks

completed. You will be given a menu of activities to be completed over the half-term. The activities have been designed to help your child to secure the required knowledge for this stage of their education. Homework books will not always be formally marked but will be checked by teachers/teaching assistants on a weekly basis. I hope that you will enjoy this approach to homework throughout Year One.

In addition to the homework activities, the children will have their tricky words and GPCs (Grapheme-Phoneme Correspondences) stuck into their homework book. Please practise these regularly at home on a weekly basis to help your child develop confidence and fluency with their phonics.

Organisation

I would like to remind you that all children must have a full water bottle in school every day; bottles will be topped up as appropriate during the day. I will continue to prompt children to drink regularly throughout the day, but it is great to see them becoming more independent with this and choosing to take regular hydration breaks. A fruit snack is provided each day, but the children may bring a fruit snack or crackers/breadsticks to eat at playtime; please remember that snacks must be nut and sesame free. Please ensure all clothing and personal items are named as we encourage children to take responsibility for their own belongings, and it is much easier for them to keep track of their clothes if they are clearly named. Bookbags are preferable to rucksacks as they fit neatly into the children's trays and can be accessed easily throughout the day. Please ensure your child has a spare pair of underwear in their bookbags in case of any accidents.

What do I need to remember each week?

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
AM: Homework Books / Orange Book to be returned to school. AM: Bring Nature Space clothes in a named bag. Return phonically decodable text. Swap classroom library book. PM: Homework Books / Orange Books will be handed out. PM: Nature Space clothes will be returned		PE Kit	PE Kit Children to bring home phonically decodable book to share and celebrate.	
Everyday: Water bottle, bookbag (no backpacks please), raincoat/sunhat, clean pair of pants.				

Class Collective Worship and Key Dates:

Our Class Collective Worship: Friday 25th September at 9:10am. Parents for Year 1 children are invited to attend this in the school hall.

Further dates will be published on the school website and fortnightly newsletters.

Kind regards,
Miss F Thorburn