

## Amberley Parochial School

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**Head Teacher:** Miss S Cale



*becoming*

*reflective, independent and aspirational learners for life*

Dear parents and carers,

### Welcome to Amberley!

We are so pleased to be able to welcome you to the start of your child's journey at Amberley Primary School and look forward to getting to know you all.

Understandably, you may have some concerns over your child starting school during these unprecedented times. Please be assured that your children's wellbeing and safety is of the utmost importance to us all, and we have strategies in place to help them settle quickly, whilst maintaining vigilance in preventing the spread of Covid-19.

During the first few weeks of term, your children will get to know the routines and expectations for school and will take part in a wide variety of activities which will allow us to get to know them better. You may find that they are tired when they return home, even when they begin with half days. This is perfectly normal as they will have a lot of new information to process. We will record their participation and eventually their progress using an online learning journey, called Tapestry. This system will allow us to update you regularly, and will also provide the opportunity for you to upload photos and comments about what your children have been doing outside of school. Details about Tapestry will be sent home in due course.

### Water bottles and snacks

Children will need a named water bottle in the classroom at all times, and they will be encouraged to drink regularly. It is important that these come home to be washed thoroughly and refilled ready for the next day, in order to reduce the potential for the spread of germs. Until they are 5 years old, children are entitled to free milk each day, through the Cool Milk scheme. Once they are 5 years old, milk can be ordered through the school office. Children are provided with a fresh fruit snack each day, though are welcome to bring their own if they would prefer. Please ensure that snacks are in the form of fresh fruit or vegetables, in order to help us promote healthy balanced diets.

### PE kits and protective clothing

Each week, after the first half term, the children in Dexter class have a PE lesson, led by a PE specialist from Atlas sports. Shorts, t-shirts and hoodies can be bought through the school office for £10, or you are welcome to purchase your own black/burgundy shorts, house colour t-shirt and suitable hoodie/jumper. Children will need to bring a pair of plain tracksuit bottoms for colder weather, suitable footwear and a bag to keep their clothes in. These will remain in school.

We spend a good proportion of the day using our outdoor space and getting creative. Children will need to bring in a pair of wellies (which we will ask you to leave in school) and an art apron to protect their clothes. Once they are in full time, we will go on a weekly 'welly walk' on which children learn about the natural

world and take part in a variety of activities, including whittling, den building and natural weaving. For these walks, the children will need to have a pair of waterproof trousers which they can wear over their uniform, and a suitable waterproof coat. Children will be encouraged to wear their waterproofs when playing with water in the outdoor area too, so we would be grateful if these could also stay in school.

#### Phonics pots

As the children learn new sounds, we will send home a small pot containing letter cards which can be rearranged into short words. Additional sounds will be added each Friday. We would be grateful if you could find time to sit with your child to revise these sounds each day, in order to develop familiarity and recognition. We will send home supporting materials to ensure that you are confident in complimenting what the children have learned at school. If you would like further information before then, please visit our class webpage.

#### Reading books

Once the children have reached an appropriate point in their phonics learning, we will send home reading books. These will be carefully selected based on the sounds that children have been taught and children will be encouraged to re-visit texts and words by re-reading books, in order to help them to become more fluent readers. Reading fluency is the ability to read with speed, accuracy and expression, and better fluency leads to confidence and a better understanding. In line with our Reading Policy, we will therefore send home 3 books on a Monday and 3 books on a Friday. We will then listen to each child read to ensure that they are reading with fluency before changing their books accordingly. Please encourage your children to read these books several times and help us to reinforce that racing through the reading scheme will not benefit their reading skills. It is not about achieving the highest level on the book band, but is about fluency and understanding within the level that is appropriate for them. Children are expected to bring their reading books into school every day, along with their reading record. We would be grateful if you could record your children's daily reading in the record book, noting any words or sounds which they have struggled with and any particular successes.

We are aware that there is always a great deal of information given at the start of a school year. Please don't hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions, or visit the school website which contains a wealth of information and is updated regularly. We have our own class page, to which we will add copies of letters, useful resources and a weekly update on the children's time at school. If you subscribe to the school blog, you will receive notifications of new posts (these will not be limited to Dexter class!) Our school newsletter, The Pink Letter is emailed out every Friday. If you do not receive a copy, please contact Mrs Russell to check that we have the correct email address on file.

<https://www.amberleyschool.co.uk/dexters>

Thank you for your support. We look forward to catching up with you all over the next few weeks.  
Kind regards,

Mrs K Crampton, Mrs S Penn and the Reception team.