

5th January 2026

Dear Parents,

It's hard to believe we have started the Spring term when it is so very cold, but we are thrilled to welcome your children back to school and look forward to all this new term has in store for them.

Here are a few things you may find helpful:

Water Bottles

Thank you for sending your children to school with their water bottles freshly filled each day. We encourage them to drink often and respond very well to being awarded water drinking star stickers from time to time! We do also refill bottles during day if they are empty.

Book Bags

The children are reading well and are listened to by us at school. Please remember to pop their phonics book in their book bag each day. 2026 is National Year of Reading and there are some linked activity dates below.

Milk and Snack/Lunch

Children in Reception have a daily snack of milk and fruit/veg which we eat and drink sat down together. (Milk is charged at 25p a day once a child turns 5 if you wish them to continue). Every Thursday they are still offered crackers with unsalted butter and they are all independently spreading them (sure they'd love to show you at home). We arrange the tables to ensure an adult faces them as they eat and drink. Snack time is a wonderful time for talking together (when they've chewed and swallowed)! If they stay for Wrap Around @ St Peter's (WASP) they can bring a snack in a labelled pot/bag in their book bag.

Please be aware **we do not allow nuts** in school and snacks need to be healthy. Any grapes/cherry tomatoes or similar sized items for WASP snack or packed lunches need to be halved/quartered to reduce choking risk please.

PE

As a reminder, as part of the Early Years curriculum, children in Reception have regular opportunities for physical development through continuous provision in both gross motor skills such as balancing, running, jumping, throwing, catching and fine motor skills such as pencil control, threading, cutting and drawing.

The children enjoy their PE lesson on a Friday morning. Please check that their PE bags include shorts/tracksuit bottoms and t-shirts and that everything is named. They won't need trainers until the summer term, when lessons will be outside.

Teaching days

Mrs Williams teaches Cygnus class on Mondays to Wednesdays and Mrs Smith teaches on Thursdays and Fridays. Mrs Rabbich and Mrs Offord are the Teaching Assistants in Cygnus class.

Home Learning

Thank you for sending in photos/work for our 'word of the week' linked to our learning in class. Our 'word of the week' pictures are still shared with the children so they have an opportunity to discuss them at school. We are currently reviewing how we use Evidence me. Please do add to it if you want to.

Clothing

If unsure, please check your child's wellies still fit them and if possible, leave them labelled at school. We will post on Homeroom when we plan to take the children on walks and for Outdoor Explorer sessions. Please do provide extra layers/warmer socks and waterproofs in a plastic bag for these experiences.

Jumpers and cardigans are taken off and put on several times a day and are easily misplaced when not easily identified. **Please** check clothes are labelled. Learning in reception is also sometimes messy and the children sometimes have toileting accidents. A change of clothes in a separate, named carrier bag would be useful (thank you so much to those who already provide these). We are very happy to support your children with toileting and will remind children to go as often as we can. They are still very young and independently doing this can still be tricky. Encouraging independence as much as possible at home really helps them – thank you!

Homeroom

Please do not share any pictures or information from this private platform more widely. Only staff and parents of this class can access it.

Dropping off your children

Unless your child is particularly unsettled, please encourage them to enter school independently this term.

Toys from home

To prevent loss or damage and unnecessary distraction, we kindly ask parents to ensure that children leave personal toys at home unless we request, they bring them in.

Dates

Jan 22nd – Outdoor Explorers (date may change if weather is poor)

Jan 28th-30th Book Fair Families can browse and buy a range of new books and stories

Jan 28th – Books at Bedtime 5-5.45pm – for families

Cygnus and Tucana families are invited to school in pyjamas and with teddies to enjoy a hot chocolate and share a book together.

Feb 11th - Cygnus trip to 'The Story Museum'

Feb 13th - Cygnus class assembly – Families arrive at 2.30pm for a 2.40pm start in hall. Cygnus class share some of their learning with everyone.

Mar 4th – Mini Grey Author visiting – signed books available to buy

Mar 5th – World Book Day – Pupils are invited to dress up as a favourite book character. This can be as simple or elaborate as you choose as long as safe and practical for school. It is optional. Parents are encouraged to explore the book with their child. Try and focus on books – not films/TV – even though they overlap a lot!

Please let us know if you have any questions. We can be contacted during working hours at cygnushomework@stpeters.oxon.sch.uk. However, any urgent queries should be directed to the school office.

Many thanks,

Grace Williams and Anna Smith