



## OLD TOWN INFANT SCHOOL & NURSERY

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Headteacher: Mr Douglas Gubbins BA (Hons), PGCE, NPQH



8<sup>th</sup> September 2025

### Happy New (School) Year

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back to Old Town! I hope that everyone was able to have a restful summer and recharge their batteries? This year the weather was significantly better than usual, so I hope that you were able to enjoy lots of the sunshine that we had.

#### Welcome to the team

This year we welcome a number of staff to our Old Town team. In terms of our teaching team, we welcome Mrs Saunders as one of our Sea Turtles Class Teachers and Ms Green joins us as our Octopus Class Teacher. Ms Green will lead the Octopus class until Miss Williams and Mrs Crossland return from maternity leave later in the year. We also welcome Mrs Brunton back to the Senior Leadership Team in the post of Assistant Headteacher.

In addition to this, we welcome two new support staff to the Teaching Assistant team: Mr Burton joins our Year 2 team, with Miss Johnson joining the Year 1 team. We also welcome Mrs Spychala to our MDSA team. I am sure after a few weeks they will feel settled in to their new roles and I have no doubt that everyone will make them feel most welcome.

*We currently have vacancies on both our Midday Supervisor team and our cleaning team. Please look out for job adverts as they arise over the coming weeks.*

#### Getting to know you

This year, we continue to develop our communication routes and our 'Getting To Know You' meetings are back for all year groups (including Nursery). These meetings will take place on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> or Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> September 2025.

These 'Getting to know you' sessions will run in a similar format to parents evenings with the core purpose of building a relationship with your child's teacher much sooner than in past years. 'Getting to Know You' sessions will allow for you to put a face to the name and also have an informal chat about how your child has settled into their new class/year group. These meetings will also provide you with the opportunity to share any relevant information that you feel necessary with the teacher e.g. different people who may collect from school.

Whilst 'Getting To Know You' sessions are not compulsory, I would urge you to sign-up/attend if you can. Sign-up sheets will be available at classroom doors in the playground from Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> September.

If you are unable to attend, please remember that class email addresses continue to offer non-urgent access to class teachers:

[Starfish@coastalpartnership.co.uk](mailto:Starfish@coastalpartnership.co.uk) For Mrs Cameron and Mrs Butcher in the Nursery

[Angelfish@coastalpartnership.co.uk](mailto:Angelfish@coastalpartnership.co.uk) For Mrs Chase in the Angelfish class

[Seahorses@coastalpartnership.co.uk](mailto:Seahorses@coastalpartnership.co.uk) For Miss Davies in the Seahorses class

[Jellyfish@coastalpartnership.co.uk](mailto:Jellyfish@coastalpartnership.co.uk) For Mrs Clarkson and Mrs Smith in the Jellyfish class

[Stingrays@coastalpartnership.co.uk](mailto:Stingrays@coastalpartnership.co.uk) For Miss Burchell in the Stingray class

[Octopus@coastalpartnership.co.uk](mailto:Octopus@coastalpartnership.co.uk) For Ms Green, Mrs Crossland and Miss Williams in the Octopus class

[Seaturtles@coastalpartnership.co.uk](mailto:Seaturtles@coastalpartnership.co.uk) For Mrs Evans and Mrs Saunders in the Sea Turtles class.

*Class staff will endeavour to get back to you as soon as possible and certainly within 48 hours.*

### P.E days

As you are probably already aware, here at Old Town children attend school in their P.E kit on the days in which P.E is taught.

- Reception will have their P.E lessons on Wednesdays and Fridays.
- Year 1 will have their P.E lessons on Tuesdays and Fridays
- Year 2 will have their P.E lessons on Wednesdays and Thursdays

### Home learning

Over recent years we have done a considerable amount of work on home learning. Lots of feedback indicated that parents found home learning stressful and not an enjoyable experience. Having reflected on this feedback and discussed this with both staff and the PFG, we decided to give home learning a refresh. As you already know, reading is VERY important to us here at Old Town. We want to make sure that all of our children develop a love for reading and have lots of time and support to become the best readers that they can be. Therefore, following on from last year, weekly home learning will consist of a compulsory three reads at home. Mrs Brunton has worked hard to create a 'Home Reading at Old Town' diary, completely bespoke to our school. This work was reviewed by the PFG.

Our new diary includes:

- A rationale for Old Town's love of reading
- Reading expectations
- Phonics
- Progression through book bands (including set phonics books)
- Tricky and Common Exception Words for Reception, Y1 and Y2
- Top tips for reading together
- Questions to ask your child when reading (to develop comprehension)
- A detailed guide for how to use the reading diary
- How we reward reading/the procedure we will follow if children are not read with at home

Each week has been clearly dated to make the tracking of reading easier and I hope, like the rest of us, you find this new tool useful. Please remember that a 'read' does not have to be the whole book, it could just be an extract or a few pages.

In addition to the three reads, we will also be setting an optional home learning task (for Year 1 and Year 2 children) on our Purple Mash learning platform (accessible via a computer, tablet or smartphone). We know how much children love their computing lessons, so are hoping that by selecting specific tasks, games, or activities on Purple Mash each week, they will be enthused and excited to complete the home learning tasks. Purple Mash can be accessed via the curriculum page (computing) of our school website. Children's login details will be sent home over the next week.

### Clubs

Here at Old Town, in addition to our wraparound care (breakfast and after school provision), we continue to look at our extra curricular offer in terms of clubs. Over the course of the year we try to offer a range of different activities to the children – some during the school day (at lunchtime) and some after school.

Our club offer starts next week (commencing 15<sup>th</sup> September) and bookings can be made via Arbor (for school run clubs) or through Premier Education for provider run clubs

This year we are introducing a new drama club led by Miss Burchell and one of our parents who has a background in Performing Arts. This new club will initially run on a weekly basis and will give children the opportunity to develop their acting, dance and singing skills.

Club	Year groups	Day	Time	Cost	How to book
Drama	Year 1-2	Monday	1515-1615	£2.00 per session	School via Arbor
Football	Year 1-2	Tuesday	1515-1615	£6.00 per session	School via Arbor
Archery	Years R-2	Wednesday	1515-1615	£4.00 per session	Premier Education. See attached flyer
Hockey	Years R-2	Thursday	1515-1615	£4.00 per session	Premier Education. See attached flyer

*Places are limited at each club so please book asap. **Booking for clubs opens on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> September at 0900***

### Weekly updates

I am aware from previous Parent Focus Group feedback that our traditional school newsletter was felt to be overwhelming. It was far too colourful, not reader-friendly and, as a result, was only being skimmed through- meaning important information was sometimes missed. It was felt that this should be a document for parents and not children. Parents wanted something that was short, sharp and easy to read. Taking this on board, I plan to continue to send out a weekly bulletin on a Friday, containing important dates for the following week and any

important headlines that you need to know. Our PFG continues to welcome new membership. This is a group that meets with me on a half termly basis and we discuss 'all things school' from a parents perspective. If this is something you would like to be part of, please email the group directly on: [oldtownpfg@coastalpartnership.co.uk](mailto:oldtownpfg@coastalpartnership.co.uk)

### Key dates

- Whole School 'Getting to Know You' sessions: Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> September 2025
- Half Term: Monday 27<sup>th</sup> October to Friday 31<sup>st</sup> October 2025.
- Parents Evenings: Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> November 2025
- Reception Nativity: Monday 15<sup>th</sup> December 2025, 0915am
- Year 1 and 2, 'An Old Town Christmas' at St James' Church: Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> December 2025
- Trip to Lighthouse Pantomime: Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> December 2025
- Visit from Santa: Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2025
- End of Term at 1315: Friday 19<sup>th</sup> December 2025
- Health Week: Week commencing 14<sup>th</sup> April 2026
- Sports Day: Friday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2026: Nursery and Reception (am), Year 1 and 2 (pm)
- Old Town Community Picnic: Friday 1<sup>st</sup> May 2026, 1200-1400

As always, we have lots of exciting things on the horizon for this academic year. More information and key dates will follow in due course.

Best wishes,

*Doug*

Doug Gubbins  
Headteacher