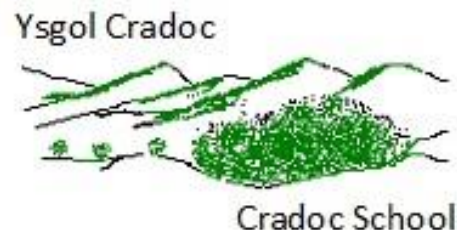


Cradoc School General Information for Parents



Welcome back to a new school year. We hope you have had a lovely break and we are all looking forward to the new term.

At Cradoc we believe that children are always most successful when they know that parents and teachers are working together in partnership for their interest. So, we hope that the following information will be useful. Each term, each class will also receive a "Key Information Sheet" setting out specific information for the coming term, along with a topic web, detailing what the children will be learning about (more information later).

It is not exhaustive, but we hope it answers most of your questions but do feel free to speak to us if you have any queries. In the meantime, if there is anything you think we need to know about your child, for example a physical or medical need, that they are vegetarian, left-handed or have had some form of family upset recently to name but a few, please do speak to the class teacher about this. We appreciate that this may be difficult but it really does help us to understand and help your child. Anything we are told will of course be in confidence.

The office staff can take messages or provide copies of recent letters and forms. However, if you need to talk to the teacher, the office staff will be happy to arrange an appointment for you. After school is usually better than mornings, but obviously there are times when the matter is urgent or can only be dealt with that morning.

We understand that changing classes/teacher can be a difficult adjustment for some children. Most children, despite their anxieties, settle in quickly and thoroughly enjoy the challenges presented. The quicker your child can become independent, the happier they will be. An independent child feels more comfortable in a different setting and will make the most out of opportunities presented to them. These are some of the things you can do to promote independence and confidence:

- Give your child some responsibility, however small, and expect him or her to accept this responsibility. For example, packing their own school bag or lunch box; giving you letters/messages from school.
- Help your child to become a better time manager, for example, by expecting them to carry out your instructions immediately and to complete tasks asked of them. This could include laying the table, feeding pets, watering plants, tidying up.
- Help your child to look after their own things at home, which will help them with their personal organisation at school.
- Give plenty of praise - sometimes apparently small achievements have taken a lot of effort.
- Let your child do as much as possible for themselves, even if it is painful to watch and frustrating to wait! They do get quicker.

Children are expected to enter and leave the school building independently, dealing with all of their belongings personally, rather than relying on a parent to help them. On wet mornings, please can you bring your child to the school foyer between 9.05 and 9.15am, but leave them to enter the hall independently, as the number of adults in the hall is causing congestion and overwhelming and upsetting some of the youngest children.

WHAT WILL MY CHILD BE LEARNING?

Learning happens not only in lessons, but also through a wide range of activities and includes the 'hidden curriculum' or what the pupils learn from the way they are treated and the way they are expected to behave. We embrace the approach of 'Growth Mindset' encouraging children to have high expectations of themselves and each other and to develop a culture of improvement and learning from mistakes. We provide children with strategies to help them to persevere and challenge themselves and work with increasing independence and resilience.

When planning learning experiences, we consider the contribution of both subject based learning and the knowledge, skills and dispositions that will help children to meet the needs of today and the challenges of tomorrow. We aim to promote coherence and encourage children to make connections across different aspects of their learning and to apply what they have learned in unfamiliar or different contexts.

At the heart of this curriculum are our four core purposes. We want all of the children at Cradoc to be:

- Ambitious capable learners who are ready to learn throughout their lives
- Enterprising, creative contributors who are ready to play a full part in life and work
- Ethical, informed citizens who are ready to be citizens of Wales and the World
- Healthy, confident individuals who are ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society.

To develop these we combine knowledge, skills and understanding from six Areas of Learning and Experience, to create different learning experiences for the children. These six areas are:



Inc Art, music, drama



Inc PE, Personal Social and Health Education



Inc Geography, History, Religious Education & Business Studies



Inc English and Welsh



Inc Maths, problem solving



Inc Science, Design Technology, ICT

With this in mind, staff work together as a staff team to create whole school or key stage topics and at the beginning of each term we will send home a "Topic Web", which outlines what we have planned for the children to learn about for the term. However, it is very clear that children learn best when they have decided what they want to learn for themselves. For this reason, we encourage children to give ideas about what they want to learn and make suggestions. Where possible and appropriate the class teacher will then adapt the learning experiences with these ideas in mind. Consequently, the topic webs we send out at the start of the term may change as the children suggest new ideas or as events happen in the world that we wish to react to.

HOW TO HELP YOUR CHILD WITH THEIR LEARNING

- Encourage your child but please do not put them under pressure. Each child is an individual and all have different strengths and areas for development.
- Allow them the freedom to develop their independence, with a responsible attitude.
- Encourage them to ask the teacher if they are unsure about anything.
- Help your child with their homework. Read with them read every day. Support them when they practise their spellings and write.
- Research shows that rest, sleep and a good breakfast significantly improve children's learning, health and well-being.

WALTS and WILFS:

Your child may periodically refer to the WALT or the WILF! In class we explain the learning objectives for the lesson in child-speak by referring to **We Are Learning To** and **What I'm Looking For**. This is our main focus for teaching and marking that piece of work. In all of their writing, children will also be encouraged to consider their own individual next steps for learning.

WHAT DOES MY CHILD NEED TO HAVE IN SCHOOL?

The following need to come in and stay in school please:

- Slippers or Croc style shoes
- Wellies
- PE Kit (see information in Physical Education below).

Daily

- drink, in a refillable container
- snack for playtime (please see later)
- waterproof and warm coat
- book-bag or rucksack (not both please due to limited storage space)

ENGLISH AND LITERACY

In education there is an important difference between "English" lessons and "Literacy". English lessons are where we teach the children new aspects of speaking, listening, phonics, reading, writing (including different types of text, grammar and punctuation), spelling and handwriting. Literacy is where we help the child to use skills learned in their English lessons in other situations. For example, a child might learn about how to lay out a letter in English lessons and then write a letter in a bottle in their pirate topic,

which would be Literacy reinforcement. Please look at the school website for a copy of the English Learning Objectives which we will be covering this year.

At Cradoc we provide English lesson of about four to five hours per week. This may well be split into different sections across the day, for example 20 minutes reading, 15 minutes phonic work etc or may be in larger blocks to help the children become more focussed.

Reading

Reading is taught through shared (whole class), guided (small group) sessions and individual reading. Guided reading is when the adult will hear each of the children read a group text. There will be a particular focus eg, comprehension, punctuation, expression, etc depending on the text chosen. And, of course, they are being taught to read in many other activities.

It is important to develop a regular habit of reading at home on a **daily** basis, sometimes independently and sometimes with you and this forms part of their homework. The ability to “comprehend” and interpret the story is as important as the ability to read the individual words. Please use the reading record/diary provided to make comments. Time spent sharing books with your child is very valuable. It will also help if your child is a member of a local library and if you encourage regular visits.

HOW PARENTS CAN HELP WITH READING

Hints for making reading together an enjoyable experience:

- Most importantly, encourage your child to concentrate on the **meaning** of what they are reading.
- Choose a time when you can be **relaxed** and give your **undivided attention**.
- **Praise** what your child can do - build confidence at every opportunity.
- Make it **enjoyable** for both of you - enjoy the book, it's not just about getting the word right. Even if you think the text is too easy, talk about the story line or characters or find words with letter patterns in them.
- Use **funny voices** to add interest and expression, where appropriate.
- Choose a time in the day when your child is **receptive**. Then build into the routine so it is a regular habit.
- Remember, this does not have to be reading your child's reading book - they could read magazines, letters, joke books, invitations, instructions for games and models, reading related to computer games, reference books, library books ...
- Once your child is a confident, fluent reader they still need to read aloud to help them **develop expression** and **use punctuation** correctly. They will benefit from talking about the book - forming opinions, summarising, guessing what might happen next. They also need to be encouraged to read different kinds of texts.

For more information about learning to read, please see our booklet “Helping your Child to Read”.

Writing

When we are teaching writing, the children will be focusing on a text genre for a period of time, often several weeks. We often choose a text that is linked to our topic work to highlight a “WAGOLL” (**W**hat **A** **G**ood **O**ne **L**ooks **L**ike). Focussed teaching will include considering the type of text it is (fiction, non-fiction, poetry), the genre (myth, traditional tale, sci-fi, recount, instructions, haiku etc). The children then learn about the features and language specific to that genre (eg imperative or ‘bossy’ verbs in recipes). We will also look at aspects of grammar, punctuation and spelling, building on their phonics work. We often use drama or role-play to encourage children to formulate and develop their ideas before expecting them to write their own version.

Handwriting and Presentation:

At Cradoc we believe that good handwriting and neat presentation raises self-esteem and enables children to communicate clearly. Children are encouraged to keep their work and their books neat and well presented. For example, children are taught to use a ruler for underlining and are not permitted to ‘doodle’ on the cover or pages of their books etc.

HOW PARENTS CAN HELP WITH WRITING

When writing at home, please help to reinforce our work at school by ensuring:

- your child has the **correct posture** with children sitting comfortably with feet flat on the floor with body upright but tilted slightly forward on a chair suited to the height of the table.
- the **paper position** is adjusted to suit right or left-handers, that is, find the writing position which is the most comfortable.
- your child has **good light** in order to see what they are writing without eye strain.
- your child uses the **correct pen grip** which is firm but relaxed. The writing implement should be held between the thumb and the first finger, resting against the middle finger.
- your child uses the **correct letter formation** at all times

For more information, please see the school booklet “Helping My Child with Handwriting and Presentation”.

Spelling

There is an important link in using the movements of handwriting to support spelling, through the revision of common letter patterns and we believe that good spelling is a fundamental part of a child's development. During their lessons, children are given the opportunity to look for patterns in the spelling of words and to invent rules and sayings to help them to learn to spell. Some information about Spelling Patterns and Rule Reminders are in the appendix.

In KS2, each week the children will have a lesson relating to a particular sound or spelling pattern, and then they need to find a stated number of words that fit in with that pattern, putting some of these words into sentences in their homework book. The children will then have a spelling test where words that comply with that pattern will be chosen. The children will not be given notice before or have words to learn. In this way we are providing them with the ability to apply their knowledge and skills to everyday life and become more independent.

HOW PARENTS CAN HELP WITH SPELLING

Hints for making learning spelling an enjoyable experience:

We suggest children learn their spellings using the '**Look, Say, Cover, Write, Check**' method. This encourages your child to 'see' and 'hear' the word, and to see for himself if he spelt it right.

- Look at a spelling word. Which parts of the word do I know already?
- Say the spelling word
- Cover the spelling word.
- Visualise the covered word.
- Write the word from memory.
- Check what has been written with the uncovered word and identify the error if there is one.

We will also sometimes send home games to play with your child to encourage them to learn their spellings. Please make them fun and enjoyable rather than a chore.

Accept that there will be mistakes in tests, and just look for consistency and improvement. We encourage the children to identify misspellings in their own writing and learn to spell them.

MATHEMATICS AND NUMERACY

As with English and Literacy, Maths is where we teach the children the different concepts and skills and Numeracy is where they use those skills across the curriculum. For example, a child would learn to use a weighing scales and about grams and kilograms in maths lessons and then use these measuring skills to weigh the flour in baking.

Please see the School website for a copy of the Maths Learning Objectives which we will be covering this year.

Generally, children will have about 5 hours per week of maths teaching. In these lessons, teachers teach the whole class together for a proportion of the time with a significant focus on oral and mental calculation. Pupils are given the opportunity to explain their answers and suggest new ways of tackling problems.

Learning Times Tables and Number Bonds

In Foundation phase, we learn to count in 10's, 2's and 5's and then develop this to times tables. Regular practice of addition and subtraction facts of **all numbers** up to 10, pairs of numbers that total 20 and then 100 and use of doubles and halves will help to build up quick recall and confidence.

In KS2 we regularly chant through the tables to aid recall, improve accuracy, speed and knowledge of tables as well as confidence in their usage. Children are encouraged to access J2Blast or Rock Stars to practice their times tables. Any practice you could give the children with these would be helpful, eg saying them as you go up/down stairs, using them in practical situation when shopping etc. Your child's password will be sent home in their reading record/diary.

We have a weekly times tables test which will be based on the tables your child has been learning (please see class key information for details of which day). From time to time the test will be a mixed tables test of those learned to date, where the children will only have a few seconds to answer the questions, just to try to embed their skills and practice speedy recall in order for the children to use times tables in other areas of life.

HOW PARENTS CAN HELP WITH MATHS

Maths is a part of everyday life, something we all use every day without realising it! Consequently, helping your child with maths is something you do every day without realising it. Include your child in activities involving numbers and measuring, such as shopping, cooking and travelling. Showing your child that you're using the maths skills they're learning will also encourage your child, eg do 'homework' yourself eg shopping list, checking your phone bill etc. Other ways to help your child include:

Younger children

- singing nursery rhymes (one two, buckle my shoe....)
- playing counting games (eg countdown rocket launches, going up and down the stairs etc)
- practical household tasks (eg ask your child to fetch four spoons when laying the table)
- practice writing numbers correctly in the steam on the shower tiles/car window

Older children

- play games such as Monopoly, Scrabble (adding the score), Uno, Sudoku, Game of Life, Quirkle, Mastermind code breaker, Skyjo etc
- playing boules etc at the beach, how do you decide who has won? Let your child keep score.
- Ask your child to read data in different forms, eg graphs, timetables, thermometer, and interpreting statistics in the

- playing games like snap, What's the time Mr Wolf, Twister, Connect 4, dominoes, skittles, Magnetix
- Ask your child to help you with comparatives such as nearest and furthest, shortest and tallest, heaviest and lightest using everyday situations.
- news or Farmers Weekly.
- Ask your child to help solve problems, eg by working out:
 - the best buys in the supermarket, checking change,
 - the VAT on farm purchases
 - splitting the bill after a meal out with friends
 - how many tiles/rolls of wallpaper are needed for a DIY job

Praise your child for effort rather than for being "clever". This shows them that by working hard they can always improve. Most of all, try not to say things like "I can't do maths" or "I hated maths at school" - your child may start to think like that themselves.

AMSER ENFYS (Rainbow Time)

In the Foundation Phase, we try to support the children to learn through active learning, creating & thinking critically and playing & exploring. This is done through a combination of adult led activities, supported by "continuous and enhanced provision". Continuous provision allows children to make choices and initiate play independently and generally refers to the activities that are always available for the children to choose, eg sand, playdough etc. Some aspects of this continuous provision can be enhanced with challenges aimed at developing specific skills or providing opportunities for the children to practice what they have learned in adult led activities. At Cradoc, this enhanced provision is known as Amser Enfys and is split into bronze, silver and gold challenges across six areas.

HOMEWORK:

Following the feedback from parents, the Governors and staff have reviewed how we will use homework. We very much value the opportunities outside of school that our children have, eg sporting clubs, Brownies, drama workshops etc, and have decided to reduce the homework we set. We hope this will allow the children to enjoy being a child, get more rest and ease the pressure on families, enabling them to enjoy more family time together.

With this reduction in mind, and in order to get the most out of their learning at school, we really urge all parents to support their child to complete the smaller amount of homework they do receive, thoroughly and on time. Research shows that the most important factor in children's educational success is the home. By sharing activities with your child each week, you are participating in their education, valuing what they do at school and learning together. You do not have to be a great mathematician or linguist to help – just a willing partner! To assist the children it would help if parents could please provide a quiet place in which children can complete their homework.

Some weeks your child will bring home a maths homework activity. This is intended to be shared with your child by you or someone else at home. It is through talking about their maths, discussing how they do things and working it out in collaboration with someone else that children learn best.

- The activity is written for you to read to or with your child, rather than for them to read alone.
- Try to make the activities enjoyable. We want children to learn maths well and to succeed in the subject. They are more likely to do this if you give them plenty of encouragement and make it fun!
- If the activity is taking too long, leave it at a suitable point. It is more important that the children have a go than that they struggle on for hours. The activities should take about 15 minutes.
- Do send back to school any drawings, comments or results which are appropriate to the activity. We shall discuss the homework in class and what the children have shared at home will inform what we do in the lesson.

Literacy/Topic: Sometimes your child will bring home a literacy or topic homework activity. Sometimes, this will involve researching an aspect of their topic work or discussing the past with family and neighbours.

HWB+

It would be great if you could encourage the children to add things they do at home that they are proud of so it can be shared with the rest of the class either in their J2E files or on the class page.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

PE is a compulsory part of the curriculum and generally all children will be expected to participate in PE sessions unless we have a note or email giving reasons otherwise for a specific session. Unfortunately, due to the very considerable costs of transport and the very low level of parental contributions, we will not be having Swimming lessons for the foreseeable future. Please can you ensure that your child has a suitable PE kit which they keep in school at all times.

UNIFORM

As a school we think it is important that children wear uniform to school and take a pride in their presentation. Uniform plays a valuable role in contributing to the ethos of school. It also ensures that children are not teased or bullied because of their clothing or not having the most up to date designer items or clothes/shoes with the right logo. We find that when children put on their uniform it helps to provide a sense of identify and unity and consequently, all children are expected to wear school uniform and look smart.

We are mindful of the costs of purchasing uniform and we are more than happy to accept high street school uniform and PE kit but insist that no items have logos, pictures or slogans. If desired, uniform sweatshirts, bearing the school logo, may be purchased from the school office.

General Uniform

- White or red polo shirt
- Grey or black trousers, shorts or skirt
- Grey pinafore dress
- Red sweatshirt, jumper or cardigan
- Red and white gingham dress
- White, red or grey socks or tights
- Suitable coat of any colour
- In Y6 also have "leaver hoddies" for their final year in school.

General Appearance:

- Jewellery should not be worn, with the exception of wrist-watches, religious or medical items, plain stud ear-rings (to be removed or covered for PE).
- Hair: Long hair should be tied up (both for smartness and safety)
- Make-up should not be worn

Footwear:

- Plain black or red shoes or sandals (that your child can do up independently please)
- Black boots in the winter
- Trainers for sport only (not as general school shoes)
- Slippers or "Croc" style shoes for indoor wear. Please make sure these are safe, as we have had large comedy style slippers appearing that have proved an accident hazard.
- Wellies

Miscellaneous:

- Children are encouraged to wear gloves, warm or sun hats, waterproof trousers etc as appropriate.
- Children do not need pencil cases or to provide their own stationery. However, they can start to bring these if they wish to when they go into Key Stage 2. Please do not send in Sharpies or other permanent markers, as these are causing problems with uniform being spoiled.
- Lost property not claimed after one week is placed on the second-hand uniform for sale stand.

PLEASE CHECK ALL ITEMS ARE NAMED WITH PERMANENT MARKER OR NAME LABELS!

SNACKS:

Cradoc is a Healthy School and we have a 'Healthy Eating' Policy at school. Part of this policy is that children are encouraged to have healthy snacks and as such children should have **only fruit at playtime**. We want children to understand that occasional treats are fine, and so permit a small chocolate bar (eg penguin etc) on a Friday. **We are grateful for your co-operation in this**, as it is an area that causes considerable problems if one child has a treat sent from home when others do not.

TOYS:

The children should not bring in toys from home. However, there will occasionally be an opportunity for the children to bring in an interesting or favourite toy to share with the class. You will be notified as necessary.

EXPECTATIONS:

In lessons, clear expectations are given to all children as to what we expect them to personally achieve during a session. If the expected quantity/quality of work is not completed, then children will be made aware of this either at the time or when we mark their work. Where this is the case, the child will be missing playtime to complete the work. If they do not use this time efficiently then the work will be photocopied (with a comment attached) and sent home to complete. This procedure is used in all junior classes and we hope that as parents you will support this system in order for us to help the children reach their full potential.

PROGRESS, ASSESSMENTS AND TESTS

The staff in school constantly carry out checks about your child's learning so that they can plan activities to meet each child's individual needs. We hold weekly tests for spellings and tables, once the children are old enough. In addition to these on-going daily observations, each term we hold a "Have a Go Week" where all of the children have more formal assessments. Depending on the age of the child this may include written tests, phonic assessments and practical activities.

There are also times of the year when more formal or statutory assessments take place. In Reception, the Welsh Govt "Baseline" assessment is completed within 6 weeks of your child starting school. As the children are very young, these checks are carried out as part of the children's everyday activities, and they are highly unlikely to notice that they are happening. The outcome will be shared with you in the next Parent's Evening (usually in November).

Each year, the children from Y2 to Y6 have to sit the National Tests in reading, procedural maths and maths reasoning. The results from these are forwarded to Welsh Government and you will receive an annual results sheet in July to confirm how your child got on.

At the end of Foundation Phase (ie Y2) the teachers submit assessments of how well the children have done in aspects of English, Maths, Personal Social and Health Education and Physical Development. Similarly, at the end of Key Stage 2 (Y6) the teachers

submit assessments of how well the children have done in aspects of English, Maths, Science, and Welsh. Again, Welsh Government produce result sheets which are forwarded to parents in July.

We want to keep you informed about your child's progress as much as possible, so we hold Parents' Evenings in November and March each year and forward written reports in July. Where parents have separated, we are quite happy to see parents separately and to send separate reports - just please do let us know.

COMMUNICATION

Our main method of communication at present has been through email and Facebook. We wish to use Schoop but only a few parents are currently signed up. Please sign up:

- To Schoop: <https://www.schoop.co.uk/> entering Cradoc School Schoop ID 6722
- To Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1471949176466878/> for the main school and <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2481177282199513/> for 3@Cradoc (you are welcome to join both!)
- Please also make sure we have your up to date **address, phone numbers and email address** so that we can get in touch when we need to.

CLASSROOM HELP

If anyone is able to spare an hour or so in the week to help with listen to readers, classroom jobs etc please let us know. Any help is greatly appreciated!

The above contains a huge amount of information – most of which you will only need now and again! Should you wish to discuss any of the above or have any questions or concerns of any kind, please feel free to speak to the class teachers.