



Oaklands School

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HEADMISTRESS

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4 December 2017

Dear Parents

As I write my final Headmistress's letter for 2017, I am amazed at how fast the Autumn term has flown by. Besides all the hard work, this half term has been full of exciting events and performances from the children, and there are still some events to look forward to.

We welcomed many new children into the school in September and I am happy to see how well they have done in their first term. Having read through the latest set of school reports, there is much to celebrate in pupils' achievements in class, and lots to praise in their achievements beyond the classroom.

We have organised a number of school House competitions this term in which every Year 1-6 pupil has scored points for their house. Sycamore House have been particularly successful winning both the Handwriting competition and the Art Christmas decoration competition. Holly won the House point shield for the first half term and the children are eagerly waiting to hear who has gained the highest number of points to claim the shield for this half term. This will be announced in the final assembly on Wednesday 13 December.

We have competed in a range of sporting events or competitions where our pupils have shown good sportsmanship and dedication in their victories and in their defeats.

Pupils continue to be successful in Art competitions. Two pupils were highly commended for their work in the ISA National Art competition. In the local Loughton Town Council Christmas card competition, Nell in 2C won the infant section, Alice in Y6 and Charlotte in Y5 were both joint runner-ups in the junior section and Amber M in Y4 was named as the overall winner of the whole competition.

Well done to all the children for their perseverance and hard work in all areas of the curriculum.

The Early Years department has been particularly busy. Lower Kindergarten performed for the first time for their parents on Thursday 16 November. They sang beautifully with the help of the Lower Kindergarten staff and Mrs Rathbone. We enjoyed the highly original performance of 'Oaklands' got Talent' by the Transition children on Friday 24 November, which included some amazing singing and dancing. Last Friday, Garden Room entertained their parents with 'The Nativity Story' which was simply delightful. Thank you to all the staff who help prepare the children for these showcases.

I was very proud of those pupils in Years 3-6 who took part in the 'Sing Christmas' event last Thursday at St Mary's Church. The pupils sang two songs: 'Nazareth' and 'The Holly and the Ivy'. It was lovely that Oaklands School once again took part in this local community event.

Carol Service

I look forward to seeing many of you, who have children in Year 1 to Year 6, at the Carol Service on Wednesday 6 December at 2pm in St Mary's Church, Loughton. May I remind you that each family is only permitted two seats at this event. The staff have worked hard to prepare the children for what promises to be a lovely occasion. I have had the pleasure of listening to the singing rehearsals as I work in my office and the children sound superb.

Christmas parties

The children at Oaklands are very lucky to have such a supportive OPA who have organised various pantos, parties and presents from Father Christmas. Remember that for EYFS and KS1 children, these are non-uniform occasions and the children can come to school on their 'Party Day' in party clothes, but please ensure they are wearing sensible shoes and have their coat, hat and gloves as they will still be going out to play! Children in Years 3, 4 and 5 who are attending the OPA Disco on Friday 8 December 4.15pm – 6.15pm, should go home to get changed and return to school for the start of the disco at 4.15pm. Please check the dates list for your child's party date.

OPA Recycled school uniform

The OPA will be holding a recycled school uniform sale on Friday 12 January 2018 in the studio. This will be the only school uniform sale held during the Spring Term, so please check to see if you need any items of uniform.

If you would like to order any particular item in advance, or if you are unable to attend the sale, please email Mrs Connolly (oaklandsparentsassociation@gmail.com), and she will look to see if she has the item of clothing for you.

Pantomimes

Years 3-6 will be travelling to the Millfield Theatre on Monday 11 December to watch 'Jack and the Beanstalk' while Year 1 and 2 children will be watching 'Rapunzel' at the Stratford Theatre on Monday 4 December. Children in EYFS will be entertained by Pyramid Pantomimes performing 'Aladdin' on Wednesday 6 December in the school hall. I know all the children are looking forward to these performances.

Christmas lunch

We are having Christmas lunch on Friday 8 December. All the children will be wearing their Christmas hats that they have made during an Art session in class.

Parent-School communication

As a school, we are always looking for ways to share with you the educational methods our teachers use in the classroom to teach your children and to provide opportunities for you to see your child's work.

To address this aim, we have held two Maths Information evenings during this half term for KS1 and KS2 parents. The evenings were very well attended and I have received some very positive comments about how useful they were. I hope you are finding the Maths Booklet for your child helpful at home.

Each class has also held their Drop-in session from 8.30am - 8.50am to give you the opportunity to look at some of your child's work with them.

We shall be organising another rotation of Drop-in sessions after February half term 2018.

Reports

All children will receive an Autumn Term report, which will be sent to your portal, on Monday 11 December. Further details on how to access these will follow next week.

Wynaud Trust

As you are aware, we adopted the Wynaud Trust as our international charity last year. The Wynaud Trust is a Christian charity who works with communities in Zambia to set up schools and family care centres.

At this time of year, the Trust aims to send as much footwear as possible to the Zambian community. To support this, we would like to invite the children and yourselves to donate any unwanted shoes, boots or trainers during the last few days of term, Monday 11 to Wednesday 13 December. Please bring your donation to the Parent's waiting area. Thank you for your support.

Christmas jumper day

On Wednesday 13 December, all children are invited to wear their favourite Christmas jumper to school to celebrate the end of term and the beginning of the festive holidays.

School App

You might have noticed that the App had a facelift over the summer at the same time as the school website was updated. One of the main changes is that you are now able to add individual dates to your phone's calendar by clicking the + symbol on the event. The 'Key Dates' section focusses on the term dates and main whole school events, with all other dates on the calendar.

Coffee mornings

Matthew Hagger and I will be continuing our annual informal coffee mornings on Tuesday mornings starting again on 16 January. These meetings serve as an opportunity to hear your views and to discuss school life. The coffee mornings take place in the studio, 8.45-9.45am. Please check the table below for your class time:

CLASS	DATE	TIME
Year 5	Tuesday 16 January	8.45am to 9.45am
Year 3	Tuesday 23 January	8.45am to 9.45am
Year 4	Tuesday 30 January	8.45am to 9.45am
Lower Kindergarten	Tuesday 6 February	8.45am to 9.45am

Forthcoming Events

The following list provides an update of events planned:

Monday 4 December	KS1 Pantomime at Stratford Theatre 12.45pm – 5.30pm
Tuesday 5 December	Y6 Coffee Morning 8.45am
Wednesday 6 December	EYFS Pyramid Pantomime in School Hall 1.15pm-3pm KS1 + KS2 Carol Service at St Mary's Church 2pm
Thursday 7 December	GR Badgers + Hedgehogs 'Drop-in' session 8.30am -9.00am Y6 11+ Mock Exam 9.30am – 10.30am Y6 11+ Mock Exam 1.45pm – 2.45pm
Friday 8 December	GR Rabbits + Squirrels 'Drop-in' session 8.30am -9.00am Y6 11+ Mock Exam 9.30am – 10.30am Whole School Pupil Christmas Lunch Y3 – Y5 OPA Christmas Party in School Hall 4.15pm – 6.15pm
Monday 11 December	Y6 11+ Mock Exam 9.30am – 10.30am KS2 'Jack & the Beanstalk' Pantomime at Millfield Theatre 12pm 4.30pm Y1 + Y2 Christmas Party 2pm Whole School – Reports out to parents
Tuesday 12 December	KS2 Christingle 8.50am LK + GR Christmas Party 10.30am Y6 Tenpin Bowling Event 10.45am – 3.45pm TR Christmas Party 2pm
Wednesday 13 December	Last day of Autumn Term Whole School wear Christmas Jumpers

Forthcoming events/dates for Spring 2018

Tuesday 9 January	First day of Spring Term
Wednesday 10 January	Y3 + Y5 First swim of Spring Term
Tuesday 16 January	Y5 Coffee Morning 8.45am
Friday 12 January	OPA Recycled school uniform sale 2.30pm
Tuesday 23 January	Y3 Coffee Morning 8.45am
Thursday 25 January	TR trip to St Albans Abbey
Tuesday 30 January	Y4 Coffee Morning 8.45am Y1 Lego workshop
Friday 2 February	Y1 – Y6 Maths workshop
Tuesday 6 February	LK Coffee Morning 8.45am
Thursday 8 February	3L Assembly to Parents 9am

Half Term is from Monday 12 February to Friday 16 February 2018

End of term

Please remember that the Autumn Term finishes at lunchtime on Wednesday 13 December. There are no afternoon sessions.

It just remains for me to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year. I look forward to welcoming you back to school on Tuesday 9 January 2018.

With kind regards

Yours sincerely

Sue Belej

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Headmistress

