



# Oaklands School

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## HEADMISTRESS

MRS SUE BELEJ B.A. (JNT HONS), CERT.ED.

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4 September 2018

Dear Parents

I hope that you had a lovely summer break, enjoying time with your families and friends in the British sunshine or abroad.

I am looking forward to seeing all the pupils as they return to Oaklands this week, or start with us for the very first time. Oaklands prides itself on being a warm and very friendly environment, so I have no doubt that our new arrivals will settle in easily and quickly become part of the Oaklands community. All the Oaklands staff are here to help you and your child's school experience to be a rewarding and pleasurable one.

New pupils joining us from Reception to Year 6 will have a 'buddy' to help them settle in during playtimes and the class teachers are always available every afternoon for a brief chat when they bring the children out to meet you. As you bring your child to the classroom in the morning, you will quickly become familiar with their class teacher and routine.

If you have any questions, please feel free to email or speak to your child's class teacher or keyworker; I am sure we will be able to help the transition run smoothly and we are very much looking forward to getting to know you over the course of the coming year.

### Staffing

A warm welcome also to our new members of staff. Miss Ashleigh Zaydner joins the Key Stage 1 team as Year 1Z'S class teacher, Mr John Caunt joins the Key Stage 2 team as one of our Year 3 class teachers and Miss Nikki Aston joins the EYFS team as our new Upper Kindergarten Coordinator. Mrs Amanda Stone is our new Office manager; she is keen to get to know our parents as quickly as possible so please drop in to introduce yourself.

We also welcome Mrs Stacey Curtis as one of our lunchtime and Tea Time assistants, Mrs Carol Byron who will be working in Breakfast Club every morning, Miss Zoe Morey who is our new Zumba teacher and Ms Cheryl Fordham who joins us as an additional teacher for our KS2 Speech and Drama club.

Congratulations to Miss Bond, Reception Robins class teacher, who is expecting her second baby in late December 2018. The Oak-Tree recruitment process is already in motion to appoint a suitably qualified teacher to act as the maternity cover for Miss Bond during the Spring and Summer terms 2019.

### Summer holiday work

As you will have read in Mr Hagger's letter sent to you today, we have had an incredibly busy seven weeks and made substantial progress with our massive building project. I am incredibly excited about the impact these additional facilities will have on the education of your children.

Our new car park will be operational as from tomorrow, which should help to ease the congestion around the school at arrival and dismissal times.

Besides the many different groups of builders who have been working at the school throughout the holidays, the maintenance team and our cleaning staff have also played a very important part in ensuring that the school is ready for you and your children. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved, particularly Mr Hagger who has expertly masterminded the entire scheme of works.

### Renaming of Year groups

As from September 2018, I am pleased to announce that Garden Room will now be known as Upper Kindergarten and Transition will be called Reception. In addition, for the first time in Oaklands history, we have two Year 3 classes and two Year 5 classes in Key Stage 2.

### **Holiday activities**

Over the summer break many of our pupils have made use of the holiday activity courses held at Coopersale Hall School and at Braeside. These included Multi-sports, Drama and Early Years activities. The courses were very well attended and the pupils had great fun! The Oak-Tree Group will be continuing their provision next Easter and Summer and will write with more details nearer the time.

### **The Oak-Tree Challenge Award**

We will be introducing the Oak-Tree Challenge Award across the group this year. The award will have Bronze, Silver and Gold levels, with a range of challenges to be completed and verified before the award is presented at the end of the academic year. The junior award is for Years 4 -6.

The award reflects the approach of schemes like the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. We will be writing to parents shortly with more details about how the award will be launched and we will be talking to the pupils in assembly.

### **Admissions Policy**

Last year, we updated our Admissions policy which is, as always, available for reading on the school website. For those of you with pre-school children, please ensure that you familiarise yourself with the following section about 'Siblings.'

'We aim to give the siblings of current pupils at Oaklands priority when considering children applying to join the school from outside. However, admission is not necessarily automatic and siblings are still subject to the school's admissions procedures when applying for all year groups.

The deadline by which time siblings must be registered to join Oaklands in September 2019 is Monday 8 October 2018. We will not be able guarantee siblings priority consideration if applications are made after this time as the process will have started for those who have already registered to enter the school from outside.'

### **Reminders**

#### **Arrival**

As you know children can attend Breakfast Club from 7.30am, otherwise children should be at school by 8.45am for registration. Any child arriving after this time should be taken to the office and signed in. The office will notify the class teacher. The school doors to all areas of the school open at 8.30am and all teachers set early morning activities (EYFS) or early morning tasks (KS1&2) for the pupils.

#### **End of the school day**

Morning sessions for the younger children (LK and UK) finish at 12 noon or 1.00pm if your child is staying for lunch and whole day sessions at 3pm. Reception pupils finish at 3pm; Year 1 and Year 2 at 3.15pm and Year 3 to Year 6 at 3.30pm.

#### **Absence**

Parents are asked to notify the office of any absence either by telephoning, via the portal or via email by 9am. Please note that children in Reception to Year 6 are of compulsory school age and the law in England and Wales states that schools are only allowed to permit term time holidays in exceptional circumstances. Requests for absence during term time for other reasons can only be approved in exceptional circumstances. If you wish to request time out of school for such a reason, please contact the School Office who will give you a 'Request for absence' form which should be completed and returned to them; I will then confirm whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised.

I know how difficult it is to get dentist/doctor appointments, but please do try to book these out of school time wherever possible to minimise disruption to your child's education.

#### **Absence from PE/Games Lessons**

If your child is in school but unable to participate in their PE or Games lesson, please send them into school with a note for the PE staff explaining the reason. Please also ensure that they have their PE kit with them because they need to wear it and go to the PE lesson with the rest of the class, even though they will not participate.

### **Breakfast and Teatime Clubs**

Teatime Club runs from 3pm to 6pm for children aged 3 years and above. Both Breakfast and Teatime Clubs are run by school staff and the children are given food and suitable activities. Please contact the office if you wish to use either Breakfast and/or Teatime Club facilities.

### **Supervision**

When you have collected your children at the end of the day, and in particular the younger children, please do not allow them to access the adventure playground or field, climb the fences or walls or access the car park in front of Oak House or the new car park accessed via Warren Hill. This also applies to those of you who collect your children later from Tea Time Club.

Our building contractors will be continuing with their work during this term. We have ensured that the construction area is not accessible to children, staff or parents. Please ensure that you closely supervise your child at all times on the school site. Thank you.

### **Uniform**

Summer uniform must be worn until the October half term when we change into winter uniform until the beginning of the summer term, 2019. Please ensure that all items are clearly named. Please check the uniform list on our website if you need further details.

### **Extra-Curricular Activities**

All clubs begin from Monday 10 September, except Tea Time Club which starts on Wednesday 5 September. We have an extensive programme of clubs and activities, many of which take place after school. Please contact the office if you need further details regarding availability. A complete list of activities may be found on the website. If you have any queries regarding the club/s your child is attending, please visit or contact the School Office.

### **Parents' Association**

The Oaklands Parents Association work extremely hard to organise events and to enhance the children's experiences in school. If you would like to join the team then please contact the Chair, Mrs Katie Griggs, via the office. We are grateful for as much support as possible and the Committee is always keen to welcome some 'new blood and enthusiasm'.

### **Home/School Links**

#### **Parent/School Communication**

We value the healthy partnership we have between school and home. As well as the day-to-day informal conversations between you and your child's keyworker/teacher, I am happy to chat and meet with you informally or formally. I am usually available first thing in the morning or by appointment via the School Office.

We encourage parents to make use of our email facility – please see the staff list on our website for the links. If you send an email to your child's keyworker/class teacher, please be aware that they will always endeavour to reply to your message at lunchtime or at the end of the school day. It is often difficult to reply to messages first thing in the morning as they are busy preparing their classroom for the day ahead.

We will text you via our 'Groupcall' texting facility and we tweet news highlights several times each week!

### **Parent Portals**

The office will contact new parents this week with information about how to access the Parent Portals. The email will contain your username and password details. Please email [support@oaktreeschools.co.uk](mailto:support@oaktreeschools.co.uk) if you need any assistance and our team will be happy to help. Your Parent Portal will contain much information, including the Parent's Handbook, your child's class booklet, timetable and Autumn Term 1 curriculum overview. Please check your portal regularly as this is an important form of our parent/school communication. You should receive an email when new information has been uploaded.

### **Website and App**

Don't forget that you can access much information from our website that is updated regularly as well as our most informative app.

## Contact Details and Medical Information

Please let us know as soon as possible if any of your contact details have changed over the summer. This includes your address, telephone numbers, emergency contact details, any changes to your child's health or any other changes of which we should be aware. You can check the current information we hold on your Parent Portal.

## Long term medication

If your child requires the school to store and when needed, administer long term medication, please download and complete the appropriate forms. These forms and the labelled medication should be given to the office staff on the first day of term. Thank you.

## Reports

We send written reports to parents at the end of the Autumn and Summer Terms for all EYFS, KS1 and KS2 pupils. Reports will be uploaded to your Parent Portal when due.

## Parents' Evenings

On Wednesday 17 and Thursday 18 October, there are formal interviews with parents and class teachers for pupils in Reception to Year 6 so that parents and teachers can discuss how the children have settled into their new class and the curriculum of their age group. LK/UK parent consultation evenings will be held in November. Further details to follow.

## Open Morning

We are holding an Open Morning for prospective and current parents from 9.15am to 11.30am on Thursday 4 October 2018. This is a good opportunity to view the school at work and refresh your memories of areas of the school with which you may be less familiar. Please let the office know if you would like to come along.

## Coffee Mornings

Once again, Mr Hagger and I will be meeting with parents informally year group by year group from the week after the October half term to February half term to discuss all aspects of school life. The dates are published below for those year groups whose coffee morning falls in this term. We will write to you the week before as a polite reminder.

## Complaints

### Communication and Concerns

We have an open door policy and take pride in our excellent communication with parents. We take seriously any concerns that you may raise, which are normally resolved informally through constructive discussions. You might be interested to know that last academic year we did not receive any official complaints.

Your suggestions and comments are always welcome, and we do appreciate the chance to work with you for the benefit of the children.

## Dates for the Diary

The following list provides an update of events planned for the Autumn Term:

|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| Wednesday 5 September      | Start of Autumn Term  |
| Thursday 6 September       | Y3-Y6 Mad Science Assembly 8:50am                               |
| Monday 10 September        | Whole school photograph<br>All clubs start (except Mad Science) |
| Wednesday 12 September     | Y3 & Y5 First Swim  |
| Wednesday 12 September     | Reception RWL Meeting 6:00pm in the Hall                        |
| Tuesday 18 September       | UK 'Ready to Read' Meeting 9:00am in Studio                     |
| Thursday 20 – 21 September | Y3 Camp   |
| Monday 24 September        | Harvest Assembly 8:50am tbc                                     |
| Tuesday 25 September       | Y2 7+ Meeting 8:50am – 9:15am in the Hall                       |
| Thursday 27 September      | Harvest Assembly tbc  |
| Wednesday 26 September     | Y4 Hatfield Forest Trip   |
| Thursday 27 September      | Y6 Taster Day at St Edmunds                                     |
| Thursday 4 October         | Open Morning 9:15am – 11:30am                                   |
| Tuesday 9 October          | Y5 11+ Meeting 8:50am – 9:15am in the Hall                      |
| Monday 15 October          | LK 'Settling in chat' 3.15 – 5.30pm                             |

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| Tuesday 16 October   | UK 'Settling in chat' Badgers & Rabbits 3.15 – 6.00pm       |
| Wednesday 17 October | UK 'Settling in chat' Hedgehogs & Squirrels 3.15 – 6.00pm   |
| Wednesday 17 October | Reception - Y6 Parent Consultation Meetings 3:45pm – 7:00pm |
| Wednesday 17 October | Y6 11+ Mock Exam 9:30am – 10:30am + 1:45pm – 2:45pm         |
| Thursday 18 October  | Y6 11+ Mock Exam 9:30am – 10:30am + 1:45pm – 2:45pm         |
| Thursday 18 October  | Reception - Y6 Parent Consultation Meetings 3:45pm – 7:00pm |

### Half Term Monday 22 October – Friday 2 November

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| Tuesday 6 November   | UK Coffee Morning 8.45 – 9.30am                     |
| Thursday 8 November  | 2C Drop in session 8.30 – 8.50am                    |
| Friday 9 November    | 2S Drop in session 8.30 – 8.50am                    |
| Tuesday 13 November  | Reception Coffee Morning 8.45-9.30am                |
| Thursday 15 November | 1Z Drop in session 8.30- 8.50am                     |
| Thursday 15 November | LK Assembly to parents 9.15am                       |
| Friday 16 November   | 1R Drop in session 8.30 – 8.50am                    |
| Tuesday 20 November  | Y1 Coffee Morning 8:45am – 9:30am                   |
| Thursday 22 November | 3L Drop in session 8.30-8.50am                      |
| Thursday 22 November | 3C Drop in session 8.30 – 8.50am                    |
| Friday 23 November   | Reception Play to parents 9.00am                    |
| Tuesday 27 November  | Y2 Coffee Morning 8.45 – 9.30am                     |
| Thursday 29 November | 4C Drop in session 8.30- - 8.50am                   |
| Friday 30 November   | Y5G Drop in session 8:30am - 8:50am                 |
| Friday 30 November   | UK Play to parents 9.15am                           |
| Tuesday 4 December   | Y6 Coffee Morning 8:45am – 9:30am                   |
| Thursday 6 December  | Y6 11+ Mock Exam 9:30am – 10:30am + 1:45pm – 2:45pm |
| Thursday 6 December  | Y5Z Drop in session 8:30am – 8:50am                 |
| Friday 7 December    | Y6 11+ Mock Exam 9:30am – 10:30am                   |
| Friday 7 December    | Y6 Drop in session 8:30am – 8:50am                  |
| Monday 10 December   | Y6 11+ Mock Exam 9:30am – 10:30am                   |

I am looking forward to another exciting and productive year. As always if you have any concerns or questions you wish to discuss, please contact your child's class teacher, Key Stage Coordinator, Senior Leadership member or myself by telephoning/emailing the school office to arrange an appointment.

I hope too, that your children are excited about the challenges and opportunities that they will experience at Oaklands during the forthcoming academic year.

With kind regards

Yours sincerely

*Sue Belej*

Sue Belej  
Headmistress

