



Oaklands School

8 Albion Hill, Loughton
Essex IG10 4RA

Tel: 020 8508 3517
Fax: 020 8508 4454

HEADMISTRESS

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

E-mail: info@oaklandsschool.co.uk
Website: www.oaklandsschool.co.uk

December 2018

Dear Parents

It is hard to believe that this is my final Headmistress's letter for 2018. I am amazed at how fast the Autumn Term has flown by. Besides all the hard work by the children and the staff, 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.

This term, we have organised two school House competitions in which every Year 1-6 pupil has scored points for their house. Beech House narrowly won the Spelling competition by three points with Sycamore coming a close second. This week, we are holding the Christmas Poetry writing competition. Willow 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 12 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. Annabelle and Konstantin in Y4, represented London North at the ISA National Swimming Championships at the Olympic Pool, Stratford on Saturday 1 December and helped their respective relay team to finish in the top three. The recent success of our Y5/6 Girls Athletics team achieving first place in the first ever Oak-Tree Indoor Athletics Competition held on Friday 30 November also deserves special mention. Congratulations to the team and Mr Paine!

Pupils continue to be successful in Art competitions. Aadi, in Y5, won his category in the London North regional Art competition and his piece represented London North at the National Art Competition in November. In the local Loughton Town Council Christmas card competition Sienna, in Y3, was chosen as the winner of the Junior section of the 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 15 November. They sang beautifully with the help of the Lower Kindergarten staff and Mrs Rathbone. We enjoyed the highly original performance of 'A Winter Wonderland' by the Reception children on Friday 23 November, which included some amazing singing and dancing. During the following week, Upper Kindergarten entertained their parents with 'The Toyshop' 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 Year 3 who took part in the 'Sing Christmas' event on Thursday 29 November at St Mary's Church, Loughton. The pupils sang two songs: 'You can't dodge the census' and 'Feliz Navidad'. 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 5 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 some of the singing rehearsals as I work in my office and the children continue to sound as beautiful as ever.

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 these are non-uniform occasions and the children in EYFS and KS1 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! Please check the dates list for your child's party date.

Pantomimes

Years 3-6 will be travelling to the Millfield Theatre on Thursday 6 December to watch 'Beauty and the Beast' while Year 1 and 2 children will be watching 'Aladdin' at the Harlow Theatre on Friday 7 December. Children in EYFS will be entertained by Pyramid Pantomimes performing 'Sleeping Beauty' on Wednesday 5 December in the school hall. I know all the children are looking forward to these performances. My thanks to the OPA for funding all these festive events.

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 will be holding two Maths Information evenings next half term for Year 1 and Year 3 parents to inform them about the methods we use to teach the four rules of number to our pupils. I would be grateful if all Year 1 and Year 3 parents would make a note of the following dates in their 2019 diary:

- Thursday 24 January 2019 - Year 1 Maths Information Evening, 6.00pm
- Wednesday 30 January 2019 - Year 3 Maths Information Evening, 6.00pm

Each class has also held their Drop-in session from 8.30 to 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 2019.

Reports

All children will receive an Autumn Term report, which will be sent to your portal on Monday 10 December. Further details on how to access these will follow next week.

E-Safety

As you will be aware, we consider the protection and safeguarding of children to be of the highest priority. With the expansion of social media websites and younger children having access to mobile phones, it is essential that all members of our community are aware of the need to act responsibly when using technology.

E-Safety is an integral part of children's education in today's digital world and is embedded in their learning at school. We also want to help our parents improve their own understanding of E-Safety issues so that children can learn to use the internet and all digital media in a safe and secure way.

For these reasons, we are organising an E-Safety Day on Wednesday 16 January with workshops for all pupils from Year 3 upwards. Staff will also be trained after school. The training will be run by John Woodley and John Staines (also known as the 'Two Johns'), who are both qualified Police Trainers and CEOP Ambassador trainers who trained every Youth Officer within Essex Police. They deliver training within schools and specialise in pupil, parent and teacher events.

The day will finish with a session for parents from 6pm in the school hall to raise awareness about E-Safety and so that you are aware of the content of the earlier pupils session. We will be writing with full details in due course, but in the meantime you might like to visit The Two Johns' website <https://www.esafetytraining.org> for more information.

Christmas Jumper Day

On Wednesday 12 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.

Summer Ball 2019

The four Parents' Association of the Oak-Tree Group will be coming together again to organise another joint Oak-Tree Summer Ball on Saturday 18 May 2019 from 7pm until 1am in the marquee at Chigwell Hall (Metropolitan Police Club) for parents, staff and friends of the schools.

This year there will be a *Casino Royale* James Bond theme with a jazz band, DJ, casinos, cocktail bar and much more. Tickets will be going on sale shortly after Christmas, but please do put the date in your diaries as this promises to be a fun event for us all.

Coffee Mornings

Matthew Hagger and I will be continuing to hold our annual informal coffee mornings on Tuesday mornings starting again on 15 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	PLACE
Year 6	Tues 4 Dec	8.45am to 9.30am	Studio
Year 5	Tues 15 Jan	8.45am to 9.30am	Studio
Year 3	Tues 22 Jan	8.45am to 9.30am	Studio
Year 4	Tues 29 Jan	8.45am to 9.30am	Studio
LK	Tues 5 Feb	8.45am to 9.30am	Studio

Forthcoming Events

Monday 3 December	Hedgehogs + Squirrels Visit to Mellows Care Home 10am
Tuesday 4 December	Y6 Coffee Morning 8:45am – 9:30am
Wednesday 5 December	Rabbits + Badgers Visit to Mellows Care Home 10am Y1-Y6 Carol Service, St Mary's Church, Loughton 2pm EYFS watching 'Sleeping Beauty' Pantomime in the Hall
Thursday 6 December	Y6 11+ Mock Exam 9:30am – 10:30am + 1:45pm – 2:45pm Y3-Y6 Pantomime at Millfield Theatre 12:30pm – 4:15pm
Friday 7 December	Y6 11+ Mock Exam 9:30am – 10:30am Y6 + 5Z Drop in session 8:30am – 8:50am Y1+Y2 Pantomime at Harlow 12:15pm – 5pm Y3-Y5 OPA Christmas Disco 4.15pm – 6.15pm
Monday 10 December	Y6 11+ Mock Exam 9:30am – 10:30am Whole School Christmas Lunch Y1+Y2 Christmas Party 2pm LK Tea Party 3.15pm – 4pm (for new pupils starting Jan 2019)
Tuesday 11 December	LK + UK Christmas Party 10.30am Y6 Tenpin Bowling Christmas Event 10am Reception Christmas Party 2pm
Wednesday 12 December	Christmas Jumper Day Last Day of term LK – TR finish at 12pm Y1 + Y2 finish at 12.15pm Y3 – Y6 finish at 12.30pm

Forthcoming events/dates Spring 2019

Tuesday 8 January	Spring Term 2019 – First day for pupils
Wednesday 9 January	Y3 – Y5 Swimming begins
Tuesday 15 January	Y5 Coffee Morning 8:45am – 9:30am
Wednesday 16 January	Y3-Y6 E-Safety Workshop 9am – 3.30pm E-Safety Workshop for Parents 6pm

Tuesday 22 January	Y3 Coffee Morning 8:45am – 9:30am Forest School Swimming Gala 4pm – 6pm
Thursday 24 January	Y1 Maths Information Evening 6pm
Tuesday 29 January	Y4 Coffee Morning 8:45am – 9:30am
Wednesday 30 January	Y3 Maths Information Evening 6pm
Tuesday 5 February	LK Coffee Morning 8:45am – 9:30am Y5+Y6 Young Voices, O2
Friday 8 February	Y6 Anglo-Saxon Workshop tbc
Wednesday 13 February	Y1-Y6 Parents' Evening 3.45pm – 7pm
Thursday 14 February	Reception Trip to St Albans Cathedral Y1-Y6 Parents' Evening 3.45pm – 7pm

Half Term Monday 18 February to Friday 22 February

End of term

Please remember that the Autumn Term finishes at lunchtime on Wednesday 12 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 and your children back to school on Tuesday 8 January 2019.

With kind regards

Yours sincerely

Sue Belej

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Headmistress

