



# Oaklands School

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## HEADMISTRESS

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

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December 2019

Dear Parents

### Re: **Headmistress's Letter**

Dear Parents

It seems incredible that this is my final Headmistress's letter for 2019. 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 a few events to look forward to.

Oaklands welcomed many new children into the school in September and I am so 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 both inside and outside the classroom, and many encouraging comments about the ongoing personal development of the children.

This term, we organised a House Spelling competition in which every Year 1-6 pupil scored points for their house. Holly House narrowly won the Spelling competition by two points with Sycamore coming a close second. Willow won the House point shield for the first half term with a massive total of 738 house points! 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 Thursday 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, in Y5 represented London North at the ISA National Swimming Championships at the Olympic Pool, Stratford on Saturday 30 November and helped her relay team to finish in the top five. Our Y5/6 Netball team finished 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Oak-Tree tournament and the Y5/6 Football Team finished a respectable 3<sup>rd</sup>. The recent success of our Y5/6 mixed Athletics team achieving first place and our Y3/4 mixed team finishing second in the Oak-Tree Indoor Athletics Competition held on Friday 29 November also deserves special mention. Congratulations to all the teams and Mr Paine!

Pupils continue to be successful in Art competitions. We were awarded two second places and three third places in different categories of the London North competition in October. In the local Loughton Town Council Christmas card competition, Mrs Wiseman, our SENDCO was placed first in the adult competition!

The Early Years department has been particularly busy. Lower Kindergarten performed for the first time for their parents on Friday 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 Medley' by the Reception children on Thursday 21 and Friday 22 November, which included some amazing singing and dancing. During the following week, Upper Kindergarten entertained their parents with 'The Littlest Christmas Tree' which was simply delightful. Thank you to all the staff who help prepare the children for these performances.

### **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 4 December at 2pm in St Mary's Church, Loughton. 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 5 December to watch 'Mother Goose' while Year 1 and 2 children will be watching 'Jack and the Beanstalk' at the Harlow Theatre on Friday 6 December. Children in EYFS will be entertained by Pyramid Pantomimes performing 'Cinderella' on Wednesday 4 December in the school hall. I know all the children are looking forward to these performances. My thanks once again 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 have held two Maths and English Information evenings this half term for Year 1 and Year 3 parents to inform them about the methods we use to teach the four rules of number, reading, comprehension and writing to our pupils.

A large number of parents attended these meetings and I received some very positive feedback.

Each class has also held their Drop-in session from 8.30—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 2020.

### **Staffing**

As you are aware, Mrs Leighton and Mrs Rowlands went on maternity leave last February. They are both enjoying being full time mums at home and will not be returning to Oaklands. We wish them every happiness in this next phase of their lives.

I am delighted to announce that Mr Crane, current Y3 teacher and Miss Flanagan, current Y1 teacher, are both remaining at Oaklands as permanent members of staff. Mrs Billington, current Reception Robins teacher, is also remaining with us as Miss Bond, who previously taught in this area of the school, is now our part-time Computing teacher.

### **Christmas Jumper Day**

For the last morning of term, on Thursday 12 December, all the children are invited to wear their favourite Christmas jumper to school to celebrate the end of term and the beginning of the festive holidays. I would be very grateful for a £1 donation from each pupil which we can send to 'Save the Children' charity. Thank you.

### **The London Book Project**

This charity collects donations of new and gently used children's books and gives them to targeted schools and organisations. Their aim is for all children to have the opportunity to choose, take home and keep their own books

and to develop a love of reading. During the last year, they have delivered books from Dagenham to Hillingdon and have reached over 50,000 young people and their families.

Oaklands School plans to support this new charity during 2020. On Monday 13 January, a representative from the London Book Project will be visiting Oaklands to deliver an assembly to the children. From Monday 13 to Friday 17 January, we would like the children to bring into school any books they no longer enjoy reading or are now too young for them. Christmas is an ideal time for a sort out so I am hoping we can collect a healthy collection of books to pass to the charity. Details about where to bring the books will be circulated in the New Year.

Thank you in anticipation of your support of this new charity.

### Snow and Wintry Weather

Although a white Christmas is probably unlikely, we usually have snow at some point in the winter period. Our aim is always to stay open, unless there is a health and safety concern in doing so. The maintenance team arrive on site early to clear paths and to make the site safe, and an update will be posted on the website by 7am so that parents are informed about arrangements for the day.

### Reports

All children will receive an Autumn Term report which will be sent to your portal on Monday 9 December. Further details on how to access these will follow next week.

### Coffee Mornings

Matthew Hagger and I will be continuing to hold our annual informal coffee mornings on Tuesday mornings, starting again on 14 January. These meetings serve as an opportunity to hear your views and to discuss school life. The coffee mornings take place in the studio or the hall, 8.45-9.30am. Please refer to the table below to check the date for your child's class.

CLASS	DATE	TIME	PLACE
Year 5	Tues 14 Jan	8.45am to 9.30am	Studio
Year 4	Tues 21 Jan	8.45am to 9.30am	Hall
Year 3	Tues 28 Jan	8.45am to 9.30am	Studio
Year 1	Tues 4 Feb	8.45am to 9.30am	Studio
Lower Kindergarten	Tues 11 Feb	8.45am to 9.30am	Studio

### Forthcoming Events

Tuesday 3 December	Y6 Coffee Morning 8:45am – 9:30am
Wednesday 4 December	Y1-Y6 Carol Service St Mary's Church, Loughton 2.00pm
Wednesday 4 December	LK, UK, Reception 'Cinderella' Panto in Hall
Thursday 5 December	Y5C Drop in session 8:30am – 8:50am
Thursday 5 December	Y6G & Y6J 11+ Mock Exam 9:30am – 10:30am
Thursday 5 December	Y3-Y6 to Millfield Theatre Pantomime
Friday 6 December	Y6G & Y6J Drop in session 8:30am – 8:50am
Friday 6 December	Y6G & Y6J 11+ Mock Exam 9:30am – 10:30am + 1.45-2.45pm
Friday 6 December	Y1 & Y2 'Jack and the Beanstalk' Panto, Harlow Playhouse
Friday 6 December	Y3-Y5 OPA Disco 4.15-6.15pm tbc
Monday 9 December	Y6G & Y6J 11+ Mock Exam 9:30am – 10:30am
Monday 9 December	Y1 & Y2 Party 1.15-3.00pm
Tuesday 10 December	LK - Y6 Christmas lunch
Wednesday 11 December	LK & UK Christmas Party 9.30-11.15am
Wednesday 11 December	Reception Party 1.15-3.00pm
Thursday 12 December	Last Day of term

### Spring Term begins on Tuesday 7 January 2020

### End of term

Please remember that the Autumn Term finishes at lunchtime on Thursday 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 7 January 2020.

With kind regards and seasonal greetings

*Sue Belej*

Sue Belej  
Headmistress



**OAK-TREE SCHOOLS** is the group name of:

BRAESIDE SCHOOL, BUCKHURST HILL • COOPERSALE HALL SCHOOL, EPPING • NORMANHURST SCHOOL, NORTH CHINGFORD • OAKLANDS SCHOOL, LOUGHTON

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GROUP MANAGING PRINCIPAL: MR MATTHEW HAGGER B.A. (HONS), M.ED., PGCE PRINCIPALS: MR NICHOLAS HAGGER M.A. (OXON), MRS ANN HAGGER CERT. ED.

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