



Oaklands School

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HEADMISTRESS

Mrs Sue Belej B.A. (JNT HONS), CERT.ED.

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1 December 2020

Dear Parents

Re: **December Headmistress's Letter**

It seems incredible that this is my final Headmistress's letter of 2020; a year that can only be described as 'unbelievable' and 'unprecedented'. I am so proud of how the Oaklands community, including children, parents, staff and management, has worked together to maintain as much normalcy for the children despite the Covid-19 restrictions the school has had to put in place and often adapt, to adhere to the government guidelines. Thank you for your continued support, understanding and patience during this term; it is much appreciated.

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 this term's set of school reports, there is much to celebrate in pupils' achievements, both inside and outside the classroom, and many positive comments about the ongoing personal development of the children. These reports will be sent out to parents, via the portal, on Wednesday 9 December. If you have any difficulty logging on to access your child's report, then please contact the school office who will be able to offer you some assistance.

Christmas Events

During the week beginning Monday 7 December, the children will be participating in a number of entertaining and enjoyable Christmas activities listed below.

Christmas lunch

Chartwells are again providing a delicious Christmas lunch for the whole school on **Wednesday 9 December**. Our Chef, Ian Grigg, and his team will be catering for all dietary requirements on the day. The menu will be a roast dinner with all the trimmings, followed by jelly and ice cream. The children will pull their crackers in their classrooms before coming into the hall for lunch so that they can wear their party hats. Festive music will be filling the hall throughout the lunch period.

Virtual Pantomime 'Jack and the Beanstalk'

At some point during the last week of term, all the children will have the opportunity to watch this virtual pantomime. Produced by former Blue Peter presenter, Peter Duncan, it is packed with interactive songs, laughter, great spectacle and numerous opportunities for chants of 'Oh yes he is' and 'Oh no she isn't' that will undoubtedly entertain all the children.....and staff!

Visit from Father Christmas and Party time

On **Thursday 10 December**, all the children will be visited by Father Christmas bringing gifts and a singing a jolly 'Ho, ho, ho'! My thanks to the OPA class representatives for organising the purchase and wrapping of all the presents for the children.

Each class/year group will also have a 'party time' in the hall with music, dancing and games.

Please note that **Thursday 10 December** is a **non-uniform day** for Lower Kindergarten to Year 6

We finish the term on **Friday 11 December**, which will also be a **non-uniform day** in support of **'Save the Children'**. We would like to invite the children to wear their Christmas jumpers for the last morning of the Autumn Term and bring in a £1 donation towards the work of this well-known charity. Thank you in advance of your support.

Year 6 Post Boxes

Year 6 have done a fantastic job of designing and making their post boxes this year. They have been arriving in all the classrooms since Monday 30 November so that the children can start to bring their Christmas cards into school to post ready for delivery in the last few days of term. Well done Year 6!

Start of the School Day

We have kept to the temporarily advanced start time of 8.15am throughout this Autumn Term in order to train our pupils to keep their distance from others when entering the site. This also allowed for a wider window for arrivals and for pupils and families to establish new routines after the summer holidays. We feel that our Coronavirus procedures are now more settled and that we have a greater level of control over the initial morning routines, so we plan to start moving the arrival time back in order to help our staff prepare more effectively for the start of the school day.

From Wednesday 6 January 2021, the doors will open at 8.20am and Registration will be at 8.40am. We will be on hand as usual to welcome the children from this time. Breakfast Club will continue to run as usual from 7.30am.

We anticipate moving the start time to 8.25am from after the February half term, but I will confirm this in my February Head's Letter once we have had the opportunity to review the first month back.

Extracurricular Clubs

As you are aware, during this term we have had to make a number of adaptations to our after school club provision in response to government directives. We will be looking at the timetable for the Spring Term 2021 over the Christmas holidays and will be writing to you with further details in time for the start of the new term.

Virtual Coffee Mornings

Since October half term, we have been holding our usual programme of Coffee Mornings. These meetings serve as an opportunity to hear your views and to discuss school life. Thank you to those of you who were able to virtually join Mr Hagger, Mrs Osborn and myself at your respective Coffee Morning over the last few weeks. The final two this term are listed below.

Staff News

There are sometimes occasions during a school year when we say goodbye to a member of staff. At the end of the Autumn Term, Mrs Caroline Wiseman, our SENDCo, will be leaving Oaklands. She has been overseeing the SEND department for 4 years and has supported a number of children of all different ages in their learning and personal development. We wish her every happiness in her retirement.

I am delighted to inform you that Mrs Michaela Ridgeway, a current member of the SEND team, will become our new SENDCo in January 2021 and Mrs Margaret Donoghue will continue as our Assistant SENDCo.

Our main school caretaker since January 2020, Mr Aaron Moore, will be moving to the central Group Maintenance Team after the Christmas break to use his skills as a qualified plumber. I know you will join me in wishing him well for his new role, and we will continue to see him regularly as he moves between the sites.

We will be joined in January 2021 by Mr Mark Hewitt, who is a very experienced member of Oak-Tree staff. He will be moving across to the Oaklands main caretaker role from a similar position at Braeside.

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 to develop a love of reading.

We supported this charity for the first time last year and the organisers were amazed by the vast number of books the children donated. Oaklands plans to support this worthwhile charity again at the start of next term.

From Wednesday 13 to Friday 15 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 another 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 charity.

Dates for the Diary

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

Tuesday 1 December	Y3 & Y4: Parents virtual Coffee Morning with Mr Hagger, Mrs Osborn & Mrs Belej
Thursday 3 December	Reception – Y5: Flu Immunisation
Tuesday 8 December	Y5 & Y6: Parents virtual Coffee Morning with Mr Hagger, Mrs Osborn & Mrs Belej
Wednesday 9 December	LK – Y6: Christmas lunch and Virtual Panto
Wednesday 9 December	Y6: Flu Immunisation
Thursday 10 December	LK – Y6: Non-Uniform Day: Visit from Father Christmas and 'party time'
Friday 11 December	LK-Y6 Save the Children Fundraising Day: wear your Christmas jumper to school
Friday 11 December	Term finishes at lunchtime
	EYFS - 12.00noon
	Y1 and Y2 - 12.15pm
	Y3-Y6 12.30pm
Wednesday 6 January 2021	Start of Spring Term 2021

End of Term

Please remember that the Autumn Term finishes at lunchtime on Friday 11 December. There are no afternoon sessions.

May I take this opportunity to wish you and your families a very Happy Christmas and a peaceful and healthy New Year. I look forward to welcoming you and your children back to school on Wednesday 6 January 2021.

With very best wishes

Yours sincerely

Sue Belej

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Headmistress



OAK-TREE SCHOOLS is the group name of:

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

HEAD OFFICE ADDRESS: 6 ALBION HILL, LOUGHTON, ESSEX IG10 4RA

GROUP MANAGING PRINCIPAL & DIRECTOR: MR MATTHEW HAGGER B.A. (HONS), M.ED., PGCE CO-DIRECTORS: MR NICHOLAS HAGGER M.A. (OXON), MRS ANN HAGGER CERT. ED.

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