



Oaklands School

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HEADMISTRESS

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1 December 2022

Dear Parents

Re: **December 2022 Headmistress's Letter**

Unbelievably, this is my final Head's letter of 2022 and the end of my first term at Oaklands. I would like to thank you all for making me feel so welcome. As always, the final few weeks of the Autumn term are packed with events, activities and learning so please read through the dates list at the end of this letter and look out for more detailed emails pertaining to some events.

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 Autumn 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. We have also been busy finalising the references for our fantastic Year 6 pupils as they approach a very busy period with entrance examinations for their chosen secondary schools. They have now finished their mock exams and some have sat their first external examination. We wish them all the best of luck in January; they have worked incredibly hard.

We have competed in a range of sporting events or competitions where our pupils have shown good resilience and dedication in their victories and in their defeats. Our girls football team represented us at the Essex finals held at Chelmsford FC on 15 November and against extremely tough competition they did exceptionally well, holding their own for much of the tournament. Well done everyone who took part.

Our Year 4 to 6 swimmers competed in the ISA London North Swimming Gala on 18 November and performed brilliantly. There were 15 schools taking part in this Swimming Gala and every one of our team were at least in the top or middle places showing our excellent talent across Year 4 to 6. A special mention must go to Erin who finished 3rd in her 50m Front Crawl and will now represent London North at the Nationals in December! The Year 6 relay team managed to bring home a bronze medal too which was a fantastic achievement. Great swims by Arriana, Anais, Jude, Denzel, Erin, Lucy, Sammy, Ethan, George, Lucy, Ana, Arjun and Gabs! Well done to all the teams and of course Mr Paine, without his dedication and organisation these events would not go ahead.

Sadly, the Oak-Tree athletics event at the Peter May Centre was postponed due to essential maintenance work being carried out but we will host this event in the Spring term 2023.

The Early Years department has been particularly busy this term, Lower Kindergarten performed for the first time for their parents in November. They sang beautifully with the help of the Lower Kindergarten staff and Mrs Rathbone. We enjoyed a highly original performance by the Reception children at their Christmas Show, which included some amazing singing and dancing, closely followed by Upper Kindergarten entertaining their parents with their Nativity Play, which was wonderful. I never under estimate how daunting these first public performances are for our youngest pupils but with the skills, support and encouragement of our talented Early Years teaching team they always do so well. Thank you to all the staff who helped prepare the children for these performances.

Anti-Bullying Week

November 14-18 saw Oaklands and many other schools around the country take part in Anti-bullying Week. We began with an assembly and then followed up throughout the week with activities in class, highlighting what bullying is and who to tell. Bullying is never acceptable and we aim to create a culture where staff are vigilant and children have the confidence to tell us when things go wrong. I have included below a link for parents to the Anti-bullying Alliance homepage which has an information pack at the bottom of the page that you might find useful.

<https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/anti-bullying-week/parents-and-carers>

OPA

The OPA held their Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 16 November at 8.50am in the studio. It was great to have such a good turnout of parents for this event; the OPA has some fantastic ideas for this year that I hope you will all support.

Voting for the formation of a new Committee took place with the following results:

Chair – Lauren O’Shea

Co-Chair - Manpreet Johal

Deputy Chair – Gemma Davies

Deputy Co-Chair – Nav Dhanoa

Secretary – Krissy Sheringham

Co-Secretary – Victoria Epaminondas

Treasurer – Tom Tang

Thank you again to those parents who are busy fulfilling their roles as Class Reps for 2022-2023; your hard work is much appreciated, especially during the build up to Christmas. Please remember that the events organised by the OPA can only run if we have willing parent volunteers to help, no matter how much time you can offer all help is gratefully received.

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 the children can come to school on their Party or Disco day in party clothes with a Christmas jumper, 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 at the end of this letter for dates.

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 7 December at 2pm in St Mary’s Church, Loughton. The staff are working 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. Due to the fire capacity regulations of St Mary’s Church I am afraid that once again we shall have to limit tickets to one per child. Please do adhere to this on the day of the service we are bound by the rules of the venue and they cannot let us go over capacity.

Pantomimes

Children in EYFS and Years 1 and 2 will be entertained by ‘Out of the Box’ theatre company with a performance of Robin Hood on Thursday 8 December in the school hall. On the same day, Thursday 8 December, Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 will travel to the Millfield Theatre in Edmonton to watch a performance of Snow White and the Seven Superheroes. I know all the children are looking forward to these pantomimes; my thanks once again to the OPA for funding all these festive events.

Clubs

I thought it might be worth clarifying the seemingly early finish of the programme of after school clubs that normally run for 10 weeks each term. This term has lasted 12 weeks and 4 days, with 12 of the weeks starting on a Monday. We began our clubs on the first day of term in September but has resulted in the 10 weeks finishing quite early. We are looking at this across all four schools in preparation for next September and rest assured there will be some tea time club spaces for those parents who urgently need after school care.

Parking

Thank you to everyone who has helped support our 3PR parking initiative this half term. I never under estimate how busy the morning drop-off, sometimes of multiple children, to different schools can be. The element of competition has really helped and I feel we have already made Albion Hill a safer road to walk to school.

Fireworks

Thank you to everyone who helped at, and attended, our annual fireworks display. This was a wonderful community event involving all four of the Oak-Tree Schools. It was super to have musicians from Normanhurst and Braeside showcasing their talents on the stage and wonderful to see families across all of our schools coming together at one event.

Mornings in School

We have a flexible drop off procedure in the morning between 8.25am and 8.45am. There are always activities taking place from 8.25am where children can do warm up activities for the lesson ahead, change their reading books and sometimes go through their response to marking activities with teachers and TAs. The children are always purposefully deployed as soon as they arrive in school.

Reports

All children will receive an Autumn Term report which will be sent to your portal on Monday 12 December. Further details on how to access these will follow in due course.

Coffee Mornings

We will continue to hold our annual informal coffee mornings on Tuesday mornings with myself and either Mr Hagger or Mrs Osborn until the end of term and into the New Year. 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 from 8.45am to 9.30am. Please refer to the table below to check the date for your child's class.

AUTUMN TERM	
Tues 29 Nov 8.45-9.30am	Year 3
Tues 6 Dec 8.45-9.30am	Year 2
SPRING TERM	
Tues 17 Jan 2022 8.45-9.30am	Year 1
Tues 24 Jan 8.45-9.30am	Reception
Tues 31 Jan 2022 8.45-9.30am	Upper Kindergarten
Tues 7 Feb 2022 8.45-9.30am	Lower Kindergarten

Forthcoming Events

The following list provides an update of events planned for the remainder of this half term:

Monday 28 November	Year 1 & Year 4 Drop In 8.25-8.50am UK Foxes & Rabbits Drop-In 2.35-3pm
Tuesday 29 November	Year 3 Coffee Morning 8.45am – 9.30am
Thursday 1 December	UK Foxes, Rabbits, Badgers Play to parents 9am ISA U11s Athletics at Peter May Year 6 11+ Mock Exams
Friday 2 December	UK Hedgehogs and Squirrels Play to parents 9am
Monday 5 December	Reception Drop In 8.25-8.50am and 2.35-3pm
Tuesday 6 December	Year 2 Coffee Morning 8.45am – 9.30am Year 1-Year 6 Carol Service Rehearsal
Wednesday 7 December	Year 1-Year 6 Carol Service at St. Mary's Church 2pm
Thursday 8 December	LK, UK, Reception, Year 1 & Year 2 Pantomime at Oaklands School Year 3-Year 6 Pantomime at Millfield Theatre
Monday 12 December	Year 6 Christmas Pizza Lunch UK, LK, Reception, Year 1 & Year 2 Santa's Grotto
Tuesday 13 December	Year 3, Year 4 & Year 5 Santa's Grotto Christmas Jumper Day Christmas Lunch Day Christmas Discos LK Butterflies Tea Party 3.15-4.00pm (new starters)
Wednesday 14 December	Year 5 Victorian Christmas Workshop
Thursday 15 December	Last Day of term – LK, UK, Reception, Year 1 & Year 2 12pm finish Last Day of term – Year 3, Year 4, Year 5 & Year 6 12.15pm finish

Spring Term begins on Tuesday 10 January 2023

End of Term

Please remember that the Autumn Term finishes at lunchtime on **Thursday 15 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 10 January 2023**.

With kind regards and seasonal greetings

Yours sincerely



Gretchen Copeman
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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