



Oaklands School

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HEADMISTRESS

Mrs Gretchen Copeman B.Ed. (Hons)

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2 October 2023

Dear Parents

Re: **October 2023 Headmistress's Letter**

This half-term is flying by and we are fast approaching our half-term break. What a busy start to the academic year. The children have all settled back well into the routine of school life.

Our School Council, Eco and Sports teams have now been elected and those pupils have begun meetings and are undertaking initiatives around the school. They have already generated some very interesting ideas for consideration.

Many pupils have received our Friday 'Congratulations' emails and it has been a pleasure to read them all. Our two Year 3 classes were extremely proud of themselves for demonstrating resilience during the Oak-Tree Camp. They made new friends, put up their own tents and braved, under canvas, a night in the fields of Oaklands. Year 5 have returned to school full of enthusiasm and with a wonderful attitude to learning and were the first class of the year to receive a Head's Award for their conduct in school. Well done Year 5!

Our new Reception, Lower and Upper Kindergarten children have begun to settle into the rhythms of school life and they have embraced their learning extremely well. I am impressed with how much they have already learnt from our dedicated staff. A huge well done to our Early Years pupils.

I have been impressed with the 'can do' attitude of every one of our pupils since their return in September, their kindness, resilience and excellent attitude to learning is most impressive, they have embraced an 'anything is possible' attitude.

The September Newsletter gave a picture of how much is going on in the school. We have had information events for Lower and Upper Kindergarten, Reception, Year 1 and Year 3 parents, a number of Drop-in Sessions for parents to visit their child's classroom, Oak-Tree Group Year 3 camp, House, Sport and School Council meetings, Harvest assembly with a visit from Tony Miller from the Whitechapel Mission and Jeans for Genes day.

The extra-curricular club programme is underway, which now includes new cookery, theatre and gymnastic clubs which I am delighted so many children are enjoying. Many of our clubs are now full but please contact clubs@oaklandsschool.co.uk and the office staff are happy to add names to our waiting lists. We try very hard to accommodate as many children as possible but I am afraid not every child can have their first choice of club every night.

We have welcomed a new violin teacher to our peripatetic team this term. If you would like to be informed when vacancies arise please contact the office staff.

Open Morning Tuesday 3 October

We are hoping for fine weather on Tuesday for our Open Morning, which is for both prospective and current parents to view the school at work. Our Year 6 Prefects, along with some of our Year 5 pupils, will act as the official guides and I know they will represent Oaklands in its best light to our visitors.

As part of our presentation to parents, our Head Boy and Head Girl will be delivering their first public speeches.

Parents' Evenings, October 2023

Formal Parents' Evenings for Reception to Year 6 pupils will be held just before half term on Wednesday 18 October and Thursday 19 October.

Upper Kindergarten parents are invited to attend a Parents Evening meeting with your child's keyworker on Tuesday 17 October.

Lower Kindergarten parents are invited to attend their 'Settling in' meeting with your child's keyworker on Wednesday 18 October.

Further details will be sent to you later this week.

Coffee Mornings

Mr Matthew Hagger, Mrs Osborn and I will be holding our annual coffee mornings on Tuesday mornings in November. We would really like to hear from you at these events so please check the table below for your year groups time:

AUTUMN TERM	
Tuesday 14 November 8.30am – 9.45am	Year 3 to Year 6
Tuesday 28 November 8.30am – 9.45am	Year 1 and Year 2

Coffee mornings for Lower and Upper Kindergarten and Reception parents will be in the New Year.

Mild Illness and School Attendance

The Government has published some guidance for parents about school attendance if their children are slightly unwell, which is based on advice from Professor Chris Whitty, the Chief Medical Officer, as well as other eminent medical professionals.

Parents can view the letter here: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

The guidance says that it is usually appropriate for parents and carers to send their children to school with mild respiratory illnesses. This would include general cold symptoms: a minor cough, runny nose or sore throat. However, children should not be sent to school if they have a temperature of 38°C or above.

The guidance also offers advice for parents whose children may feel anxious about coming to school: [guidance on mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance](#).

Uniform Reminder

As the weather begins to turn colder please ensure that children have coats, hats and gloves in school every day as we will spend as much time as possible outside unless the weather prevents us. After half term we return to winter uniform for all pupils, please check the website for specific items that need to be worn. All uniform can be purchased from Forest Casuals in Loughton. If you have any questions regarding PE kit please email Mr Paine apaine@oaklandsschool.co.uk

Can I remind you please that items of religious jewellery may be worn to school but they must be either removed or covered for PE lessons, Essex SACRE recommend a bandage or sports band to cover religious bracelets to prevent them from getting caught on equipment and causing injury.

Morning Work

It might be useful to remind you all that children should arrive at school before 8.45am. It's surprising how much work is done in the first 15 minutes of the school day. This is a time when teachers give feedback and support to individual children and help them complete the next steps in their learning. Arriving on time sets children up for the day ahead.

Sports

Mr Paine has been very busy diarising sporting events for this academic year. We will write with further information about fixtures this term which include house sports, Oak-Tree and WESSP events for lots of different year groups.

Miss Dee and I will attend the ISA Autumn Study conference later this term. This is an excellent opportunity for us to meet with leadership teams from schools across the country, to share good practice and bring fresh ideas back to school.

Dates for the Diary

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

Tuesday 3 October	9.15am – 11am	Open Morning	All Parents Welcome
Thursday 5 October	9am – 3pm	Trip to Gunpowder Mills	Year 5
Friday 6 October	9am – 3pm	Trip to Mountfitchet Castle	Year 1
Thursday 12 October	5pm – 6pm	Parents Meeting	Year 5
Friday 13 October	9am – 3pm	Trip to St Pauls Cathedral	Year 2
Tuesday 17 October	3pm – 6pm	Parents Evening	Upper Kindergarten
	9am – 12pm	11+ Mock Exams	Year 6
	1.30pm – 3pm	7-a-Side Football @ Peter May	U11 by Invitation
	1.30pm – 3pm	7-a-Side Netball @ Peter May	U11 by Invitation
Wednesday 18 October	3.15pm – 6pm	Parents Evening	Reception
	3.30pm – 6pm	Parents Evening	Year 1 – Year 6
	3pm – 6pm	Settling in Chats	Lower Kindergarten
Thursday 19 October	9am – 12pm	11+ Mock Exams	Year 6
	1.30pm – 3pm	Trip to Buddhist Retreat	Year 4
	3.15pm – 6pm	Parents Evening	Reception
	3.30pm – 6pm	Parents Evening	Year 1 – Year 6
Friday 20 October	9.30am – 3pm	Maths Workshop in School	Year 1 – Year 6
Monday 23 October – Friday 3 November – Half Term			
Sunday 5 November	PM	Oak-Tree Fireworks at Oaklands	
Tuesday 7 November	9am – 3pm	Trip to Celtic Harmony	Year 3
Thursday 9 November	AM/PM	Individual School Photos	Whole School
Tuesday 14 November	8.30am – 9.45am	Coffee Morning	Year 3 - Year 6
	9am – 3.30pm	Trip to Verulamium	Year 3
	1pm – 3.30pm	7+ Interviews with Mrs Osborn	Year 2
Wednesday 15 November	9am – 12pm	Florence Nightingale W/shop	Year 2
	3.30pm – 5pm	Oak-Tree Maths at Braeside	KS2 by Invitation
Thursday 16 November	9am – 10am	Assembly to Parents	Lower Kindergarten
	8.25am – 8.45am	Drop In Session	Year 1, Year 3 & Year 4
	7.30am – 12pm	London North Cross Country	By Invitation
Friday 17 November	8.25am – 8.45am	Drop In Session	Year 2, Year 5 & Year 6
Tuesday 21 November	2.30pm – 3pm	Drop In Session	UK Foxes & Rabbits
	9am – 12pm	11+ Mock Exams	Year 6
Wednesday 22 November	9am – 10am	Christmas Concert to Parents	Rec Woodpeckers & Owls A
	2.30 – 3pm	Drop In Session	Badgers, Hedgehogs & Squirrels
Thursday 23 November	9am – 12pm	11+ Mock Exams	Year 6
	10am – 1pm	London North Girls Football	U11 by Invitation
Friday 24 November	9am – 10am	Christmas Concert to Parents	Rec Robins & Owls B
	10am – 1pm	SportsHall Athletics Comp	U11 by Invitation
Tuesday 28 November	8.30am – 9.45am	Coffee Morning	Year 1 and Year 2
	1.30pm – 3.30pm	Athletics @ Peter May	U11 by Invitation
Wednesday 29 November	2.30 – 3pm	Drop in Session	Reception
Thursday 30 November	9am – 10am	Christmas Show to Parents	UK Foxes, Rabbits and Badgers
Friday 1 December	9am – 10am	Christmas Show to Parents	UK Hedgehogs and Squirrels
Wednesday 6 December	2pm – 5pm	Carol Service at St Marys	Year 3 – Year 6
Thursday 7 December	9am – 10am	Nativity Play to Parents	Year 1 and Year 2
Friday 8 December	9am – 10am	Nativity Play to Parents	Year 1 and Year 2

Monday 11 December	AM/PM 2.30pm – 4.30pm AM/PM	Christmas Disco Christmas Disco Santa's Grotto	LK, UK, Reception, Y1, Y2 Year 3 – Year 5 LK, UK and Reception
Tuesday 12 December	12pm – 3pm 9am – 10.30am	Pantomime at Millfield Pantomime at Oaklands	Year 1 - Year 6 LK, UK and Reception
Wednesday 13 December	AM/PM AM/PM	Christmas Jumper/Dinner Day Santa's Grotto	Whole School Year 1 – Year 6
Thursday 14 December	12pm 12.15pm 12.30pm	Last Day of Term Last Day of Term Last Day of Term	LK, UK and Reception Year 1 and Year 2 Year 3 – Year 6
Friday 15 December – Monday 8 January – Half Term			

Parking

Thank you to all parents who park considerately on our surrounding roads or use the carpark. Our new crossing patrol warden Kim, is on the High Road every morning to help pupils and parents cross the main road safely.

A polite reminder that you should not obstruct any of our neighbour's driveways, no matter how short the period. It brings Oaklands reputation into disrepute. I have received photographs of parents and their cars in the last week which is extremely disappointing.

Reading for Pleasure

At this time of year, I like to publish the link below which offers some excellent books for all ages. We promote reading for pleasure throughout the school and are keen to encourage pupils to read widely, in addition to the books we have in school. <https://schoolreadinglist.co.uk/category/reading-lists-for-primary-school-pupils/>

Keeping Children Safe

In school, we use a variety of resources to support the safeguarding of children and Essex has recently reminded all settings that online safety can be supported at home with the following resources.

CEOP, part of the National Crime Agency, helps keep children and young people safe from sexual abuse and grooming online. Their education programme provides training, resources and information to professionals working with children, young people, and their families: thinkuknow.co.uk.

The second half of the Autumn Term, as we approach Christmas, is always incredibly busy in school, not only with school work but with preparation for seasonal events. There will be lots of opportunities for you to attend a school event which involves your child and I look forward to sharing these special moments with you and your children. Parents of Year 1 and 2 children are reminded that their Christmas Nativity, in response to feedback, will take place in the school hall this year. More details will follow. Years 3 to 6 will have their Christmas Service at St. Marys Church Loughton as usual. We hope that by splitting the year groups we can accommodate 2 tickets per family for each event.

I have enjoyed welcoming you to school in the mornings and meeting some of you at various events during this half term. I wish you all a lovely half term break.

With kind regards

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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