



Oaklands School

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HEADMISTRESS

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1 December 2023

Dear Parents

Re: December 2023 Headmistress's Letter

Unbelievably, this is my final letter of 2023 to you all. Christmas is now in full swing at Oaklands and it has been a pleasure to welcome our EYFS parents to some of our first performances. 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 wonderful performance by the Reception children of their Christmas Show, which included some amazing singing and dancing, closely followed by Upper Kindergarten entertaining their parents with their Nativity Play. I never underestimate 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. We have more performances to follow for our Key Stage 1 children and parents and then our Christmas Service for Years 3 -6 at St. Mary's church in Loughton.

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. We try extremely hard to adhere to the published dates so that parents have as much notice as possible, however, there are occasions that dates may have to alter slightly. We aim to publish any amendments in plenty of time.

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 so 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 and competitions, where our pupils have shown good resilience and dedication in their victories and in their defeats. Well done everyone who took part. I am delighted to announce that this year we have 3 pupils representing Oaklands in the ISA National finals swimming gala at Stratford and next term we have two pupils competing in the ISA National finals for Cross Country. A huge well done to Jude, Sammy, Ethan, Erin and Jimmy! I am also delighted to share that our Girls Football team won the plate in the recent ISA London North competition. A huge thank you to Mr Paine and the staff who support the children at these events.

Christmas Parties

The children at Oaklands are very lucky to have such a supportive OPA who have organised various pantomimes, parties and presents from Father Christmas. Remember that the children can come to school on Monday 11 December in their party clothes for their Christmas discos. Christmas jumper day takes place on Wednesday 13 December, please ensure children 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.

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 performances from all 4 of our schools showcasing their talents on the stage and wonderful to see families across all of our schools coming together at one event.

Anti-Bullying Week

November 13-17 saw Oaklands and many other schools around the country take part in Anti-bullying week. We began with an assembly with activities in class throughout the week to highlight 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. The following is a link to the Anti-bullying Alliance homepage, which has an information pack that you might find useful: <https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/anti-bullying-week/parents-and-carers>.

Pantomimes

Children in EYFS will be entertained by 'Out of the Box' theatre company with a performance of 'Sleeping Beauty' on Tuesday 12 December in the school hall. On the same day, years 1-6 will travel to the Millfield Theatre in Edmonton to watch a performance of 'Sleeping Beauty and the Guardians of Dreamland'! I know the children are looking forward to these pantomimes; my thanks once again to the OPA for funding all these festive events.

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 made Albion Hill a safer road to walk to school. However, we do still have several parents parking across driveways, or double parking on Albion Park. Please remember, when parking that emergency vehicles need to be able to move freely up and down the road. Please also remember it is never acceptable to stop or park on the Zig Zags painted outside the school or engage in disputes with our residents.

Site Security

As most of you will already have seen, our car park and side gate now lock automatically at 9am and are scheduled to reopen at 2.30 pm. If you are ever in the car park after 9 am and need to exit please use the green push button located on the final stretch to the exit. During the school day we request that parents either buzz the car park gates for entry or enter school from Albion Hill. The front door of the school and the approach from Albion Hill is covered by CCTV, along with many other areas of the site.

Mornings in School

We have a flexible drop off procedure in the morning between 8.25 and 8.45am. Please rest assured 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 TA's. The children are always purposefully deployed as soon as they arrive in school.

Reports

All children in Reception to Year 6 will receive an Autumn Term report which will be sent to your portal. I will write to you with further details on how to access these in due course. Reports look a little different this year as we have updated the format, however the information we are sharing is the same.

Dates for the Diary

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

Friday 1 December	9am – 9.30am	Christmas Show to Parents	UK Hedgehogs and Squirrels
Wednesday 6 December	2pm – 3.30pm	Carol Service at St Marys	Year 3 – Year 6
Thursday 7 December	9am – 10am	Nativity Play to Parents	Year 1V and Year 2S
Friday 8 December	9am – 10am	Nativity Play to Parents	Year 1C and Year 2Z

Monday 11 December	AM/PM 12pm 2.30pm – 4.30pm	Christmas Disco Pizza Lunch Christmas Disco	LK, UK, Reception, Y1, Y2 Year 6 Year 3 – Year 5 LK, UK and Reception Year 1 - Year 6 LK, UK and Reception Whole School Year 1 – Year 6 LK, UK and Reception Year 1 and Year 2 Year 3 – Year 6
Tuesday 12 December	AM/PM 12pm – 4.15pm 9am – 10.30am	Santa's Grotto Pantomime at Millfield Theatre Pantomime at Oaklands	
Wednesday 13 December	AM/PM	Christmas Jumper/Dinner Day	
Thursday 14 December	AM/PM 12pm 12.15pm 12.30pm	Santa's Grotto Last Day of Term Last Day of Term Last Day of Term	
Friday 15 December – Monday 8 January – Half Term			
Tuesday 9 January	8.30am – 9.45am	Coffee Morning	Reception By invitation Lower & Upper Kindergarten By invitation By invitation Year 4C By invitation Year 3Ca
Thursday 11 January	AM	U11 London North Boys Football	
Tuesday 16 January	8.30am – 9.45am	Coffee Morning	
Monday 22 January	AM/PM	ISA London North Indoor Athletics	
Wednesday 31 January	AM/PM	U11 London North Netball Championship	
Thursday 1 February	9am – 9.30am	Class Assembly to Parents	
Tuesday 6 February	PM	U11 Tag Rugby Festival 7-a-side-mixed	
Thursday 8 February	9am – 9.30am	Class Assembly to Parents	
Monday 12 February – Friday 16 February – Half Term			
Tuesday 20 February	3.30pm – 6pm 5pm	Parents Evening Young Mariners Parents Meeting	Year 6 Year 4 and 5 Year 3Co Years 4, 5 and 6 Year 2S Year 5 and 6 Year 2Z
Thursday 22 February	9am – 9.30am	Class Assembly to Parents	
Monday 26 February	AM	Swimming Gala	
Thursday 29 February	9am – 9.30am	Class Assembly to Parents	
Friday 1 March	AM/PM	Tag-Rugby	
Tuesday 5 March	9am – 9.30am	Class Assembly to Parents	
Wednesday 6 March	AM/PM 3.30pm – 5.30pm	Book Fair in School Oak-Tree Spelling Bee at Oaklands	Whole School Years 3 – 6 by Invitation Whole School Whole School Whole School Whole School Whole School
Thursday 7 March	AM/PM	Book Fair in School	
Friday 8 March	AM/PM AM/PM	Book Fair in School World Book Day	Year 1V Year 3 Year 1C Years 1 – 5 Whole School LK, UK and Reception Year 1 and Year 2 Year 3 – Year 6
Monday 11 March	AM/PM	Book Fair in School	
Tuesday 12 March	AM/PM	Book Fair in School	
Wednesday 13 March	AM/PM	Book Fair in School	
Thursday 14 March	9am – 9.30am AM/PM	Class Assembly to Parents Trip to Verulamium Museum	
Friday 15 March	9am – 9.30am	Class Assembly to Parents	
Wednesday 20 March	3.30pm – 6pm	Parents Evening	
Friday 22 March	AM/PM	Easter Bunny	
Wednesday 27 March	12pm 12.15pm 12.30pm	Last Day of Term Last Day of Term Last Day of Term	
Thursday 28 March – Wednesday 17 April – Half Term			

I look forward to seeing you all at our festive events before we break up and would like to wish you all a relaxing and safe Christmas 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

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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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