



Oaklands School

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HEADMISTRESS

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9 January 2024

Dear Parents

Re: January 2024 Headmistress's Letter

Welcome back to you all and I hope you had a wonderful, festive break with family and friends. Thank you very much for the lovely Christmas cards and gifts you and your children gave me and the rest of the staff at the end of term.

We have another busy Spring Term ahead so please regularly check our website and your Portal/Groupcall for information. Where sports events are listed in the date list you will be notified separately if your child is taking part.

We shall be continuing with our programme of coffee mornings for parents and there are some class assemblies and plays which parents will be invited to attend. Parents Evenings will take place during March; however, Year 6 will have a slightly earlier Parents Evening in February. Our 'Drop-in' sessions for parents to informally view their children's work, will also continue during this half term.

The Spring Term sees some of our pupils, particularly in Year 6, take entrance examinations to a number of independent secondary schools. I know you join me and the Oaklands staff in wishing them all the very best of luck in these exams.

OPA

I would like to, once again, thank the OPA for funding all the wonderful Christmas events for the children.

My thanks to the OPA committee, class representatives and parent volunteers who gave up their time to wrap Santa gifts and supervise the discos in the final week of term, great fun was had by all. The children all enjoyed 'Skittleman' and his antics!

Our Grotto this year was wonderful and I would like to thank the OPA, who gave up part of their time to transform the library into a magical wonderland. My thanks also go to Father Christmas who made a special guest appearance this year!

The pantomimes were a great success, with EYFS entertained by Out of the Box productions in the school hall and KS1 and KS2 going to the Millfield Theatre.

Christmas lunch, with crackers and party hats, was amazing on the last Wednesday of term; thank you to Ian, our chef, and his team in the kitchen. Year 6 also thoroughly enjoyed their lunch at God's Own Pizza in Loughton.

We ended our Christmas festivities with a whole school assembly, singing carols, playing instruments and celebrating with our Behaviour, Friendship and Merit awards together with the awarding of our Sports badges. We also celebrated the numerous sporting achievements we have had this term with Mr Paine.

Curriculum Overviews and Timetables

The Curriculum overviews for each age group are published on your parent portals every term. They provide you with detailed information about the teaching content in each subject. I hope you will continue to find them useful documents to refer to during 2024. We also publish current timetables for each age group to help ensure that each child wears their PE kit to school on the correct day/s of the school week. For some year groups timetables remain unchanged throughout the year, however, after the February half term, Year 3 to 6 will have new timetables to reflect the change in swimming.

Charities

The children were incredibly busy in their charity work last term. We began with generous gifts of tinned food and toiletries filling the school stage at Harvest in October, which were gratefully received by the Whitechapel Mission. The School raised £237.11 on 'Jeans for Genes' Day in October, £228.4 for 'Children in Need'. Our Christmas Jumper event raised £178.50 for Crisis at Christmas and the EYFS Festive Feet danceathon raised £130. Thank you for your generous donations!

House Points Cup

Congratulations to Beech House who won the House Points Cup for Autumn Term 2 with the grand total of 283 points; Holly came second with 233 points; Willow came a close third with 162 points and Sycamore gained 150 points. Well done to all the Year 1 to Year 6 pupils for working so hard to achieve such grand totals in just six weeks!

Very excitingly, our Reception pupils will all be in Houses on their return in January and they will also be taking part in our Friday assemblies so they can celebrate success with their respective Houses throughout the year.

Collection at the end of school

Please ensure you notify the school office before the end of the day if someone different is collecting your child. If you would like to notify your child's teacher please can you also copy in the office staff. There are occasions when teaching staff are too busy to look at emails during the day whilst they are teaching. All children now have a password and you should share this only with trusted adults you are sending to collect your child.

Can I also remind you that children should not play on any of the outdoor equipment and climbing frames either before or after school, there are times when this equipment is undergoing maintenance and cannot be used.

School Uniform

All children should be wearing the correct school uniform, including the school scarf, hat and gloves. All items of school clothing and PE kit should be clearly labelled. Please can I remind you that only regulation green tights should be worn under pinafores, no leggings please, and no white tights in the winter months. Blazers must be worn every day and at this time of year, children should wear their winter coat to school every day as they will be going out to play, except in adverse weather conditions. Year 1 and 2, as per my letter before Christmas, should bring named wellies to leave in school on our return to school.

Snow

This is usually the term when the weather turns extremely cold and brings us snow. Our maintenance team work hard to make the school paths, steps and entrances clear and safe for use in the event of snow, however this can take time in the morning. Please check the website for updates and announcements in the event of heavy snow. We also aim to text parents by 7.15am to provide up to date information about the condition of the roads surrounding the school and the organisation of the school day ahead. Please be aware that on rare occasions we may shorten the school day or cancel our wrap around care if the weather is particularly bad. This is to allow time for our staff to travel safely to and from school.

Coffee Mornings

Coffee mornings for Years 1 to 6 took place last term and were well attended. We welcome this opportunity to talk to parents on an informal basis to find out what we are doing well and ideas for areas of improvement. This term, parents of Reception and Upper and Lower Kindergarten children have the opportunity to attend their Coffee morning on the following dates:

Tuesday 9 January	8.45am – 9.30am	Reception
Tuesday 16 January	8.45am – 9.30am	Upper and Lower Kindergarten

We always write in advance of each coffee morning with further details.

'Drop-in' sessions

The 'Drop-in Sessions' that we held during the Autumn Term continue to be very popular and I received many positive comments about them. The children enjoyed showing off their work and I know many of you found them useful too.

We plan to hold another set of 'Drop-in' Sessions this half term. Please note below the dates and times for each year group. Please note that for Reception only, there are both morning and afternoon drop ins to ease congestion in the corridor.

Tuesday 6 February	8.25am – 8.50am	Reception, Year 2, 5 and 6
	2.30pm – 3pm	Upper Kindergarten Foxes and Rabbits
Wednesday 7 February	8.25am – 8.50am	Year 1, 3 and 4
Thursday 8 February	2.30pm – 3pm	Upper Kindergarten Badgers, Hedgehogs and Squirrels

Parents' Evenings, February 2024

Formal Parents' Evenings for Reception to Year 5 pupils will be held on March 20 and 21 this year and I will write, in due course, with more information. Please note Year 6 Parents' Evening will be on Tuesday 20 February. UK Parents' Evening will take place on 18 March, followed by LK on 19 March.

PSHE Jigsaw Scheme of Work

During this half term, pupils will be exploring, at an age appropriate level, the topic of 'Dreams and Goals' which includes:

- How to stay motivated when doing something challenging
- Showing resilience to keep trying even when the task is difficult
- Being able to work well with a partner or in a group
- Striving to always have a positive attitude in order to overcome obstacles
- Making a determined effort to help others to achieve their goals
- Coping with constructive criticism and overcoming disappointment
- Enjoying and celebrating the feelings of success when goals are achieved, however big or small
- Recognising that not every dream is easy to achieve but is still worth pursuing.

In the first assembly and PSHE lesson of the term, pupils will be invited to create their dreams and goals for the forthcoming weeks. We will be using the image of a rollercoaster to help the pupils visualise that the pathway to achieving a dream or goal is a bit like a roller-coaster, full of ups and downs and twists and turns which may feel uncomfortable and exciting at different times; but by staying positive and being resilient, they will finally get to the end of the roller-coaster and achieve their aspirations.

Parking

I am delighted to report that the 3PR scheme worked last half term. We will continue this initiative in the Spring term and look forward to announcing our class winners of 2024. We still have a minority of parents who are double parking on Albion Hill, in the event of an emergency response vehicle trying to get to school, double parking would make this impossible at times. Please engage politely with the residents of Albion Hill. Number plates and photographs are often sent to both myself and Mr Hagger and we have often needed to apologise for inconsiderate parking that has let the school down. I appreciate your support in making Albion Hill a safer road.

Information

I often like to share resources with you all and many of them are taken directly from Essex information pages for parents. You may find some of the resources on the page below useful. Please note not all of them are suitable or relevant to parents of primary aged children but the emotional well-being podcast is very informative.

<https://essexfamilywellbeing.co.uk/services/emotional-wellbeing/resources-for-parents/>

Dates for the Diary

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

Tuesday 9 January	8.45am – 9.30am	Coffee Morning	Reception
Thursday 11 January	AM	U11 London North Boys Football	By invitation
Tuesday 16 January	8.45am – 9.30am	Coffee Morning	Lower & Upper Kindergarten
Monday 22 January	AM/PM	ISA London North Indoor Athletics	By invitation
Wednesday 31 January	AM/PM	U11 London North Netball Championship	By invitation
Thursday 1 February	9am – 9.30am	Class Assembly to Parents	Year 4C
Tuesday 6 February	PM	U11 Tag Rugby Festival 7-a-side-mixed	By invitation
	8.25am – 8.50am	Drop-In Session	Reception, Year 2, 5 and 6
	2.30pm – 3pm	Drop-In Session	Upper Kindergarten Foxes and Rabbits
Wednesday 7 February	8.25am – 8.50am	Drop-In Session	Year 1, 3 and 4
	3.30pm – 6pm	Settling In Chats	Lower Kindergarten
Thursday 8 February	9am – 9.30am	Class Assembly to Parents	Year 3Ca
	2.30pm – 3pm	Drop-In Session	Badgers, Hedgehogs, Squirrels
Monday 12 February – Friday 16 February – Half Term			
Tuesday 20 February	3.30pm – 6pm	Parents Evening	Year 6
	5pm	Young Mariners Parents Meeting	Year 4 and 5
Thursday 22 February	9am – 9.30am	Class Assembly to Parents	Year 3Co
Monday 26 February	AM	Swimming Gala	Years 4, 5 and 6
Thursday 29 February	9am – 9.30am	Class Assembly to Parents	Year 2S
Friday 1 March	AM/PM	Tag-Rugby	Year 5 and 6
Monday 4 March	9am – 10am	Mother's Day Fun Session	Reception
	1.45pm – 2.45pm	Mother's Day Fun Session	Reception
Tuesday 5 March	9am – 9.30am	Class Assembly to Parents	Year 2Z
Wednesday 6 March	9am – 9.30am	Mother's Day Assembly to Parents	Upper Kindergarten
	AM/PM	Book Fair in School	Whole School
	3.30pm – 5.30pm	Oak-Tree Spelling Bee at Oaklands	Years 3 – 6 by Invitation
Thursday 7 March	9am – 9.30am	Mother's Day Assembly to Parents	Lower Kindergarten
	AM/PM	Book Fair in School	Whole School
	1.45pm – 2.45pm	Mother's Day Fun Session	Reception
Friday 8 March	AM/PM	Book Fair in School	Whole School
	AM/PM	World Book Day	Whole School
Monday 11 March	AM/PM	Book Fair in School	Whole School
Tuesday 12 March	AM/PM	Book Fair in School	Whole School

Wednesday 13 March	AM/PM	Book Fair in School	Whole School
Thursday 14 March	9am – 9.30am	Class Assembly to Parents	Year 1V
	AM/PM	Trip to Verulamium Museum	Year 3
Friday 15 March	9am – 9.30am	Class Assembly to Parents	Year 1C
Monday 18 March	3.30pm – 6pm	Parents Evening	Upper Kindergarten
Tuesday 19 March	3.30pm – 6pm	Parents Evening	Lower Kindergarten
Wednesday 20 March	3.30pm – 6pm	Parents Evening	Years Reception – 5
Thursday 21 March	3.30pm – 6pm	Parents Evening	Years Reception – 5
Friday 22 March	AM/PM	Easter Bunny	Whole School
Wednesday 27 March	12pm	Last Day of Term	LK, UK and Reception
	12.15pm	Last Day of Term	Year 1 and Year 2
	12.30pm	Last Day of Term	Year 3 – Year 6
Thursday 28 March – Wednesday 17 April – Easter Break			

I look forward to seeing you all this term at the various school events we have planned.

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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