



Oaklands School

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HEADMISTRESS

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2 December 2024

Dear Parents

Re: December 2024 Headmistress's Letter

This is my last Head's letter to you all of 2024 and what a busy year it has been. 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 performances. 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, our Nativity from KS1 children and then our Christmas Carol Service for Years 3 to 6 at St. Mary's church in Loughton. I hope you all enjoy these events.

This term has been packed with events, activities and learning and we have more to come so please read through the dates list at the end of this letter. We try extremely hard to adhere to the published dates so that parents have as much notice as possible, however, there are occasions when 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, I see 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 been finalising the references for our fantastic Year 6 pupils as they approach a very busy period with entrance exams for their chosen secondary schools. They have now finished their mock exams and some have sat their first external examinations. We wish them all the best of luck for the final push in January, they have worked incredibly hard.

We have participated in a variety of sporting events and competitions, and our pupils have demonstrated remarkable resilience and dedication, both in their victories and in their defeats. Congratulations to all who took part! For the first time in many years, we entered a gymnastics competition, and I would like to commend all the pupils who participated in the trials. Given the fierce competition, it was not feasible to select everyone who tried out. Well done to all!

Inspection Report

I trust you have all had the opportunity to review our Inspection report. Although gradings are no longer provided, I believe the narrative within the report effectively highlights the numerous strengths of our school. I was particularly pleased to note that, overwhelmingly, our students feel safe and happy in their school environment. The Inspection team rightly acknowledged that all children make good progress during their time with us.

Anti-Bullying Week

In November Oaklands and many other schools around the country took 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 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 Friday 4 October in the studio. It was fantastic 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 - Geraldine Chapman	Co-Chair - Lauren O'Shea
Deputy Chair - Nav Dhanoa	Co Deputy - Sarah
Secretary - Krissy Sheringham	Co Secretary - Ken Jadeja
Treasurer - Tom Tang	

Thank you again to those parents who are busy fulfilling their roles as Class Reps for 2024-2025; 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. So please contact them if you feel you have time to help at any of the events this year.

Christmas Parties

Christmas celebrations are well underway in school with our performances to parents but we also have Christmas parties, Christmas Jumper Day, Santa's Grotto and our wonderful Christmas lunch to come. Details of which have been relayed in separate emails.

Pantomimes

Children in EYFS will be entertained by 'Out of the Box' theatre company with a performance of 'Dick Whittington' on Wednesday 11 December in the school hall. On Tuesday 10 December, Years 1-6 will travel to the Millfield Theatre in Edmonton to watch a performance of 'Aladdin'. I know the children are looking forward to these pantomimes; my thanks once again to the OPA for funding all these festive events.

Parking

Parking issues on Albion Hill remain a concern. While most parents either park or drop off their children in the designated car park, there are still a few who continue to inconvenience our neighbours. We kindly ask everyone to adhere to the posted signs on Albion Hill and pay attention to the timing restrictions. Please avoid blocking our neighbours' driveways. Additionally, although some parking spots may be legal, they can be rather inconsiderate. A helpful guideline when parking is to consider whether a fire engine could easily pass your vehicle in case it needs access to our school. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Site Security

As you all know, our car park and side gate now close automatically at 9am and are scheduled to reopen at 2.30pm. If you are ever in the car park after 9am 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 buzz the car park gates for entry. The Albion Hill entrance with our new gates is unlocked at 7.25am and closes at 8.45am, it then reopens at 2.45pm. The gate is heavy, but please push it during open hours. At all other times please use the buzzer and the office will open the gate remotely.

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 great 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.

Mornings in School

We offer a flexible drop-off procedure each morning between 8.25 and 8.45am. Rest assured, there are always engaging activities available starting at 8.25, allowing children to participate in warm-up exercises for the lessons ahead, change their reading books, and occasionally review their marked work with teachers and teaching assistants. Children are purposefully engaged as soon as they arrive at school.

Reports

All children, Reception to Year 6, will receive an Autumn Term report which will be sent to your portal on Monday 9 December. Further details on how to access these will follow in due course.

Morning Drop off

Please can I remind you that children must be supervised until 8.25am, when staff are ready to receive them in the mornings, unless you have booked breakfast club. There are no staff to supervise your children before this time. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Toilets

When dropping children in the mornings and collecting them in the afternoon, please ensure children use the toilets situated on the slope between Upper and Lower Kindergarten and not the Medical room in the main building. This room needs to be kept free for emergencies.

Dates for the Diary

The following list provides a current list of events planned for the rest of the Autumn Term:

Tuesday 3 December	All Day	Carol Service Rehearsal	Year 3 to Year 6
Wednesday 4 December	2-3.30pm	Carol Service at St Marys, Loughton	Year 3 to Year 6 Parents
Thursday 5 December	9am	KS1 Nativity Play	Year 1C and Year 2S Parents
	Morning	Visit to Mellows Care Home	Upper Kindergarten
Friday 6 December	9am	KS1 Nativity Play	Year 1W and Year 2Z Parents
Monday 9 December	Morning	Santa's Grotto	LK, UK and Reception
	Morning	Magician Show – Skittleman	LK, UK and Reception
	All Day	Pyjama Day	Whole School
	Afternoon	Movie Night	Year 3 to Year 6
Tuesday 10 December	1-3pm	Pantomime at Millfield Theatre	Year 1 to Year 6
Wednesday 11 December	Morning	Pantomime in School	LK, UK and Reception
	All Day	Santa's Grotto	Whole School
	All Day	Christmas Jumper and Lunch Day	Whole School
Friday 13 December	Morning	Last Day of Term – 12pm finish	LK, UK and Reception
	Morning	Last Day of Term – 12.15pm finish	Year 1 and Year 2
	Morning	Last Day of Term 12.30pm	Year 3 to Year 6
Monday 16 December – Monday 6 January - Christmas Holiday			
Thursday 9 January	5pm	Meeting regarding Residential Trip	Year 5 Parents
Tuesday 14 January	5pm	Meeting regarding Residential Trip	Year 6 Parents
Thursday 16 January	All Day	Trip to The Globe	Year 4
	5pm	Meeting regarding Residential Trip	Year 4 Parents
Thursday 23 January	All Day	Trip to Parliament	Year 6
Wednesday 29 January	8.25-8.45am	Drop In Session	Reception, Year 2, Year 5 and Year 6
	2.30-3pm	Drop In Session	Foxes and Rabbits Parents
Thursday 30 January	9am	Assembly to Parents	Year 3C Parents
Friday 31 January	8.25-8.45am	Drop In Session	Reception, Year 1, Year 3 and Year 4
	2.30-3pm	Drop In Session	Squirrels Hedgehogs and Badgers Parents
Wednesday 5 February	12.30-9.30pm	Young Voices at the o2	Year 5 and Year 6
Thursday 6 February	9am	Assembly to Parents	Year 3V Parents
Wednesday 11 February	All Day	Trip to the London Eye	1C
Thursday 12 February	All Day	Trip to the London Eye	1W
Thursday 13 February	9am	Assembly to Parents	Year 4C Parents
Monday 17 February – Friday 21 February - Half Term			

Finally, I will see many of you at the forthcoming events in the last days of term but would like to take this opportunity to wish you all Happy Holidays, and wherever you are in the world, I hope you spend time relaxing with your family and friends. I look forward to welcoming you back in the New Year.

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. DEPENDENT

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