



Oaklands School

6-8 Albion Hill, Loughton, Essex IG10 4RA

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HEADMISTRESS

Mrs Gretchen Copeman B.Ed. (Hons)

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1 October 2024

Dear Parents

Re: **October 2024 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 and braved, under canvas, a night in the fields of Oaklands. Year 6 are working very hard to prepare for their entrance exams and we wish them good luck in the next few weeks.

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 are 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, Oak-Tree Group Year 3 camp, Eco and School Council meetings, Harvest assembly with a visit from Tony Miller from the Whitechapel Mission and Funky Hair Friday to support The Little Princess Trust.

In the middle of a very busy half term we received our scheduled inspection from the Independent Schools Inspectorate and I was delighted with how well the children conducted themselves during the three-day visit.

The extra-curricular club programme is underway, which now includes new clubs such as Gardening and STEM, which I am delighted so many children are enjoying. The morning sports clubs are proving extremely popular and are a fantastic way to begin the day for many of the children. 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.

Open Morning Wednesday 2 October

We are hoping for fine weather on Wednesday for our Open Morning, which is for both prospective and current parents to view the school at work. Our Year 6 Prefects, 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 2024

Formal Parents' Evenings for Reception to Year 6 pupils will be held just before half term on Wednesday 16 October and Thursday 17 October. Upper Kindergarten parents are invited to attend a Parents' Evening meeting with your child's keyworker

on Tuesday 16 October. Lower Kindergarten parents are invited to attend their 'Settling in' meeting with your child's keyworker on Wednesday 17 October.

Further details will be sent to you this week and if you should need more than the 10/15 minutes allocated please make an appointment after half term to meet your child's class teacher. It is important that parents' evening runs to time.

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 5 November 8.30am – 9.45 am	Year 3 to Year 6
Tuesday 12 November 8.30am – 9.45am	Year 1 and Year 2
Tuesday 19 November 8.30am – 9.45 am	Lower and Upper Kindergarten and Reception

Mild Illness and School Attendance

The Government has published some guidance for parents about school attendance if their child is 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 guidance 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](#).

A reminder, that following the publication of new attendance advice from the Government in the Summer, no holiday during term time will be authorised for any pupils of statutory school age. If absence for any child, of statutory school age, for any reason exceeds 15 days this will be reported, by school, to Essex County Council.

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. EYFS, Year 1 and Year 2 should also have their wellingtons in school. 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. There will be a 'pre loved' uniform sale on Friday 11 October.

Can I remind you please that discrete 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. It is not possible to take all children to each fixture but Mr Paine will ensure fairness for the youngest children, rotating them, where he can. For our older pupils, we will hold tryouts, again where we can, to ensure our teams are picked as fairly as possible.

Parking

I will be writing in more detail about parking soon but once again, my monthly reminder to you all, is that obstructing the road or our neighbour's driveways is never acceptable. This causes frustration and upset to our residents who need free access to their driveways whenever they wish. It is perfectly safe for children in Years 3 and upwards to be dropped in the carpark to walk on their own up to the main building. There are staff at all access points to the school to ensure no child can wander off site.

Security

Our new fencing on Albion Hill is in progress and I will write to you all with the new access arrangements throughout the day and before and after school once it is completed. Weather permitting, this should be on Friday.

Miss Dee and I will attend the ISA Autumn Study conference later this term and 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.

Year 5 have been busy in their computing lessons this term learning the legal age for holding an account to various popular social media accounts, they were surprised to discover that 13 and upwards are the legal ages for all platforms and therefore no children at Oaklands should have an account of any sort. Continuing the theme of e-safety below is an interesting link, shared by the Essex Safeguarding Team about the hidden dangers of posting information about your children online. On his blog, Wayne Denner has written about this issue extensively. In a short but worthwhile read, he exposes some of the potential issues, lurking in the e-space. If interested, please follow this link: <https://www.waynedenner.com/protect-your-child-the-hidden-dangers-of-posting-back-to-school-photos-on-social-media/>

Dates for the Diary

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

Tuesday 1 October	5pm	Secondary Transfer Parent Meeting	Year 5 Parents
Wednesday 2 October	9am	Open Morning	Prospective Parents
Monday 7 October	All Day	Trip to St Pauls Cathedral	Class 2S
Tuesday 8 October	8.25-8.45am	Drop In Session	Year 2, Year 5 and Year 6 Parents
	2.30-3pm	Drop In Session	Reception Parents
Wednesday 9 October	All Day	Trip to St Pauls Cathedral	Class 2Z
Thursday 10 October	8.25-8.45am	Drop In Session	Year 1, Year 3 and Year 4 Parents
	All Day	Trip to Gunpowder Mills	Year 5
	2.30-3pm	Drop In Session	Reception Parents
Friday 11 October	3-4.30pm	OPA Uniform Sale in Class 5Z	Whole School
Monday 14 October	Morning	Mock Exams	Year 6
Tuesday 15 October	Morning	Mock Exams	Year 6
	3.15-6pm	Parents Evening	Upper Kindergarten Parents
Wednesday 16 October	3.15-6pm	Parents Evening	LK, Reception and Year 1 to Year 6 Parents
Thursday 17 October	3.15-6pm	Parents Evening	Reception and Year 1 to Year 6 Parents
Monday 21 October – Friday 1 November – Half Term			
Tuesday 5 November	8.30-9.30am	Coffee Morning	Year 3 to Year 6 Parents
Thursday 7 November	Morning	Individual Photos	Whole School
Tuesday 12 November	8.30-9.30am	Coffee Morning	Year 1 and Year 2 Parents
Wednesday 13 November	9am	Christmas Show	Lower Kindergarten Parents
Monday 18 November	Morning	Mock Exams	Year 6
Tuesday 19 November	8.25-8.45am	Drop In Session	Year 1, Year 3 and Year 4
	8.30-9.30am	Coffee Morning	LK, UK and Reception Parents
	2.30-3pm	Drop In Session	UK Foxes and Rabbits Parents
	All Day	Flu Vaccinations	Whole School
Wednesday 20 November	Morning	Mock Exams	Year 6
Thursday 21 November	8.25-8.45am	Drop In Session	Year 2, Year 5 and Year 6 Parents
	9am	Reception Christmas Show	Woodpeckers and Owls (Group A) Parents
	2.30-3pm	Drop In Session	UK Badgers, Hedgehogs and Squirrels Parents
Friday 22 November	9am	Reception Christmas Show	Robins and Owls (Group B) Parents
Wednesday 27 November	9am	Dress Rehearsal for Christmas Show	All Upper Kindergarten children to attend
Thursday 28 November	9am	Upper Kindergarten Christmas Show	UK Foxes, Rabbits and Badgers Parents
	2.30-3pm	Drop In Session	Reception
Friday 29 November	9am	Upper Kindergarten Christmas Show	UK Squirrels and Hedgehogs Parents
	2.30-3pm	Drop In Session	Reception

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 1 and Year 2 Parents
Friday 6 December	9am	KS1 Nativity Play	Year 1 and Year 2 Parents
Monday 9 December	Morning	Pantomime in School	LK, UK and Reception
	3.30pm	Movie Night	Year 3 to Year 6
Tuesday 10 December	1-3pm	Pantomime at Millfield Theatre	Year 1 to Year 6
Wednesday 11 December	All Day	Santa's Grotto	Whole School
	All Day	Christmas Jumper Day	Whole School
	All Day	Christmas Lunch Day	Whole School
Thursday 12 December	All Day	Christmas Parties	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

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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