

Ox Close Primary School Newsletter



Dedicated to Excellence

September 11th 2020 Volume 2

Welcome Reception

It has been incredible to welcome our new Reception children to Ox Close this week. Our arrangements for induction have had to be very different but, despite this, the children came into school calmly and confidently and settled in so quickly. Parents had to leave their children at the gate and staff were on hand to collect them. Again, this is hugely different to our traditional approach. I have to say that I have never known Reception children come in and settle so well and this has been most pleasing. I would like to say well done to all of the children and to thank the parents and the staff for their co-operation and hard work in achieving this early success. Having reviewed the situation, we are now able to welcome both Reception groups into school for full days next week and this will be another step up and challenge.

COVID-19

COVID-19 continues to dominate life, just as it has done since the lockdown in March. We are trying our utmost to have the most effective possible procedures in place and I will be consulting with the children on how they are feeling about their return to school soon. It is a public health crisis and, inevitably, some schools have already been affected since returning in September. Currently, the protocol is that schools are to consult with Public Health England if there is a confirmed positive case and then the advice from Public Health will depend upon the situation and organisation of the bubbles within the various schools. I have a friend who is a Headteacher and he has already been in this position and it is expected that the number of schools affected will grow as we move into autumn. Under those circumstances, schools have to communicate effectively with the parents and a calm approach is needed by all concerned. All that we can do is to try our best to plan and to control things which are within our power to do so.

Testing

If you or anyone in your family are displaying COVID-19 symptoms then the following link is useful in order for you to be able to book a test: <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>. Alternatively, you can also call 119. Under these circumstances, please keep us informed. Thank you.

Social Distancing

We appreciate all of the parents help with social distancing at the gates and request that you continue to be mindful of this.

Extra Cleaning

As part of our extensive Risk Assessment planning, we identified the need for extra cleaning during the day. Normally, cleaning takes place before and after school. However, for obvious reasons we are now also cleaning during the day and we have made an appointment to this position on a temporary contract this week.

Virtual Classroom

Our Virtual Classroom continues to be available on our school website. There are some children, that as we go through the term, may need to self-isolate for numerous reasons. To ensure that these children are still learning whilst at home, we will upload planning on a weekly basis. These plans contain suggested activities to complete with your child and links to useful websites. In addition, we are also making arrangements to COVID-proof our curriculum in case of further significant longer-term lockdowns. More information will follow.

Tuff bag - Year 1 / 2

Children will be bringing a tuff bag home over the next two weeks which will contain their reading book and homework diary. Children have a sticker in the front of their diary to tell you which day is their reading day. Please ensure that your child brings their tuff bag on this day only, each week. Thank you for your continued support.

Planning and Adapting

We are continuing to work out ways in which we can adapt to the current situation and offer Harvest and Christmas events and class assemblies virtually, as well as facilitate an in-school pantomime without crossing bubbles. Watch this space!

Breakfast Club

Breakfast Club will be taking place at Nursery once again from Monday.

Newsletters

Just a reminder, that as well as sending out paper copies, we always save our newsletters online in case you ever lose the newsletter and need to refer to it. You can find newsletters at <http://www.ox-close.durham.sch.uk/parents/school-newsletters/>

Star of the Week

Due to COVID-19, we are not holding assemblies at the moment and we are looking into ways of managing this digitally. In the meantime, we are very keen to continue to celebrate the achievements of our wonderful children. As such, we have made Star of the Week awards this week and Miss Bowden has been to each class to hand over the awards and to take photographs for the school Facebook page. Well done to all of the winners!

Class Charts

I am delighted to announce our first Class Charts winners of the year. Our top scorer in this week in 1/2 was Rosie K. In Key Stage 2 Leo H scored highest in 3/4 and Katie-Mae S was the top scorer in 5/6.

Attendance

RB, RP and 3/4W had the highest attendance this week with 100%. The overall school attendance this year is 97.2% while this week it has been 97.0%. The threshold for what is termed as persistent absence has been determined as 90%. **Unfortunately, we are also unable to authorise term time holidays as we have to follow the Government and Durham County protocol. The Durham County protocol explains that penalty notices must be issued 'in instances of unauthorised holidays in term time (where the holiday gives rise to 7 days or more unauthorised absence in any period...).** The school processes absences and then the County Council pick up on unauthorised absence. The Government have now reinstated fines for unauthorised absences and their expectation is that all children will attend school.

Dates for the Diary

Friday 23 rd October 2020	School closes for half term
October Half Term	
Monday 2 nd November 2020	Children back to school
Wednesday 18 th November 2020	Flu Vaccination Day
Monday 23 rd , Tuesday 24 th and Wednesday 25 th November 2020	Parent Consultation Evenings – these will be held virtually and more information will follow.
Monday 30th November 2020	PD Day – School Closed
Friday 18 th December 2020	School closes for Christmas holidays
Christmas Holidays	
Monday 4th January 2021	PD Day – School Closed
Tuesday 5 th January 2021	Children back to school

A Bowden

Miss A Bowden
Head of School

D Harrison

Mr D Harrison
Executive Headteacher