

Ox Close Primary School Newsletter



Dedicated to Excellence

November 13th 2020 Volume 10

Christmas Performance

We are very keen to ensure that we make Christmas as special as it possibly can be in school this year, despite the very challenging circumstances. As I have mentioned previously, Brendon Renwick has been busy practising with small groups for a Christmas performance. This is very complicated but follows all Government guidelines and involves the children singing and speaking in groups of 15. These groups are from Reception, all the way through to Year 6. There will be two days when Brendon will come and record the groups, obviously including only those children for whom we have full photographic, website and social media consent. He will then edit the various different scenes and produce an all through Ox Close Christmas production. This is intended to go on to the School Facebook page via a website link in the week commencing December 14th, COVID permitting! It is very complicated but we were very keen to allow the children the experience of taking part in a performance and for parents to witness it, albeit it in a very different way!

Christmas Performance Recording Days

In line with the above, we will be recording the Christmas Performance over the course of two school days early in December. All children will be involved through the various practices etc. but we will obviously only film those for whom we have permission.

On recording days, we are asking if the children can come to school wearing any colourful Christmas jumper / top / shirt / dress. If not a full dress, then the bottom half should remain black (your school uniform trousers, skirts, shoes will be perfect). Black leggings would be fine too. If you've not got anything with Christmassy patterns, then any red, green, silver, gold or white upper half will still look great! If you happen to have any Christmassy outdoor extras (e.g. hat, gloves, scarf) please bring along too as some filming may take place outside. I would like to stress that we are not expecting people to go out and buy/order new clothes, especially at this difficult time.

The Christmas Performance Recording Day for Reception, 1/2C, 1/2P and 1/2R will be on Thursday 3rd December, while 3/4C, 3/4H, 3/4W, 5/6P, 5/6S and 5/6T will record on Tuesday 8th December.

Taylor Shaw Christmas Card Competition

Taylor Shaw have invited our children to take part in a Christmas Card Competition. If you would like your child to enter then please produce a design at home and send your entries into us by Monday 23rd November. Good luck everyone!

Children in Need

Thank you to everyone for taking part in Children in Need today. Anyone who would like to donate can do so by visiting this link: <https://app.parentpay.com/ParentPayShop/Foc/Default.aspx?shopid=1671>.

Remembrance

I must say that our Remembrance display looked amazing and I would like to thank all of the children, staff and Mrs Elliott, who organised it. I am sure that many of you will have seen the display on our Facebook page. It is important that we mark these events and show our respects and this display was a fitting tribute from all at Ox Close.

Open Events and prospective Reception starters for September 2021

Miss Bowden and I have held two Zoom Open meetings for the parents of prospective Reception starters for September 2021 and we are holding our final scheduled event on Thursday 19th November at 10am. Durham County Council have already received lots of applications for next year but the application process is open until January. Please spread the word to anyone who might be interested and we look forward to seeing them on Zoom on Thursday. The Zoom link is on the school website and Facebook page but if you are struggling to find it then please do get in contact with the school office. Following this meeting, we will also put further links to information videos on the school website. Choosing the correct school for your child is vital so if prospective Reception parents have any questions then they can get in touch with either me or Miss Bowden.

Consultation on Amalgamation of Ox Close Primary and Oxclose Nursery

By now, I am sure that everyone will be aware that Durham County Council is proposing to replace the current Ox Close Primary and Nursery Schools with a new build. This is as a result of the County Council's review of the rising need for school places in the town and this is the County's proposed solution. The 2 schools would be relocated in that new build, but there will also be sufficient space in it for the number of pupils there will be in the future in Spennymoor so that all families living in Spennymoor will be able to get a place at one of the primary schools in the town. **Just to clarify, no schools would be closing under this proposal and money would be made available to ensure that extra staff could be recruited** to create a staffing structure which will reflect pupil numbers and needs. Numbers would also only increase gradually over time. I can also confirm that school leaders would have

input into the design of any new build. **Please do take the opportunity to express your views through the consultation process, which closes on December 13th.**

CLT and Children's Champion

Elections have taken place this week for our Children's Leadership Team and for our Children's Champion. We do not have postal votes at Ox Close so we will be in a position to confirm our new CLT and Children's Champion very soon. I am really looking forward to meeting with all of the elected members virtually!

COVID-19

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. It is also important that if anyone in your household, child or adult, displays symptoms or has a test all within the household self isolates. This means that all siblings who live with a child or adult who is displaying symptoms should not attend school until the end of the self-isolation period or after the affected person has had a negative test. Please check by calling the school office if you are unsure. Thank you.

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. Mrs Harvey has started recording some Geography lessons and she has completed a Years 3/4 unit and is now tackling 1/2 and 5/6. She will then move onto recording Spring Term Foundation subject lessons so that we are ready for any eventuality after Christmas.

Anti Bullying Week

Next week is Anti Bullying week across the country. At Ox Close, as in other schools, we will be marking the week by inviting the children and staff to wear odd socks. We will also be talking about the issue in classes.

Class Charts

I am delighted to announce our Class Charts winners of the week. In Reception, Lyndi-Rose W gathered the most points while our top scorer this week in 1/2 was Tyler D. In Key Stage 2, Lucy P was the top scorer in 3/4, while Danielle B scored highest in 5/6.

Attendance

Despite the particular challenges of COVID-19, our attendance has been excellent since the beginning of term. Once again, I would like to thank parents for their support with this and also to pay tribute to the children and the staff. Classes RB, 1/2P, 1/2R and 3/4W had the highest attendance this week with 100%. The overall school attendance this year is 97.7% while this week it has been 98.7%. 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

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