

Ox Close Primary School Newsletter



Dedicated to Excellence

November 20th 2020 Volume 11

Christmas Performance Recording Days

As noted last week, COVID permitting, 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.

Brendon has worked with us for many years and the children have enjoyed their rehearsals. He is doing one brief final practice with all groups this coming Tuesday (Reception and Key Stage 1) and Thursday (Key Stage 2). Fingers crossed that we are able to finalise the project as I think that the end product will be a welcome boost to us all!

CLT and Children's Champion

Congratulations to all of our new Children's Leadership Team members. The election results were confirmed last Friday and were as follows:

Year 1: Xander M and Patsi H

Year 2: Alfie W and Summer L

Year 3: Alfie E and Noel G

Year 4: Harmony D and Ryan L

Year 5: Sam W and Caitlin E

Year 6: Harry D and Paige V

A huge well done also goes to Emily C, who was elected as our new Children's Champion. We did try to hold a virtual meeting yesterday, although we ran into some technical problems! However, all of the children are in place and I have given them their first tasks.

Continuing Excellence

Over the past fortnight, Miss Bowden and I have been looking closely at pupil work books and have made very brief COVID compliant visits to classrooms. I am delighted to confirm that the children are engaged and making progress and that the provision is as strong as ever. Furthermore, we have seen some very clever use of technology as staff adapt to the current situation.

Team Solan/Ox Close Primary Christmas Jumper Competition

Tonight we have sent home a letter which gives details of how to enter an exciting competition to design a Christmas jumper, with one winner from each class. The prize will be to have the design made into an actual Christmas jumper. Good luck everyone!

Poppy Appeal

We raised an incredible £522.92 for the Poppy appeal. This is an incredible total! Thank you to everyone who contributed!

Prospective Reception starters for September 2021: Virtual Tour Video

Our initial programme of virtual open meetings for prospective parents is now over and we have had a number of people who have tuned in! We now have a brand-new virtual tour video, which can be seen on our Facebook page. The video captures a day in the life of Ox Close and also features some superb overhead drone footage. Choosing the correct school for your child is vital so if prospective Reception parents have any questions then they can still get in touch with either me or Miss Bowden.

Parent Consultation Evenings

Virtual Parent Consultation evenings will take place next week and these are especially important under the current circumstances. Links between home and school are crucial and of course we have a mutual interest - the welfare and achievements of your children. I trust that this virtual experience is a useful one for you all!

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. **Whatever the outcome is, things will not stay as they are now. In my time as Head and Executive Head, Ox Close has grown by one third and this is likely to continue over time due to the increasing population and also overall demand. This means that it is crucial that the situation is carefully thought through and in any situation such as this there are inevitably pros and cons. Please do take the opportunity to express your views through the consultation process, which closes on December 13th.**

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.

Class Charts

I am delighted to announce our Class Charts winners of the week. In Reception, Oliver C gathered the most points while our top scorer this week in 1/2 was Jacob B. In Key Stage 2, Aiyilah-Jane D was the top scorer in 3/4, while Kate W 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, 1/2C, 1/2R, 3/4C and 3/4W had the highest attendance this week with 100%. The overall school attendance this year is 97.8% while this week it has been 99.2%. 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

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