

Ox Close Primary School Newsletter



Dedicated to Excellence

February 26th 2021 Volume 22

Full re-opening

Monday's news that schools would fully re-open on March 8th was something which we had expected and so we were quickly able to put plans in place. These arrangements have been shared with parents and staff and we look forward to the return of all pupils and being able to establish a regular routine. We have reviewed all risk assessments and our arrangements will be very similar to those which we operated in the autumn term, where we were fortunate in that we had only one case across those 16 weeks. I think that it is extremely unfortunate that school staff have not been prioritised for the COVID vaccine at this stage and we will continue to have measures in place which minimise risks to staff and children. We are also optimistic that the children will settle back into school well and it is perhaps a good thing that we will have 3 weeks before Easter. The increasing daylight and warmer weather will hopefully signal better times for everyone.

Engagement in Learning

I do believe that our learning offer will have minimised the amount of lost learning over the period of the latest lockdown. It has been a huge challenge for school staff to teach the children in school and at home simultaneously but they have managed this brilliantly. Our investment in training and the development of remote teaching over the past year will hopefully be shown to have paid dividends when the children all return. I have to say, once again, that we are so grateful to parents for engaging with us. We have had an average of 91% attendance during live lessons and 98% of pupils have engaged with learning during this time. While nothing is quite like being in school, our situation has probably been as authentic as it could be. Seesaw has been one of the big positives over the past 2 months and this is now going to be used in Nursery too. Thank you to everyone for your hard work, patience and support in helping to facilitate continued learning for the children.

Connecting the Community: Solan Connor Fawcett Cancer Trust

The templates are ready and each phase will send these home with the title of 'Spreading Kindness' next week, probably via Seesaw. I am aiming to select a winning entry for each phase and to then have this transferred to a mosaic design sheet by Easter, with work on the mosaics in the first summer half term and then the screenprints, T-shirts and hoodies etc will follow from there.

Well-being support

The pandemic has brought the issue of Mental Health to the fore and it is great that it is becoming more widely spoken about, with stories in the news every day. There is no doubt that many children and adults across the country will have suffered with anxiety as a result of the pandemic and it is something which we have been keeping a close eye on from September. Miss Bewick, our PSA, has counselling qualifications and is available to speak to, in confidence, if either you or your child need support or advice in this area. She also has a background in working for Families First so has a good knowledge of available support services. I know that she has arranged some support for families already and is very keen to help others.

Miss Bewick would also like me to share her email address with you so that you can contact her directly: r.bewick300@oxclosespennymoor.uk. Please feel free to get in touch with her about this or any other matters which she would normally assist.

In addition, I have made arrangements with a company who will provide well-being services to staff from April 1st. They will also meet with our Children's Champion and Y5 and Y6 CLT members to discuss and develop a pupil well-being service.

School Meals Ordered on Parent Pay

Meals can now be pre-ordered for 8th March up to Easter on Parent Pay. Taylor Shaw have decided to keep the same menu which will run up to July 2021. You will receive a text message when the menu is ready on Parent Pay for you to book meals from after Easter up to July.

Assemblies

Miss Bowden continued with her assemblies this week and they proved to be as popular as ever, with many award winners. She has done amazingly with this and she has even showed me how to organise them on Teams now too, which is no mean feat! The assemblies will continue next week.

Reception, Year 1 and Year 2	Thursday at 2pm
Years 3. 4. 5 and 6	Friday at 9:30am

Your child will just need to log in in the usual way. On the Class Channel, a link will appear just before the assembly that will say 'Click to Join'.

Collection and Drop Off

We respectfully ask that only one parent accompanies the children to and collects the children from school. In addition, in the interests of minimising the risk of the spread of the virus, we ask that parents do not arrive early at school and that they leave as soon as they collect the children. While schools do not have jurisdiction over parents off site, the advice from Durham County Council is that parents may choose to wear a face covering or mask if they feel as though it is difficult to maintain social distancing at the school gate. **We do require visitors to the office to wear a mask at this time, just as they would be asked to wear one in a shop or garage.** Thank you for your continued co-operation and for working with us to slow the spread of the virus, something which is especially important at this point in time.

Controlling the spread of the virus

The Government decision to restrict school access to key workers and vulnerable children only was as part of the effort to control the spread of the virus. As has been the case since the outset, we have a number of measures in place in school to help mitigate against the spread but ultimately COVID-19 is a community virus. In order to help control the spread of the virus, we ask if key worker parents can continue to only send the children into school if it is essential to do so - i.e. there are no safe alternative arrangements at home. Thank you for your continued support with this.

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 if your child has been in school. 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, even if children are eligible to attend, 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.

A Bowden

Miss A Bowden
Head of School

D Harrison

Mr D Harrison
Executive Headteacher