

Ox Close Primary School Newsletter



March 19th 2021 Volume 25

Red Nose Day

Today has been Red Nose Day and we marked the event in school by allowing children and staff to attend in red, with voluntary contributions welcomed but not expected and all funds going to the very worthy cause.

Birthday Parties

We are now only 1 week away from the Easter break at the end of what has been a very unusual but very successful term. As mentioned last week, although we will of course be focusing upon learning, we are also going to celebrate this term's birthdays next week. Dates have been sent out to parents by Miss Bowden and the parties will take place between Wednesday and Friday. All children can come to school in party clothes on their party day. Cakes will also be available – they are being delivered on Monday. Children who have a birthday between 1st January and 31st March will also receive a present from OCF.

Easter Activities

Due to the current situation with COVID, this year's Easter activities will be held in classes. I sincerely hope that by this time next year we are back in full swing and offering our usual calendar of community events! I am, however, delighted that we will still be holding the ever popular Eggs Factor!

Eggs Factor

As noted last week, we are delighted to be holding our Eggs Factor once again this year. The full re-opening of school has certainly made the situation easier! There will be 1 entrant per class and auditions have started this week. Miss Simpson is doing a fantastic job organising the event alongside Emily, our Children's Champion, who will be the host. Entries will be recorded and then the award ceremony will be live in school via Teams on Thursday afternoon. I have heard that superheroes will be in school and our judges are all set for another fun filled, talented packed event!

Parent Consultations

We will be holding virtual parent consultations after Easter. This will be a great opportunity for parents to find out about their child's learning, progress and welfare and to ask questions. We are proud of our partnerships with parents and these partnerships are going to be ever more important when we eventually begin to return to normality. We will be in touch with the details of the virtual parent consultations soon.

Inter School Partnerships

I am always looking at ways in which we can make Ox Close even better and one plan that I have is to further partnerships with other successful schools. I have had several virtual meetings and have lots of plans which are intended to give staff development opportunities with the ultimate aim of improving outcomes for the children at Ox Close. These plans will hopefully come to fruition in the new academic year.

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 since 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.

Pupil Well-being

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 next week and present to our Governors in July.

Collection and Drop Off

We respectfully ask that only one parent/carer 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. **In addition, we would respectfully request that adults do not stand and gather together in groups outside of the school gates as this presents a clear COVID risk. 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 still very important at this point in time as the return of all pupils to school across the country will inevitably see a rise in the infection rate.

Lateral Flow Tests

The Government has announced that parents and carers can order lateral flow tests to use at home for Primary school age pupils. Please note that this is not compulsory and that Primary Schools are not involved in the distribution of these tests. However, it is important that we share with you all as it is another way to try and keep the children safe and reduce community transmission. Staff in school are already using these twice a week and will continue to do so. The tests are easy enough to do when you get used to them and offer some extra reassurance. These tests are the same ones which have been used in secondary schools. Please click on the link for further information:

<https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests>

Governance

School Governance is now such a big responsibility and we are so lucky to have such a proactive, committed and skilled Governing body. Governors are responsible for setting the strategic direction in school and we are fortunate to have Pam Sneath, who is vastly experienced in business leadership as well as Governance itself, as our Chair of Governors. The skill set of the Governors is varied and given the expectations that the Government have, this is just as well!

Class Charts Points

This week, Katie S in 1/2C was the first child in the school to receive their Gold Award this academic year. What an amazing achievement! Over the past 5 days, Skyler J finished as top points scorer in Reception, while Noah B scored highest in 1/2. In 3/4 Faith A gathered the most points while James C achieved the same feat in 5/6. Well done to all concerned!

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.

In addition, if there is a positive Lateral Flow Test result, the procedure is to self-isolate and to book a COVID test in the same manner as previously. Full details are given in the link above.

If this occurs over the weekend, please inform school immediately by emailing oxcloseprimary@durhamlearning.net

Thank you.

A Bowden

Miss A Bowden
Head of School

D Harrison

Mr D Harrison
Executive Headteacher