

# Ox Close Primary School Newsletter



Dedicated to Excellence

April 23<sup>rd</sup> 2021 Volume 28

## **Above and Beyond**

It was lovely to see Ox Close feature in Durham County Council's Above and Beyond videos earlier this week. The whole concept was a very good one and it is pleasing that Durham have acknowledged aspects such as well-being. It was also great to see some things which other schools did too. There were many events which we held, such as our VE Day celebrations and the Ox Close Beat which were school initiated community activities which could also have been included. Well done to all concerned!

## **Congratulations Helen**

We would like to congratulate Helen Collingwood upon her re-appointment as Parent Governor. Helen offers a great deal to the Governing Body and is very committed, despite her very pressing work schedule. Being a Governor is a demanding role and a volunteer one too. I would like to thank Helen and all of the Governors for their continuing commitment, support and challenge.

## **Parent Consultations**

The children have settled back into a regular routine following their Easter break. The last calendar year has been extremely disrupted, although we have done our level best to maintain the learning, even during lockdowns. We have also done our best to provide a supportive and nurturing environment and I would say that the children have been really happy in school. Under these circumstances, parent consultations take on an even higher level of importance and it will be fantastic for parents to have the opportunity to talk to teachers next week.

## **Class Charts**

Over the past 5 days Jack A finished as top points scorer in Reception, while Noah B scored highest in 1/2. In 3/4 Miley M gathered the most points while Connor A achieved the same feat in 5/6. Well done to all concerned!

## **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. **At drop off time, everyone should be mindful of the rules around close contacts and, therefore, children should not arrive too early and should also avoid being within 1 metre for a minute or more and within 2 metres of other individuals for 15 minutes cumulatively over the course of the day. 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.

## **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](mailto:r.bewick300@oxclosespennymoor.uk). Please feel free to get in touch with her about this or any other matters which she would normally assist.

## Headlice

As we have had reports of head lice in school, we would ask that parents check and comb their child's hair regularly and purchase treatments if appropriate. If anyone would need any further advice then please contact Miss Bewick, our School PSA, and we can ask the School Nursing Team to contact you.

## Packed Lunches

At Ox Close, we are committed to ensuring that our children are fit and healthy in every way and follow Government guidance in this, which is to ensure that packed lunches for the children are healthy and balanced. Further information to support you with this can be found here: <https://www.nhs.uk/change4life/recipes/healthier-lunchboxes>. To ensure consistency and to keep packed lunches in line with food standards for school meals, packed lunches should not contain the following: fizzy / sugary drinks, sweets/confectionary, chocolate spread as a filling for sandwiches, chewing gum and nuts. Children should only have one small item of chocolate such as a coated biscuit. We thank you for your support with this.

## Allergies - Nuts

As noted previously, we do have children in school with nut allergies and therefore it is very important that no foods containing nuts are brought into school. Thank you.

## 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. Thank you.

## Attendance

Class 1/2PT had the highest attendance this week with 99.7%. The overall school attendance this year is 97.7% while this week it has been 97.7%. 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.

## Dates for the Diary

Monday 26 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday 27 <sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 28 <sup>th</sup> April	Parent Consultation Evenings
Monday 3 <sup>rd</sup> May	School closed - Bank Holiday
Friday 28 <sup>th</sup> May	3:15pm – Break up for half-term
Monday 31 <sup>st</sup> May – Friday 4 <sup>th</sup> June	Half-term holiday
Monday 7 <sup>th</sup> June	Children back to school
Friday 16 <sup>th</sup> July	3:15pm – Break up for Summer holidays
Thursday 2 <sup>nd</sup> September	Children back to school

*A Bowden*

Miss A Bowden  
Head of School

*D Harrison*

Mr D Harrison  
Executive Headteacher