

# Ox Close Primary School Newsletter



Dedicated to Excellence

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## Online Safety Update

One of the side effects of lockdown has been the increased use of technology. Most children have really benefited from this when in lockdown but unfortunately sometimes it can go wrong. The misuse of technology that some primary aged children have experienced includes, bullying, fraud and child abuse. We now need parents to take an active role in keeping their children safe in the online world, just as they would in real life!

The best way of protecting your children is to talk with them about how they use technology, find out about the apps, websites and games they use and make sure they can share any worries they have with you. Both the net-aware and internetmatters.org websites are full of helpful advice.

As a school we take online safety very seriously and children are taught about keeping safe throughout their time in school, so they develop the skills and resilience needed to keep themselves safe on line. We should remember that they are still children, they will make mistakes and they will need your support not only to stay safe but to grow and flourish both online and offline.

Below we have listed five useful websites to help support your child staying safe. Please take some time to talk to your children and find out more on the websites below. Parents and carers are also welcome to discuss issues and get support from the school – we will help.

Website	Comment
<a href="http://www.internetmatters.org">www.internetmatters.org</a>	Really useful website covering parental controls, apps and all aspects of supporting parents with technology.
<a href="http://www.net-aware.org.uk">www.net-aware.org.uk</a>	Great website for parents, written by the NSPCC, that explains about individual apps and the safety measures they have in place for children.
<a href="https://www.childline.org.uk">https://www.childline.org.uk</a>	The website for children to get support themselves.
<a href="https://www.ltai.info">https://www.ltai.info</a>	Support with radicalization.
<a href="https://www.getsafeonline.org">https://www.getsafeonline.org</a>	More for parents – this site explains how to protect yourself against online fraud – which is an increasing problem.

## Exciting Opportunities

Now that the amalgamation between the school and the Nursery has been confirmed by DCC's cabinet, I have been researching the very best provision in new schools across the North East and the country and I have made COVID secure visits to several of them. As mentioned last week, the new build is of course subject to planning and we totally respect that process. It is inevitable that opinions will differ depending upon perspective. For instance, current neighbours of the school will have a view, while residents who are in close proximity to the proposed site will have another. Should the plans be passed, I am determined that we will create the most amazing school and transfer the very best of Ox Close, while adding bespoke, world class facilities. This will provide school leaders with challenges but also incredible opportunities. The new facilities will provide the very best possible environment for pupils and allow us to pursue specialisms and the very best extra-curricular offer. I believe that the pandemic, in particular the ambition of the remote learning offer in comparison to that of others, has shown that Ox Close leaders and teachers rise to challenges. My personal motivation has always been to achieve the best that I can and the school's mantra is to 'Be the best that you can be'. I am excited to work with Miss Bowden and others, including our amazing children, to make that vision become a reality if this project goes ahead.

## Class Charts

Over the past 5 days Daisy B finished as top points scorer in Reception, while Logan T scored highest in 1/2. In 3/4 Elliott R gathered the most points while Ella C 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.

### 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 many families already and is very keen to help others as we emerge from the pandemic.

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.

### 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 RP had the highest attendance this week with 100%. The overall school attendance this year is 97.5% while this week it has been 95.4%. Nationally in Primary Schools, attendance was 93.6% last week, which shows how strong our attendance is - well done everyone! 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

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*

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*D Harrison*

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