

Ox Close Primary School Newsletter



Dedicated to Excellence

September 10th 2021 Volume 2

Great Start

The children and staff have made a fabulous start to the year and all of the classes have settled well with the children learning lots already. I have especially enjoyed seeing some of our new writing initiatives in action, while the children are very engaged in their learning. Miss Day, our new teacher, is enjoying working with her class, while our extra class in Y5/6 is already paying dividends with even smaller class sizes. Maintaining such a low average class size is a challenge as the school continues to grow in popularity and while we have always invested in staff (now 50 at the school) we obviously have limited space. There are now 77 extra children on roll from the day that I started at the school, a phenomenal growth. Best of all, we see children who feel safe and happy and enjoying continuing to have their breaks in their phases. These are very early days and we will face many challenges over the year but I am confident that we will be successful in what we can control over the course of the year.

Fabulous Reception

Our Reception children have also made a brilliant start and they deserve a mention of their own. It is a huge step to start school and all of the staff have done a great job in helping the children to feel safe and settled. Miss Reynolds has joined our very experienced and skilled Reception team and we also have the amazing Miss Dewey in there this year too while Miss Hunter is on her maternity. Well done to all in Reception!

School Organisation, Risk Assessments and Outbreak Contingency

This week there has been a rise in the number of local COVID cases and many schools have had children test positive, which is absolutely inevitable. Now that all schools have returned, the number of infections is bound to rise significantly and it is to be hoped that the vaccine programme prevents an associated rise in hospital cases and deaths this winter. We have maintained the most robust practical measures possible while ensuring that the children continue to have a full learning experience. Before we broke up for summer, many schools were decimated by the number of cases and many children were self-isolating, which we all know is very frustrating. We are naturally keen to avoid a situation where we have COVID outbreaks which then lead to children and staff being poorly and learning being disrupted. Miss Bowden and I have planned very carefully, have consulted with the Health and Safety team, and we have maintained measures such as separate phase breaks and lunches, have staggered starts (although times in between have been greatly reduced), we will still have one way systems in school and, while we monitor case numbers as the children return to school, we are continuing with our arrangements with parents being asked to contact school by telephone in the first instance. These measures won't in themselves stop what is a community transmitted virus but they will help us to control the controllables and limit risk as best we can and we will review progress at the end of September. We also have the capacity to move to remote learning for individuals or groups should it be necessary so all contingencies are in place. Ox Close parents really helped us to make last year a success and I am sure that they will continue to do so this year. Thank you for your support and understanding.

Parent Consultation Evenings

This year we are having our Parent Consultations earlier in the term. This follows feedback from parents in our parent surveys. Given what I have described above, Parent Consultations will be virtual this term. This worked well last year. We will be in touch with booking details and links at a later date.

School Uniform Bank

Thank you for all of the generous contributions for the Uniform Bank, it has been great to see families benefiting from this already. If you feel you would like to access our school uniform bank, please make contact with the school office in the first instance. If you would like to make a small donation for any uniform used, this would of course be voluntary. We will then collate any monetary donations and give to a different local charity each term. If you have any questions or queries, please contact the school office.

Job Vacancies for Kitchen Assistants at Taylor Shaw

Vacancies are across County Durham – please telephone 0191 3787860 for details.

Jewellery to be removed for PE and swimming

Due to the health and safety of all children can we please ask that all jewellery is removed for PE and swimming sessions. If children are unable to remove earrings themselves could they be removed prior to coming into school. For newly pierced ears (up to 6 weeks) plasters may be worn to cover earrings.

Class Charts

Congratulations to our top point scorers for this week – you have all worked very hard!

Year 1	Daisy B	Year 4	Robbie Y
Year 2	Leon T	Year 5	Alfie S
Year 3	Luca S	Year 6	Megan C

Parent Support

Miss Bewick, our Parent Support Advisor, is available to offer support. She can be contacted via the school office or on 07584072973 and can also be emailed: r.bewick300@oxclosespennymoor.uk.

COVID-19

New guidance was introduced by the Government during the summer break. If your child presents any COVID symptoms then please keep them at home and take them for a PCR test. Similarly, if parents test positive then they must take the children for a PCR test and they should only return to school when a negative result is confirmed. As ever, please keep the school office informed. Collectively, we have done a fantastic job in helping to limit the spread of this community virus and we must continue to do so now that schools have returned as a rise in the number of local and national cases as inevitable. It is crucial to manage this well and to avoid a situation where many children are absent from school due to COVID illness, which would be even worse than children missing school due to self-isolation.

Dates for the Diary

Monday 13 th – Thursday 16 th September	Y6 Bikeability – 6S (AM) and 6P (PM)
Monday 27 th – Thursday 30 th September	Y5 Bikeability – 5D (AM) and 5H (PM)
Monday 11 th , Tuesday 12 th and Wednesday 13 th October	Parent Consultation Evenings
11 th – 12 th October	Y1/2 – Captain Chemistry
Tuesday 19 th October	Phototronics
Friday 22 nd October	3:15pm School closes for half term
October Half Term	
Monday 1 st November	Children back to school
Tuesday 2 nd November	PM - M and M Production – Jack and the Beanstalk
WC 15 th November	Anti-Bullying Week – One Kind Word
Wednesday 17 th November	Flu Immunisation - EYFS to Year 6
Monday 29 th November	School Closed – PD Day
Friday 17 th December	3:15pm – School closes for Christmas holidays
Christmas Holidays	
Tuesday 4 th January 2022	School Closed – PD Day
Wednesday 5 th January 2022	Children return to school

A Bowden

Miss A Bowden
Head of School

D Harrison

Mr D Harrison
Executive Headteacher