



# OAKLANDS JUNIOR SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

October 2013

Dear Parents,

Half term at last and as you will see from this newsletter it has been an incredibly busy time.

We have tried to cover as many events as possible, but please be on the look out for separate letters covering individual events.

## **THE LIFE WEBSITE**

Work is progressing well on the development of our new learning platform called Owl Life. Children now have their own log on details and class pages are under construction. There is a wide range of resources and information available already. During ICT lessons children have been exploring the new website and I am sure your child would be pleased to give you a guided tour using your home computer. Owl Life is web based and includes some Flash content, so works well on PCs. Please note due to the issues with Flash and the Apple operating system, it is possible that some elements of Owl Life may not run smoothly on an Apple device. Next half term we will be rolling out parent logins and we hope that you enjoy using Owl Life. We look forward to your feedback on this exciting development.

Mr W Hill – ICT Subject Leader.

## **THINKING SCHOOLS WEEK**

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mrs Penstone for organising such a fantastic week. Her imaginative ideas ‘sparkled’ and set us all, staff and pupils alike, off on the wonderful adventure to become a Thinking School.

The children and staff were totally immersed in the world of Professor Profound, Director of the Think Tank on Planet Cortex. He had seen worrying sights on Earth and hoped that Oaklands could help him. According to him children have just been learning and regurgitating facts with no understanding of their meaning or opportunity to think for themselves. If we were up for the challenge, he wanted us to become a Thinking School, to help spread the word about higher order thinking. We took on the challenge and the Professor sent us Questioning Quinn.

Quinn has landed on Earth but will eventually need to return to Planet Cortex. Unfortunately, her jetpack is empty and needs filling with fuel. The fuel needed for the jetpack is good questions, represented by a ‘Q ball’

The children have also been organised into 'Thinking Families', with two children from each year group forming a family unit. They thoroughly enjoyed working together in a whole school scavenger hunt and for the first time ate their lunches together as a family.

The children were both excited and nervous about having lunch with people they didn't really know very well, especially our new children in year 3. Afterwards, comments from the children were wide ranging from the year 3 child who said "I could talk all the time", to the year 6 child who said "The year 3 children didn't stop talking."

The children enjoyed getting to know children from the other year groups, especially their new 'family' members but at the same time missed sitting with their friends. Quite a few children said it was a bit quiet and awkward talking to new people and they wished that they had better conversational skills, whilst a few year 6 children said that they wished the younger children had better listening skills!

Overall it went down well and there were lots of suggestions as to how we could improve it if we did it again, from special party type food to bigger tables for two or three families to sit together.

I would also like to thank all of those who were able to join us at the Thinking Schools Presentation evening. The 'feedback' I have received has all been very positive.

## **HARVEST**

Thank you for your harvest gifts which, together with the harvest loaf and flower arrangement made a wonderful display for our festival. The Crowthorne Food Bank have sent their special thanks to the school for thinking of them.

## **KINGSWOOD 2013**

The children had a fantastic time at Kingswood and the staff and I have received some lovely feedback from parents. It is always good to receive letters of thanks as the staff really care for the children 24 hours a day whilst they are away.

### **Feedback from the children**

"On our first day in the evening we had a camp fire with our year group. We sang some songs and had a laugh even though we were coughing a lot because of the smoke from the fire. The funniest part was when I bravely volunteered to sing a song called 'boom chicka' in front of the whole year group. I was really embarrassed! After all the laughing and singing we were exhausted and for once we couldn't wait to get to bed".

Jacob and Ghazi

"Kingswood was a great success and a big thank you to all the wonderful teachers that came, we had so much fun. The food was lovely, the staff were friendly and the activities daring and challenging. We learnt new songs and we are still singing them now! We will keep Kingswood as a memory for our whole life."

Ben and Georgina

## **JAMES AND THE GIANT PEACH**

On the 11<sup>th</sup> October there was an air of anticipation in Year 3 as the children put on their coats and rammed their snacks into pockets. It was their first school trip! It was on a double decker bus! The excitement reached fever pitch as Mrs Penstone and Mr Hill sorted out who was going to be allowed on the favoured top deck! The parent helpers gathered their little groups and Year 3 were off to the Hexagon Theatre to see James and the Giant Peach. The children were on their best behaviour as they walked through the market adjacent to the theatre, chatting and pointing out the sights of that part of Reading! They settled themselves into their seats and after a short wait the lights came up and the music started – show time! For the next one and half hours the children sat transfixed by a production that combined music, comedy, dialogue and stunning costumes.

Even the adults did not talk! Mrs Penstone and Mr Hill were proud of the children's behaviour, particularly as the children appeared to be the only school in school uniform! The bus journey on the way back to school was quieter, as everyone talked about the best bits of the show.

Thank you to all the adult volunteers, the trip would not have been possible without you!  
Mr Hill

## **SPORT**

### **Athletics: Oaklands v Beechwood, Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> September 2012**

With year 6 away at Kingswood we took a smaller team than normal over for the last scheduled athletics event of the summer at Beechwood. One thing you can always say about Oakland's children is that they don't give up. Race after race we were asking children to compete against older year groups and they rose to the challenge and certainly gave the Beechwood team a good run for their money. In the end we just lost by 41 points which a pretty small margin, considering the numbers in each team. Well done to all our athletes who put in a great team performance.

### **Cross Country Woodford Park Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2012**

This event was postponed due to the forecast of bad weather. It has been re scheduled to Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2013. Letter with timings to follow.

### **Cricket: Oaklands v Beechwood 11<sup>th</sup> October 2013**

On a very blustery evening we just managed to squeeze in one more cricket game. Weather conditions made bowling and fielding very difficult but at the end of the night we scored 254 whilst Beechwood just beat us by scoring 257. We had to admit to missed catches, and made some basic fielding errors. Well done and thank you to Poppy and Esme who made up the numbers when players dropped out at the last minute.

### **Tennis: Oaklands v Beechwood 16<sup>th</sup> October 2013**

On another windy but sunny afternoon we took a team of eight year 4's and eight year 5's over to Beechwood to compete in a mini tennis tournament. Our year 4 team completely outplayed the Beechwood team winning handsomely overall whilst the year 5 team had a

tighter contest but still managed to come out on top. Well done to all competitors who played some great tennis despite the conditions.

We must say a big thank you to Beechwood who have some great facilities and are more than willing to share them and organise competitions which gives so many of our children a chance to represent their school.

### **Bracknell Primary Schools Football League**

19/09/13	Holly Springs A 0	Oaklands A 5	Holly springs B 0	Oaklands B 0
01/10/13	Oaklands A 6	Holy Trinity A 0	Oaklands B 0	Holy Trinity B 1
10/10/13	Oaklands A 3	Meadow Vale A 1	Oaklands B 2	Meadow Vale B 5

An excellent start to the season by the A team who to date, remain unbeaten. Plenty of goals were scored and only one conceded. There are harder games to come I'm sure, but all you can do is beat the team in front of you and that is exactly what they have done.

There were mixed fortunes for the B team who have been improving with each game but have yet to secure their first win. They have shown plenty of fight and spirit without getting the rewards for their efforts. I feel their first win is not too far away.

### **Cross Country Black Park, Slough Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> October 2013**

Over 40 children made their way to Slough to compete in this race which is a relatively flat and fast course. Recent heavy rain made this a 'nice' wet and muddy course and the children certainly came back dirtier than when they set off. All part of the fun!

There were excellent results everywhere, a 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> were some of the individual highlights, but there were also some pretty impressive debuts as well. Well done to the Mair and Peters family who both had 3 runners representing the school.

The results came in this morning and I am delighted to report that the school came second overall.

The next race is at Bearwood College on the 21st November 2013 and the re scheduled Woodford Park race is on the 5<sup>th</sup> December 2013.

### **Cluster Sportshall Athletics Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2013**

Both the lower and upper school teams comfortably qualified for the next round of the Sportshall competition to be held at Bulmershe Centre on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> November. At St Crispins we competed against Emmbrook Junior School and Gorse Ride Junior School even though they are in a different cluster group to ourselves. In the next round we can expect to come up against the big hitters of St Pauls, Hawthornes and Aldryngton so this was a good practice session for us.

K. Hutton

### **Crosfields School Football Tournament**

On Friday 18<sup>th</sup> October, twenty nine Year 3 and Year 4 children represented the school at a 6-a-side football tournament. All the teams played five games each and registered a number of excellent wins, as well as some very unlucky defeats. Thank you to all the parents that helped with lifts and a special thank you to Mr Fryer who helped to manage one of the teams.

**S.Lee**

### **Westend Netball Match**

On the 15<sup>th</sup> October our netball team played a match against Westend. We won the match 8 goals to 3! A big well done to our team, Oliver, Susie, Esme, Lucy, Ben and Connor. Hopefully we will continue to do well in our matches. Well done 'netballers'  
Poppy

### **TEXTILE COLLECTION FRIDAY 6<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2013**

Please have a good clear out over half term, all those summer clothes that are no longer needed now that Autumn/Winter is upon us. Hopefully collection bags will have been given to the children by the time you read this newsletter.

### **BOOK FAIR**

We will be holding a Book Fair from 26<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> November

### **PTA**

An extremely successful circus was held on our school field on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> September. It was a new venture for the PTA and I am sure that it is one that will be repeated in the future as all who attended thought it was great!

The children's disco on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> October, proved as popular as ever.

The Fireworks evening is scheduled for Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> November with the next big event before the end of term, the Christmas Fayre, on Saturday 8th December.

### **PREMISES**

Please do not let your children (including toddlers) 'scoot' on school premises. We have had at least one incident where a child was knocked off their feet and hurt by someone racing down the path from the Ellis Rodd gate. All cyclists know that they must dismount at the gate and wheel their bikes in; please could we apply the same rule to scooters.

### **SCHOOL DINNERS**

I just wanted to advise you that both Miss Sheppard and I are aware of the inconsistencies in the school meals, our contracted catering company, Caterlink, provide. I have school dinners several times a week and the lunchtime staff do log positive and negative comments from the children. Our Chair of Governors has also been monitoring the situation and has had several discussions with Caterlink and written to them too. He has also talked to some of the children about their meals and the School Council have been asked to help keep an eye on the standard of food being provided. I attended their feedback session earlier this week and will be putting their points to Caterlink after half term when Miss Sheppard, myself and the chairs of governors from both schools are meeting with the management of Caterlink. I do appreciate your concerns and assure you that we are taking them very seriously indeed.

### **OUTDOOR LEARNING**

There are about eight sessions of outdoor learning throughout the year and we try to do as much of our learning outside. We ask the children to bring a waterproof coat for these sessions as we take the children out in most weathers. The children may be pond dipping, mini beast hunting in the woods or gardening, so any cuts benefit from being covered beforehand.

In addition, soil contains many micro-organisms and not all of them are safe therefore you may like to check your children are protected against tetanus. These precautions are not specific to outdoor learning but are good practice for all children. We supply gardening and rubber gloves when necessary and impress upon children the importance of washing their hands thoroughly.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Ms. Moores

## **GARDENING**

### **Greenhouse**

We now have a splendid greenhouse which was installed by Y9 Wellington College students as part of their Junior Social Apprentice Programme. The students have masterminded the entire project and raised the funds needed to support it. We are delighted they accepted our invitation to build it here.

### **Morrison Vouchers – hurry!**

The vouchers are only available until the end of October. Please remember to bring them to school after half term no later than Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> November. There is a collection box by the entrance hall.

### **Marie Curie mini pots of care**

Thank you to all year 3 children who have supported this charity. Remember to follow the instructions and your daffodils will be blooming proudly by February ready for the flower show. Year 5 will be planting daffodils around the 11<sup>th</sup> / 12<sup>th</sup> November, letters will follow

### **High Street planting**

Three children from 3H cleared weeds from the raised beds outside the Co-op and planted bulbs. Keep your eye out for some colour next spring.

M.Moores

## **REMINDER TO YEAR 6 PARENTS**

Please note that the closing date for secondary school applications for September 2014 is **October 31<sup>st</sup>**.

## **‘MOVEMBER’ AT OAKLANDS**

During November, male members of staff will be participating in ‘Movember’ which challenges men to grow a moustache for the 30-days of November, thereby changing their appearance and the face of men’s health.

As an independent global charity, ‘Movember’ aims to raise vital funds and awareness for prostate, but also testicular cancer and mental health.

If you would like to sponsor us, please either ask us for a sponsorship form or complete the form at the office.

Mr Lee, Mr Hill, Mr Hutton

## WELLINGTON COLLEGE WOODLAND REGENERATION PLAN

The Works and Estates Manager at Wellington College have advised us of work they are planning to do in the next month or so. Wellington are trying to notify as many local people as possible of the disruption this work might cause to those of you who visit the grounds. We have posted maps, given to us by Wellington College, on our website. These show where the work is to be carried out and give some indication of the timescales.

Yours sincerely,



Miss S. Charnley  
Headteacher

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**Half Term Monday 28<sup>th</sup> October to Friday 1<sup>st</sup> November**

### NOVEMBER

<b>Monday 4<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>INSET DAY</b>
<b>Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Pupils return to school</b>
Wednesday 6 <sup>th</sup>	Parents' evening
Thursday 7 <sup>th</sup>	Parents' evening
Saturday 9 <sup>th</sup>	PTA Firework Display
Monday 11 <sup>th</sup> to Thursday 14 <sup>th</sup>	Life Education Mobile Classroom visits the school
Tuesday 26 <sup>th</sup> to Friday 29 <sup>th</sup>	Book Fair
Thursday 21 <sup>st</sup>	Year 5 Astronomy Roadshow
Friday 29 <sup>th</sup>	Non-uniform day for PTA Christmas Fayre

### DECEMBER

Wednesday 4 <sup>th</sup>	Decoration Day
Saturday 7 <sup>th</sup>	PTA Christmas Fayre
Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup>	Year 3 Play at 1.45pm
Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup>	Year 3 Play 7.00pm
Friday 13 <sup>th</sup>	Year 5 Trip to the Victorian School Room at Reading Museum
Monday 16 <sup>th</sup>	2.00pm Farewell Afternoon Tea with Miss Charnley
Thursday 19 <sup>th</sup>	Christmas Church Service in the morning
Thursday 19 <sup>th</sup>	The 'Flying Pizza' Company perform the Hobbit to the school pm
<b>Friday 20<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>2.15pm End of Term</b>

### JANUARY 2014

<b>Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>INSET DAY</b>
<b>Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Pupils return to school</b>

**Please note SATs week for Year 6 is Monday 12<sup>th</sup> May to Friday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2014**