

Oaklands Junior School

Headteacher - Mrs H West

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29th November 2019

Dear Parents/Carers,

I am very aware that I have not yet communicated with you this term but wanted to do so before the Christmas activities and the accompanying excitement completely takes over. To be honest, the term to date has been extremely busy as the Governors are in the process of rethinking the school's strategic plan, which determines the direction that we would like the school to go over the next 3 years, and this has taken an enormous amount of time and effort. However, we have made great progress and I am hopeful that we will be able to share this with you on the website before the end of term.

First of all, I should like to welcome all new parents/carers to the school and hope that your children have settled well into their new environment. I did attend the Year 3 parents' information evening last term and all those I spoke to were very happy with how things were going. As you know, if you do have any concerns at all, however trivial they might seem, do please arrange to speak to the class teacher in the first instance as the vast majority of these issues can get sorted at this stage. Obviously we want all the children to feel safe and happy in a stimulating and challenging learning environment, and Governors and staff do their utmost to ensure that this is the case.

The school has been on a journey towards accreditation as a Thinking School for a number of years, as Governors and staff alike feel that the tools involved in this equip our children with skills to enhance their learning in all areas of the curriculum. We achieved this accreditation last year, and in October were visited by a group of 10 Lithuanian teachers accompanied by the CEO of Thinking Schools International. I am delighted to say that the CEO was so impressed with what he saw, that we have been asked to be a hub school, which would involve more visits and cooperation with other schools in order to promote further development of what we believe is a very valuable tool to enhance our curriculum. As the latest Ofsted inspection framework focuses far more on the curriculum than previously, we feel confident that our Thinking School status will stand us in good stead.

As I am sure you are aware, children's progress and attainment is closely monitored by the class teachers, the SLT, and indeed by the Governors in an anonymised format, but the only published results are at the end of KS2. Last year, as many of you know, we were disappointed with our SATs results and staff have been working extremely hard on areas for improvement, as they always do, year on year. We were absolutely delighted with our 2019 results, which showed a great improvement. Our results have been reported separately to you and, on behalf of the Governors, I should like to thank Mrs West and all her dedicated staff for all their hard work.

The Governing Body recently changed the way that Governors see the school in action, and each class now has a dedicated Governor, in addition to the various Named Governors for certain areas, such as Safeguarding, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, etc. The intention is that Governors will visit their particular class a few times in the course of the year to experience a range of curriculum subjects, speak to the children about their learning and find out from the teachers if there is any way that the Governing Body can help. The intention is that the Governor will move through the school with that class, thereby forming a close working relationship with the member of staff as well as getting to know the children. The link Governors for this year for each class are as follows:

Class	Link Governor
3M Miss McComish	Nada Harding
3JG Mrs Jones/Mrs Green	Robert Wyld
4L Mr Lee	Charlotte Kieran
4D Miss Davidson	Esther Blake
5N Miss Noad	Liz James
5H Miss Hanks	Amy Griffiths
6B Miss Bland	Susanne Kaps
6A Mrs Alexander	Justine Waight

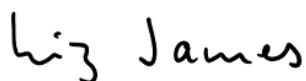
I personally spent a wonderful morning with Year 5 on their Diwali day, and was delighted at the same time to see so many parents in school helping with the various activities.

We continue to work closely with the Corvus Learning Trust, which is ultimately accountable to the DfE for the performance of all the schools in the Trust. We have seen increased cooperation in a number of areas, such as school improvement and admissions, and they are a constant source of help and advice. There will be a meeting of all Trust leaders, school Governors and school leadership teams next month when we will be able to share successes and plans for the future.

Finally, we have recently lost some long-standing members of our Governing Body, due to work and family commitments and we would like to thank Carolyn Pyke, Barbara Paige and David Whitfield for all their hard work and commitment to this school. **We would now like to recruit some new members with relevant skills.** If any of you feel that you would like to have a chat about what is involved, please do get in touch with me – I can assure you that it is really worthwhile and rewarding, getting to know so much more about the school where your children receive their education and feeling that you can contribute to its success.

As always, I should like to thank Mrs West and her dedicated team and look forward to continuing to work with Oaklands Junior School for the benefit of all our children.

Yours faithfully,



Liz James
Chair of Governors