

# Oaklands Junior School

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Dear Parents/Carers,

## Our First Week!

Firstly I would like to thank you for all the positive support we have received, both written and verbal, for what has been a rollercoaster ride for us, as well as for you. We had barely a day to organise all that was needed to support our children and families this first week. Staff, as well as parents, have been amazing.

**Lockdown:** Many of you are now faced with lockdown which feels very surreal but I hope you have come to terms with this as being absolutely necessary. Social distancing will help us to return to normality at a quicker pace.

**Home Learning** is an extension to OWL to ensure we provide children and families with all the basics that are needed to continue our children's education BUT we would not want any child or family to be faced with feeling that they have not achieved what they set out to do each day. We originally planned that home learning would be 2-3 hours with flexibility for other home learning that you and your child may choose. Please do not worry if there are some days that are better than others and try **not** to give yourself increased anxiety from feeling that you cannot possibly achieve it all. If you need any help/support or advice in any of the home learning, please do use the link we sent out to you: [hls@oaklands-jun.wokingham.sch.uk](mailto:hls@oaklands-jun.wokingham.sch.uk)

In addition, although schools are closed, we are still open for key workers' and vulnerable children; there will always be someone at the end of a phone who can speak with you or pass on a message during term time. I am in most days, along with my senior leadership team on a rota. We can speak to you or, if we are with the children, return your call. Please remember you are not alone – we are here for you.

It is only the first week and I have been worried about what may be happening to our children and families, as I am sure you have been worried too by the situation that we all find ourselves in. Please look after yourselves and don't have unreasonable expectations of what can be achieved. I want you all to be kind to yourselves and remember that in a normal situation, your child would be at school being taught by us. Your role is to continue to care for your child and support their learning in any way you are able.

**New Scope for Home Learning:** I would like to ask you to continue with the daily activities that your children are already doing which includes all the basics. If there is something that you can do outside of this together, that would be fantastic e.g. cook something (measuring ingredients), plant/care for seeds, draw/paint, measure for a new carpet, build a model out of Lego or junk modelling, research your next holiday together (finding out about that town/country), play a game, video storytelling/drama (taking on a character), play or learn to play a musical instrument, write a poem, make a comic, create a timetable of your own for each day ... whatever this may be, then please feel free to include any of these (or any other ideas you may have) in your child's home learning book – neatly presented of course!



A very small piece of writing about this, a drawing or photo with a little explanation would be perfect – nothing lengthy needed. It is most important to learn whilst having fun. Your wellbeing and your child's wellbeing is extremely important.

If you are anxious then they will be too, so please try to keep positive and remember that if your child is anxious, they may be just struggling to make sense of all that is happening; some cope better than others, just as children find some things easier or harder than others. All of this is perfectly natural.

YOU are the best person to decide what is right for your child. We know you will do your best to keep the educational basics going and to ensure your child is well cared for, loved, supported and allowed to feel emotional or upset, knowing that YOU will be there for them and help them to understand (without the scary bits) what is happening and why they are being restricted in so many ways. WhatsApp, Skype or whatever other means you have is a great way to keep in touch with friends and members of your family, especially Grandparents who can feel very isolated at this time.

**Homework Grid:** This is the bit that I hope you will LOVE. I feel, this is a bonus if this is completed, given our current situation. During these difficult times, if it helps to put the homework grid to one side as a reserve for learning, if further ideas are needed, then that is ok. You are already supporting us in distance learning daily, so perhaps you should be sending this back to us to do in these circumstances, as you continue in what is our day job! Joking aside, keep this as an example of what would happen in an ideal world when you are not doing so many other things. These tasks are there if you need anything extra. If just some of these are completed, that would be amazing but please do not overburden yourself when there is so much more to consider.

**Extra Free Activities:** In school, we have taken advantage of many of these that are now being provided and perhaps you could as well. We begin each day with 30 mins of Joe Wicks helping us to warm up and exercise. We end each day with a mat in the hall, lying down and listening to a piece of calming music and a calm voice that helps us to relax before we go home. Some parents have already shared free learning resources they have found on the Internet which may be something that you would like to join in with your child. Share these with each other on social media if you feel this would help others. We will try to compile a list of resources that you may wish to use for a bit of variety each day.

**Wellbeing:** I cannot stress this enough - please look after yourself and your family; minimising stress is absolutely vital for mental health in a time like this. You will have good days and bad days – this is perfectly normal. Don't feel guilty about unfinished tasks, or taking longer to do something. Placing undue pressure on yourself or your child, is not conducive to wellbeing. You are all super heroes to your children and families. Think carefully about what you are reasonably able to do, given other commitments and be kind to yourself and your family. If there is anything that you feel we can help with, or if you just need someone to talk to or just to listen, we are here for you. We will try to add a link for wellbeing activities and resources on OWL over time that you may wish to use with your child (this is optional).

Remember that you are doing an amazing job in raising your family and now you have been called on to do even more. Be proud of yourself in that you are doing the best that you possibly can at this challenging time – that is all we can ever ask of anyone.

Yours faithfully,



Mrs. H. West  
Headteacher