



Oaklands Junior School

Learning to think - Thinking to learn

Spring NEWSLETTER 2020

Message from Mrs West

I would like to begin by giving my heartfelt thanks to ALL our Oaklands' families for your messages of support, following my letter last Friday. I just wanted you to know that you are doing an amazing job, given our unexpected circumstances, and that we are here for you and realise how difficult this can be. The most important thing is that you and your family keep healthy, safe and well.

As Easter approaches and you think about what you might have previously done as a family, this holiday will be very different BUT there are a lot of resources online that you may be able to take advantage of, imagining you are there at the museum, art gallery, zoo or theatre together. Some resources are there for you in the list contained within this newsletter but many more are being added online daily so please look for these and go on a virtual tour! Hopefully we will have some good weather too, so you may be able to go for a walk together as a family.

We are very positive about the future and are already planning what we can do to welcome you all back – school seems very empty without the children but the children we do have in school are having a great time.

I have taken the decision to close our school over the Easter break to give staff two weeks' free from being on a rota in school, working from home or preparing resources. It has been a very stressful time but as always, we rise to the challenge and I am thankful for such supportive staff who regularly look to what they can do to help/support and positively respond to how we can make this work. These two weeks will enable us to relax and recharge our batteries!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the key workers for the fantastic job they are doing in such difficult circumstances

PTA

THANK YOU to our very creative PTA for thinking of new ways to keep us all involved, when the events that were planned are now put on hold.

Year 6 have already taken part in a fun online quiz and I believe this was very well received. I am sure that this will become a feature for different year groups next as this was so successful. Parents will know when this will happen as a message will come to you from the PTA with a day, time and link to Zoom for you to share with your child, if you would like to.

Internet Resources for Parents

The Internet has become increasingly important in our lives in the last fortnight, particularly allowing children to access their learning and to keep in contact with their friends and family.

The online safety website, Internetmatters.org has launched a new advice hub for parents, StaySafeStayHome, to help you to make the best use of technology at this time. The website also suggests [10 resources](#) to keep families happy and engaged at home with technology.

Thinking Schools Latest News

We were due to receive another group of Lithuanian visitors in school on 17th March, accompanied by the CEO of Thinking Schools International but unfortunately this has been postponed to a future date. It is fabulous that we are now part of a Thinking Hub in being able to 'show off' all that we do as a school of excellence in Thinking!

Important Dates

As we are **closed** until further notice – diary dates will be shared when open again

Easter Holiday

6th-17th April

SCHOOL CLOSED

Half Term

25th-29th May

End of Term

1.30pm 17th July

What has been happening in Years 3 & 4?

Year 3

We began the term with a visit to Butser Ancient Farm, and the children have been exploring how Britain changed through the prehistoric period. In History, we have been asking questions about how Stone Age and Bronze Age people may have lived and how and why that could have changed. We have even used this new knowledge, paired with the book, *Stone Age Boy*, to create our own time-travelling stories.

More recently, we have been sharing traditional fairy tales with the children. These tales aren't being celebrated or shared as much now, so it was really encouraging that the children had a good knowledge of them. They seemed to really enjoy being able to retell them through drama and actions. Ask at home if they can recreate our version of *Little Red Riding Hood*!

In Science, the children have learned about the human body and the skeleton. It was fantastic to see that the children had an excellent understanding of what makes up a healthy diet and how to look after our bodies. The children also had a great time with their Young Innovators challenge! The slow-mo marble run was certainly tricky but they all brought their creativity, enthusiasm and team spirit to the task!

An ongoing theme throughout this half term has been kindness. We have explored this through Philosophy for Children and our day-to-day lives. Going forward, we would love for the children to be aware of little acts of kindness around them.

Finally, we'd like to thank everyone at home for your continued support with home learning in this strange, uncertain time.

We hope to see you all again very soon!

The Year 3 Team

Year 4

We began our term with a targets week – focussing on the key elements of the Year 4 English curriculum.

We then had some great sessions working in groups attempting the 3M challenge of creating a structure that could hold up to 10kg. Well done to the group that won in Y4 and have gone forward to the finals.

The highlight of the spring term is always our residential trip to Ufton Court and this year was no exception, especially as it was the first year ever that we have taken both classes at the same time!

Throughout the time that the children were away, they all had a fantastic time – taking up the challenge of being away and embracing learning in a different environment. There are some photos available on OWL – go to the Year 4 page and click on the picture of Ufton Court. We still hope to have a 'Show & Tell' evening when we return, during which the children will share with you some of the very memorable activities that they did during their three day stay.

It is always really interesting to see how the children react to being in a different environment and there were some fantastic examples of the children demonstrating the Oaklands' mindset and facing challenges, communicating effectively, enjoying themselves, being ambitious by trying new things and demonstrating great friendship and independence!

We hope that you are enjoying the daily videos. Thank you to everyone at home for supporting our children's home learning – we know it can be challenging but hopefully fun.

The Year 4 Team

What has been happening in Years 5 & 6?

Year 5

Our Spring term started well with an exciting visit to the Living Rainforest in Newbury, as an introduction to our Geography topic. We were able to really immerse ourselves with the sights, sounds and smells of the rainforest environment. During our tour, we learnt about how plants and animals have adapted to enable them to survive in their habitats. A highlight of the visit for many of us was seeing Cinnamon, the resident two-toed sloth, in such close proximity.

Back at school, we started reading 'Journey to the River Sea' by Eva Ibbotson, which the children really enjoyed. The book, as well as our experiences at the Living Rainforest, helped us to write detailed descriptions of the Amazon rainforest using expanded noun phrases and figurative language. We were highly impressed with the quality of these pieces of writing.

Throughout our Geography topic, the children have learnt about the layers of the rainforest in which the animals live, the tribes who call the rainforest their home and compared or contrasted with the climate in Manaus, Brazil and London. We started exploring the effects of deforestation during a P4C session, using the picture book 'Where's the Elephant?' as a thought-provoking stimulus.

Our production of Romeo and Juliet played a big part in this term. Since the first rehearsal, we were so impressed with the enthusiasm and commitment to learning lines, songs and dance routines that all the children demonstrated. We were all disappointed to learn that the play to the parents could not go ahead but were so proud of the manner in which the children performed to the school and the way that so many of them volunteered to take on new lines, parts and responsibilities. Hopefully you have been able to watch the video of the production on OWL in the comfort of your own home!

On behalf of the Year 5 team, we would like to wish our families: health and happiness in this challenging time. Keep up the great work with the home learning and we hope to see you all again very soon.

The Year 5 Team

Year 6

We had a great start to the term in Year 6.

In English, we began studying the famous Shakespeare play – Macbeth. The children immersed themselves in the study and enjoyed listening to the play and watching episodes online. The children were able to write their own newspaper reports following the death of King Duncan and enjoyed writing a description of either the battle or banquet scene from the play.

In Science, we continued with our study on light and were able to make pinhole cameras. The children used Pringles tubes to make the cameras and were able to test them outside in the sunshine. The children were excited to see that an inverted image was formed in their pinhole cameras.

In Geography, we began investigating the question, why are mountains important? We looked at some of the world's most spectacular mountains and mountain ranges and began to investigate how they came to develop over millions of years. We even created mountains in the classroom with the key facts for each one.

Before school closed, the children were given the opportunity to participate in Bikeability. The children loved learning to cycle correctly on the road and were a credit to the school. Anyone who was not in school to receive their certificate, will find that this has been posted to them.

Finally, we'd like to say a huge thank you to everyone that has offered us support and guidance.

We will continue to communicate via home learning tasks and wish for everyone to stay safe.

We hope to see you all soon and when we do meet, we will also be organising a celebration of your time with us at Oaklands Junior School.

The Year 6 Team

Further News

Sports Report

We have had an amazing netball season so far, winning all but one of the league matches we have played. The netball team have been a joy to work with and the children always represent Oaklands brilliantly. The children show true sportsmanship and enjoyment for the game. As the league is not currently underway, I do not have our final placing. The children have put in lots of effort and I hope to see all the netballers again soon.

Pupils' Wellbeing on OWL

Many of our children have been working with Mrs Lenon in nurture groups and we have created a button on the front page of OWL where these children can contact her and keep in touch if they would like to. This could be about any worries or concerns they may have but could equally be just a place where they can chat as they will have missed their sessions with her.

Likewise, if there are any other children who are worried or feeling that they need to share their thoughts, then of course, they will be able to contact her too. We hope that this is a very useful addition to the support we are giving that will help mental health and wellbeing for all our children.

A message from Wokingham Borough Libraries

At present Wokingham Borough Council has taken the difficult decision to temporarily close all of its libraries. A large number of online library services are still available, including [ebooks](#), [enewspapers](#) and [audiobooks](#). While the libraries are closed we have suspended the fines so there is no need to renew/return your books. Please look after the books, until such time as the libraries reopen, then you will be able to return.

Check out the Libraries Blog on <https://wokinghamboroughlibraries.wordpress.com/> for different book themed ideas and activities to do at home that maybe of interest to your students.

- Online storytime every Tuesday on our Facebook Page - [Storytime Facebook post of I am tiger by Karl Newson and Ross Collins click here](#) and [Storytime Facebook link for Smelly Peter the Great Pea Eater by Steve Smallman and Joelle Dreidemy](#)
- Rhymetime – a rhyme a week will be coming out on Friday on our Facebook page - [Rhyme a week Facebook post click here](#)
- Lego Club weekly challenge - This week's theme is Space, so submit before April 8 - [Lego Club Facebook post click here](#)
- Online Educational Children's Resources to try at home – [Blogpost on Educational Resources for Children](#)
- Children's Virtual Writing Club - <https://wp.me/p5mHbU-4ui>
- Children's Authors and Publishers offering online content from Wokingham Borough Libraries <https://wp.me/p5mHbU-4s7>

Reading Well Schemes - <https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/libraries/reading-schemes-for-children-and-adults/reading-well-schemes-to-improve-health/> Some of the titles are available on eBooks for you to listen to but check out <https://reading-well.org.uk/resources/mental-health> for more resources.

Food Bank Vouchers

If you are struggling financially to meet your family's needs, Mrs Lenon is able to distribute Food Bank Vouchers. If you feel that you would benefit from one of these please contact Mrs Lenon at nlenon@oaklands-jun.wokingham.sch.uk

Free Online Curriculum Resources:

These are just a few of the many resources that are freely available online, some of which would normally require a subscription ...

PE: Joe Wicks (Body Coach) 9.00-9.30am daily (videos are saved for access any time of day):

Youtube.com/Thebodycoach

Science:

https://www.go.twigeducation.com/covid19?utm_source=twigeducation&utm_medium=redirect&utm_campaign=covid-19

Science with Maddie Moate – live daily on You Tube <https://www.maddiemoate.com/>

Science, Maths, Computing, DT: <https://www.stem.org.uk/home-learning/primary>

Maths with Carol Vorderman: <https://www.themathsfactor.com/>

Computing/coding: <https://education.minecraft.net/>

BBC Radio – curriculum resources & stories: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p007g5y4>

David Walliams audio stories: <https://www.worldofdavidwalliams.com/elevenses/>

Astronauts reading stories from Space: <https://storytimefromspace.com/library/>

Easter Holiday activities:

Virtual visit to a Museum or Gallery around the World:

<https://lifehacker.com/you-can-virtually-tour-these-500-museums-and-galleries-1842343589>

Live Stream Visit to Chester Zoo - day of live streaming still available:

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/chester-zoo-virtual-tour-red-pandas-lockdown-facebook-livestream-a4399686.html>

Live cams for animals around the World: <https://explore.org/livecams>

Wind in the Willows stage show: <https://www.willowsmusical.com/>

Puzzles for all: <https://www.thejigsawpuzzles.com/>

Scavenger Hunt ideas: <https://scavenger-hunt.org/>

Lego Challenges: <https://www.freehomeschooldeals.com/free-printable-30-day-lego-challenge-instant-download/>

For Parents:

Theatres such as the National Theatre are streaming their plays free on YouTube e.g. National Theatre begins on Thursday 2nd April at 7pm ... you can watch this at any time over the next week and there will be a different show each week. <https://www.nationaltheatre.org.uk/nt-at-home>

Food Tech with Jamie Oliver:

<https://www.jamieoliver.com/recipes/category/books/keep-cooking-and-carry-on/>

Mental Health Matters – A message from our Educational Psychotherapist

Children depend on adults to provide a safe and secure environment, both physically and emotionally, so it's important that, as adults, we look after our own well-being, are kind to ourselves and seek support when needed. We are more able to tune in to how our children are feeling when we are calm.

Children feel safe when they feel cared for and loved. They are unlikely to clearly describe their anxieties, but instead show them through their behaviour. We can help by accepting their feelings, taking them seriously and providing comfort. Pretending that nothing's wrong or dismissing their fears can be confusing for them. When a child is upset, Bruce Perry's approach uses the 'three R's': Regulate, Relate, Reason.

Regulate – help your child calm down with a soothing activity or a hug.

- Relate – empathise with how they're feeling and show that their feelings are bearable.
- Reason – explore what's happened to bring on these feelings and discuss what's real and what's imaginary.

We are being challenged, now more than ever in the current climate of uncertainty. Providing children with a stable and secure environment as much as possible over these uncertain times is the most important thing we can do. Only when children feel safe, are they able to learn and play.

NHS - 10 tips for looking after your mental health throughout the crisis.

<https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/coronavirus-covid-19-anxiety-tips/>

NHS Mental Health Helplines:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/mental-health-helplines/>

Anna Freud Self Care (activity list created by young people) - <https://www.annafreud.org/selfcare/>

You may wish to view the following to share with your child if they are asking questions or are worried:

Children's Guide to coronavirus - <https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/cco-childrens-guide-to-coronavirus.pdf>



Wishing you ALL a Very Happy Easter