



Oaklands Junior School

Learning to think - Thinking to learn

NEWS UPDATE October 2021

Dear Parents & Carers,

As we approach half term, we have been so pleased to have returned to many school events for a good proportion of this half term, after such a difficult 18 months with social distancing! To have the whole school back together with face-to-face assemblies again, seeing the children eager to learn, singing, laughing and playing together, has been a joy to hear and see. Also being able to have parents back on site and helping in school – Thank you to all who helped with reading and other activities this half term; your support in school is always very much appreciated.

Unfortunately, since this last weekend, we have had an escalating outbreak of Covid as detailed in my letters with a daily update from Wokingham and advice from Public Health, which meant we had to return to socially distant safety measures – this may happen from time-to-time but please understand that we will only be doing this to ensure that we all remain healthy and safe. Similarly, on Tuesday when positive cases were rising rapidly, we needed to ask 3 classes to stay home to take a PCR test, returning only when negative results were received. Our very grateful thanks to all our Y5 and Y3 parents who responded so quickly in booking PCR tests. Many parents have also taken the time to speak with me in the playground, with so many positive comments about this difficult decision and totally supporting that this was the correct decision to make – Thank you. We just hope that any children and families who are currently unwell, get better very soon so that everyone can enjoy half term.

Thank you to all my staff for all your hard work this half term and for your enthusiasm in providing children with so many amazing opportunities to learn, play and thrive.

Wishing you all a safe, happy and healthy half term and we look forward to seeing you back with us on Monday 1st November. Please continue to send your children straight into classes on arrival, as we navigate what is needed to continue to keep us all safe at the start of the next half term.

Take care and stay safe.

Mrs H. West, Headteacher

Trust statement regarding COVID period of uncertainty – Autumn 2021

As you will be aware, during this period of uncertainty, our schools within the Trust are working extremely hard to provide a safe environment for all our children and staff, whilst continuing to deliver a high standard of education. At present, the school, year groups and classes have been able to remain open, and the education has continued with limited disruption but has, on occasions, offered challenges regarding staffing. However, as COVID continues to be in our schools, our colleagues remain flexible and respond on a daily basis to the needs of the children and staff.

If in this period of time, the threshold is met whereby a significant number of staff are required to be at home due to testing positive and/or having to isolate, and no additional teaching support is available, there may well be the need to send children home and close classes. At this point, the school's Remote Learning Policy will be



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put in place and this will be communicated to parents. School provision will always be available for children of keyworkers and vulnerable children. These arrangements will be communicated to parents and would be for a limited amount of time before the school could welcome the children back. This decision to close a class will be as a final resort and the Headteacher will have discussed this action with their school governors and colleagues from the Trust, and will therefore be fully supported.

Of course, it is the priority of all schools, teachers and colleagues to keep our schools open, safe and available for all our children.

Urgent Message from Mrs West

In order that we can **all** stay safe and well (staff and children) and be able to run as a near normal school without any further disruption to education, please may I remind parents not to send children into school if they are unwell (this does not mean a normal cough or cold which is common at this time of year but something more persistent and unusual as stated in Covid guidance). If you suspect your child is unwell due to Covid, then please immediately arrange a PCR test.

In addition, although the government's current guidance says that children (and staff) need to be in school if well enough whilst awaiting the result of a PCR test, we would like to kindly request support from our whole school community in this instance, by remaining at home, until the result is known.

Please contact my office to let us know when a PCR test is being taken, along with an indication of why this is being taken; the result when known would also be required. Many thanks for your kind co-operation which will undoubtedly ensure that all my staff and children remain safe and well.

During the half term if your child has a positive PCR test, please notify us via the Covid email: oisCovid@oaklands-jun.wokingham.sch.uk

Covid Catch-Up Funding

Please check our website for details of catch-up funding for last year and how this has been spent with our focus on Wellbeing, our Recovery Curriculum and Quality First Teaching. This has already been set up for this year to continue the good work that my teaching staff are already doing so that we give our children the best support and opportunities to progress.

Harvest Festival

We had a brilliant Harvest Assembly, led by Marvin from St Sebs, on Thursday 7th October, which we streamed live to our Y6 classrooms. Thank you to the many parents and grandparents who attended and we hope you enjoyed the wonderful singing, our Y6 prayers, Y5 Mayan masks, Y4 Autumn poems and Y3 Pointilism fruit and vegetable art work (along with the refreshments and biscuits in Y6 classrooms)!

THANK YOU to ALL our parent community for the fantastic gifts you sent into school for our Harvest display - we were overwhelmed with the huge amount of donations.



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Crowthorne Foodbank were very pleased to receive **an amazing 195kgs** of goods last Friday. A special thank you to our governors and Mr Shaw in particular, who volunteered to collect and deliver these so we could prepare the hall for the PTA disco.

STEM World of Energy for Y6

We were very lucky to have a whole day of STEM workshops provided by Hugh & Chris in an inspirational way on 12th October as part of: <https://letslearnenergy.co.uk/>

We learnt about healthy food choices, sustainability and climate change in a range of fun workshops and games that covered science, maths and design and technology. All our Y6s enjoyed this fun day and our thanks go to Corvus Trust for organising this opportunity for us but also to Wellington College who funded this exciting day.

Exciting News – Music Mark School Award!

As a school, we have been nominated by Berkshire Maestros to become a Music Mark School for the 2021/2022 academic year. Music Mark is the UK Association for Music Education, championing and supporting access to music for all children and young people. We have been nominated as a recognition of our commitment to a broad a balanced curriculum through our use of Charanga and affiliation with Maestros. This is a fantastic recognition of how far we have developed as a school and we are honoured to accept the nomination.

Berkshire Maestros & Tuition for Y3s

Every year we fund 10 weeks' of tuition with Berkshire Maestros so that Y3 can learn to play a musical instrument. Last year we very much enjoyed learning how to play the ukulele but this year we are learning to play the viola. Y3 are enjoying these sessions and it is lovely to hear as the music permeates the whole school from the hall. Our thanks to Fernando for his expert tuition and inspirational teaching.

Online Safety

Please may we ask you to be vigilant in taking an interest in what your children are accessing online, whether this is through TikTok or Roblox or any other media. We are not naming any specific games/threats as this may encourage pupils to search for something that they weren't previously aware of and this may escalate the danger as well as giving free publicity to something that is already alarming.

In addition, there are regularly new games/dangers online aimed at children that would equally be of concern and with Christmas on the horizon, we are sure that more will be in circulation, so please view the links below with useful information about how to keep your children safe. We hear in school often that children are accessing games and Apps beyond the recommended age range, so this should give you an idea of appropriateness. Any help you can give to support us in keeping your child safe, would be deeply appreciated.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-keeping-children-safe-online/coronavirus-covid-19-support-for-parents-and-carers-to-keep-children-safe-online>

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>



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DIY helpers needed!

Mr Lee would like to build at least one planter using the eco-bricks that his 'Eco-club' made last year. However, he is terrible at DIY and needs help!

Are you willing and/or able to assist him in building a planter using the plastic eco-bricks as bricks?

If you are able to help with some sand, cement and/or a cement mixer to assist him build it, he would be VERY grateful!

Please contact Mr Lee via the office or speak to him on the playground.

Christmas is Coming!

Unfortunately, our school Christmas post box which the children use to post their Christmas cards to their friends and staff in school, once December arrives, has seen better days and it didn't help when we put it outside at the gate (in the rain) last summer for parents to post report slips. It has now collapsed altogether 😞

Is there anyone who is feeling creative in being able to make us a new free standing red post box? Or someone who can recycle a small piece of furniture in this way? It needs to have a small opening to post cards and also an opening door, so that our Y6 posties can take out the cards and organise distribution to the right classes.

If you are able to help, this would be amazing and would make our children's Christmas! Feel free to be creative if you want to add a robin and some snow!

Squires Wokingham Decorate a Christmas Tree Competition

Oaklands Juniors are taking part in this competition to create Christmas tree decorations made from recycled materials. The ornaments must hang and be made from recycled materials such as toilet rolls, old jigsaw pieces, pinecones, bottle corks or buttons.

There was a large amount of interest from children across the school to help create these ornaments. These children were shown a PowerPoint with some ideas to inspire them.

It would be appreciated if these could be made at home and given to Miss Hanks after half term.

Local Community Information / Activities & Events

We have a dedicated page on our website providing information on local activities and events that is updated on a regular basis. You may find it of interest as it details events happening over the half term break.

<https://oaklandsjunior-school.org.uk/local-community-information-activities-events/>



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Secondary Schools

From time to time the local secondary schools provide us with information on events that are taking place. Any such information can be found on our website using the link below.

<https://oaklandsjunior-school.org.uk/secondary-school-information/>

Inclusive Sports Day

On Friday 8th October, we held our very first Oaklands Inclusive Sports Day. Each year group spent an hour taking part in a carousel of eight different activity stations moving between the field, playground and the hall. Activities included: Boule, skittles, Kurling, badminton, Tri-golf, balloon tennis, giant tic tac toe and air hockey table tennis.

Each station was manned by two Year 6 sports or house captains who amazed us all with their responsibility and maturity in instructing and encouraging the younger children. It was fabulous the way our Oaklands Mindset of Ambition and Friendship was demonstrated in the way children looked after each other and worked as a team. The enjoyment had by the children was summed up when one child said, "this was the best thing ever, can we do it again with sports day!"



Thinking Schools

On Tuesday 28th September, our school was invited to be interviewed on a Webinar as part of being a Hub Thinking School.

The webinar, watched by 147 schools, covered our reasons for becoming a Thinking School, the journey to accreditation and the benefits we see in our children. To access the recording, click on the icon below.





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Chair of Governors

Charlotte Kieran

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Oaklands Junior School Governing Body

The Governing Body is ambitious for all children and infused with a passion for education and a commitment to continuous school improvement that enables outstanding outcomes. We oversee financial performance, challenge, support, and focus on the strategic direction of Oaklands Junior school.

If you want to raise a concern, please speak with your class teacher in the first instance. We welcome your feedback if you wish to contact the Governors, please email Charlotte Kieran, Chair of Governors.

Raising a concern,

[Parents-Carers-and-Visitors-Conduct-Policy-Including-Raising-a-Concern](#)

Governing Body team,

<https://oaklandsjunior-school.org.uk/governors/governorprofiles/>