



Oakdene Primary School
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Headteacher: Mrs. H. Lee

27th November 2020

Dear Parents,

What a time we have had this half term with the dark nights closing in, the children unable to go to any clubs or activities and the uncertainty over what will be happening at Christmas. We have got some clarifications on what we can and cannot do and I hope you are able to plan a Christmas with your family and activities will be starting again soon.

I would urge everyone to keep to the guidelines so that you can enjoy a virus free Christmas. By abiding to the guidelines we have been able to have a full school right through until the end of November. This is a major achievement as the vast majority of schools have had to close bubbles. We know that we have been very fortunate in not bringing in any infections which is down to all Parents being extra vigilant about hand washing, staying away from other families and abiding by the Government rules as well as all the stringent health and safety procedures we have in place in school. We still have strict hand washing routines, no bubbles go near another bubble in school, all staff are wearing visors or masks except when they are in their bubble and extra cleaning is taking place in school. Please continue with these procedures so that all children and their families can enjoy their Christmas together.

We know that a bubble will have to go off at some point and I am sure that you will have worked out your contingency plans if your child's class has to self-isolate for 14 days at home. As previously mentioned, we will provide home learning for all children when self-isolating due to a household member waiting for a result or testing positive or when a whole class has to isolate. Please can you also think around the issue of siblings getting to school if one child has to isolate? Children are fine to be collected by a friend or neighbour to walk them to school but the person who is self-isolating must not leave the house so a parent will have to stay with them too.

Thank you so much for all adhering to the procedures in place in school. We never thought this would go on for so long but we really appreciate that you are wearing masks, socially distancing on the playground and doing your best to control the virus. Thank you.

Uniform

A few reminders from our uniform policy under the current restrictions:

- *Navy jogging suit.* (During these unprecedented times we are allowing navy or black leggings if you cannot obtain jogging trousers). We are still awaiting samples from suppliers for a hooded top and trousers and these will be available as soon as possible.
- *T shirts for PE should be one colour* (red, yellow, blue or green) with no large logos on. Once again, I can only apologise for the delay in PE T shirts arriving.
- *Black shoes for Winter Uniform.* Navy sandals or shoes are allowed in Summer.



- *Long hair (longer than shoulder length) must be tied back at all times with a dark coloured, plain bobble and if necessary children can wear a thin navy hairband or slide (this can be blue and white checked in Summer to match Summer Uniform). The school does not permit children to have haircuts that could serve as a distraction to other children. This includes no 'razor cuts' or extreme hair colour.*

I know how difficult it must be to adhere to this Policy especially when non-essential shops have been shut but I hope all items can be sourced very soon. Thank you to everyone who has been able to adhere to our policy,

Reminder of times for dropping off and collecting children

	<u>Drop off times</u>	<u>Collection times</u>
Year 6 and Year 2 children	8.45am	3.00pm
Year 3 and Year 1 children	8.55am	3.05pm
Year 5 and Year 4 children	9.05am	3.10pm
Reception children	9.05am	3.15pm

We are seeing children being dropped off early again and Grandparents / carers having to wait from 3.00pm to 3.15pm in quite cold weather. Years 1 and 3 drop off time is 8.55am. Please alert whoever is dropping off your child or picking them up that these are the times to adhere to. Please can I ask you to ask others to stand on the pavement until your Child's year group is called? We need to ensure that social distancing is taking place at all times.

Out of School Club

Did you know you can book into Out of School Club for just occasional sessions? Our Out of School Club usually has places available for both breakfast and after school - for long term bookings and the odd session whenever you wish to use it. Once you have filled out the 2 forms to register your child with the club (see our website), you will be able to book online at any time (using the SchoolMoney site) - or via the school office if it's short notice. We know many people are still working from home but if you need extra child care both before and after Christmas please do consider using our service. All classes are kept socially distant with time outside as well as films and activities to keep the children busy.

Parent Governor Election

Yesterday you should have received an envelope containing details about our Parent Governor Election and your ballot envelopes. Please check your youngest child's bag if you have not seen it yet. We have three nominations for Parent Governor with one vacancy. I would like to thank all Parents who expressed an interest in becoming a Parent Governor to help and support our school at this level. Please read the statements the potential Governors have written carefully, as this person will be representing all Parents on the Governing Body. The candidates are unable to canvass support in any other way and we hope you will disregard any other canvassing that may have inadvertently taken place. If you have not received the election envelope please contact the school office. Votes need to be submitted before 3.30pm on Friday 11th December.

Film Afternoon

Next Friday would have been our wonderful Christmas Fayre organised by our superb Friends Committee. Obviously this is not able to take place and Friends have very kindly organised a pyjama day and film afternoon for all our children. If your child has PE next Friday, and is taking part in the film afternoon, they can still come



in their pyjamas as we have arranged indoor PE sessions for Friday morning. If your child is not watching the film but still wants to come in their pyjamas then that is fine. Please send any slips and money back to Mrs. Evans in School by Thursday 4th December AT THE LATEST so that there is time to make up the correct number of pick and mix bags. Thank you to our Friends Association for allowing this to happen so all our children can see that 'It is beginning to look a lot like Christmas'. 😊

Reverse Advent Calendar

As always at this time we want to 'Give a Little' back to all in our Community. The children will be making cards to give to Whiston Hospital and local care homes as we cannot visit them this year. The Staff have organised a reverse Advent Calendar which means we give something for each day of Advent. We are therefore organising another foodbank collection and you can choose any day between 1st and 17th December to donate anything you wish from a tin to a toy! The Trussell Trust were overwhelmed by our Harvest donations in October so we know they would appreciate another donation just before Christmas. They are always looking for UHT milk, tins of fruit, fish, soups or potatoes; sugar, coffee, tea bags, nappies, toiletries or toilet rolls. There will be a crate for donations on the playground from 1st to 17th December. We just want to give something back to others in our Community. Thank you.

A Special Visitor to School

We are hoping that, if a certain gentleman is not too busy he will be visiting us on the afternoon of Tuesday 8th December. Father Christmas has said that he will try and come to Oakdene in-between getting everything ready for Christmas Eve! He will be in his sleigh behind Perspex shields but we have arranged for photographs to be taken of your child with Father Christmas. This is all thanks to Rainhill Rotary Club who asked all the local Schools what they would like to bring a bit of magic to our children at Christmas. We asked for the sleigh to come to school and they have kindly agreed to pay for photos to be taken by a professional photographer and we will be able to send them home to you. We will be having individual photos for Reception and Years 1 - 4 and Years 5 & 6 are having a class photo with an option for an individual photo if preferred. If you do not want your child to see Father Christmas (or for Years 5 & 6 only - if you prefer an individual photo) please complete the form below or email school. Unfortunately we cannot send 2 photos home for any child. We hope this will bring a bit of magic for our children and you never know - it may snow too!

Birthdays

We have been very happy with the feedback we have received following our first Birthday afternoon (and another one today) to celebrate the children's birthdays in each class. We hope that in these difficult times this is some light relief for the children.

Productions in School

We had a wonderful retelling of the Wizard of Oz by the Magic of Theatre Production Group last week. One cast member in school worked with 'virtual' cast members and the production was a great success. Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 have decided that, instead of taking home a small gift this year they will watch an online stage production of The Gruffalo on Friday 11th December. Another treat in store for the children.

Presents for Staff

We have recently had enquiries as to whether children will be able to give Staff a gift at Christmas. This will be allowed but staff have discussed this and would rather ensure that all children have a little extra at Christmas or that a donation is made to a charity of your choice. Staff will not be able to open presents they receive until they have been quarantined for 72 hours. Please also bear in mind that we are bound by St. Helens Council Code of Conduct which states that the 'types of gifts that are acceptable are flowers, chocolates, wine and gifts of insignificant value. If however, gifts are made of a significant value eg. jewellery, then these must be declared' (and this gift may then have to be given to the Mayor's Charity Appeal). The Code of Conduct also states that



the School 'informs parents of what gifts are acceptable to avoid any embarrassment to employees or parents and pupils'. No member of staff would want anyone feeling forced to enter into a group present and we know your good wishes are with us at this time. We would rather your children had an extra present or a donation was made to charity especially this year when charities have lost out on so much fundraising. Thank you for being so understanding over this matter.

Flu Vaccinations

On a less festive note, December 10th is the date we have been given for the flu vaccinations to be administered in school. I know it was a long time ago in September when you filled in the permission forms. School don't hold these forms but if anything has changed in the meantime, such as you've had your child vaccinated already, just let us know and we will pass your instructions on to the vaccination team.

Covid-19

As we near the end of term, I would ask that, if you or a family member have a suspected or confirmed case, you do not put it on social media which may cause worry and distress to other families. All people connected with any confirmed cases will be contacted by test and trace and, in the event of a school case, we will be informed as to who needs to self-isolate. On a similar note, if your child has been self-isolating for any reason, please **do not send your child to school without getting in touch with us a day or so before they return** as there are certain checks and records we must make. We can all help each other to keep safe in these very strange times and hope that we can get to Christmas in a positive way. Thank you.

Yours sincerely,



H. Lee
Headteacher

Message from School Council

We are organising a Festive Fun Run taking place on Friday 11th December (this is instead of the Santa Dash in the last week). Children come into school in their PE kit and can wear a Christmas jumper and Christmas hats / head bands etc. We want to 'Give a Little Love' from the John Lewis advert so we will be asking for donations of £1.00 to be sent in to school so we can send it to their chosen charities of Home Start and Fare Share. Thank you.

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Father Christmas Visit

Name of Child..... Class.....

*I do not want my child to see Father Christmas when he visits school.

Years 5 & 6 ONLY

*I would like my child to have an individual photo instead of a Class photo

Signed

*Delete as applicable

