



# Oakley Lower School



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**Headteacher**  
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Dear Parents

I am sure we are all looking forward to a relaxing break after a long half term packed full of fun activities and learning experiences. This week has been particularly busy.

## **On Monday**

- Yr 3 and 4 completed their 6 week unit on Drumming and Dance from the Punjab; a visiting teacher from Bedfordshire Music has been teaching the children and on Monday they had the chance to perform for each other.
- Foundation Stage and Year 1 were treated to their own disco after school; the children had great fun and I would like to thank the staff who gave up their time to organise this event.

## **On Wednesday**

Yr 3 and 4 were visited by Mrs Horsman, a relative of AP Spencer-Smith who was part of the Antarctic Expedition. A P Spencer-Smith was the chaplain and photographer who travelled on the Aurora and it was his team's responsibility to get the supplies to Antarctica for Shackleton's team. The children already knew a lot of information about Shackleton's expedition and we were all fascinated to hear about the part that AP Spencer-Smith played. We are extremely grateful to Mrs Horsman who brought photographs and books and described so vividly what it would have been like to be part of the expedition.

- Parents and children from Yr 3 and 4 visited the Corn Exchange to see the Science Museum on tour; I understand that this was an "explosive" event and the children have described in detail some of the amazing experiments that were performed. Once again many thanks to the staff who helped to organise this, especially to Mrs French who arranged the booking and to Mrs Rounding, Mrs Green and Mrs Baguley who took responsibility for making sure that everyone was checked in and out.

## **On Thursday**

- Yr 2, 3 and 4 had the opportunity to show off their dancing skills at their disco. It was a great evening and a pleasure to see the children enjoying themselves together. The behaviour was exemplary which helped to make it a very enjoyable evening. Once again I would like to thank the staff and the PTA members who attended and helped to make it such a successful evening.

### **School Council**

We are always interested in new ideas and suggestions on how we can improve learning, communication and any other areas of school life. Attached to the Newsletter is a tear-off slip where we welcome you to write down any suggestions or comments you may have.

We would really like to hear from you. We are always pleased to receive feedback:

In our Parent questionnaire at the end of the summer term:

- 94% of children at KS1 were reported to enjoy school, especially outings, golden time, topic work and numeracy. Learning was said to be well balanced and good, assemblies enjoyable and the range of after school activities excellent.
- 100% of KS2 parents claimed children enjoyed school, especially topic work, outings and sport. Golden time, IT and DT were also greatly enjoyed as was the opportunity to help with younger children in the school.

During pupil interviews :

- Children were full of enthusiasm when discussing their topics.
- Favourites are WW2, Ancient Egypt, Space, Castles, The Great Fire of London and Kenya.
- Visits, making things and drama were all important to them and KS2 children thought more drama would be useful as they said it helped them to understand things more easily. They also suggested more “real life” activities would be helpful.
- KS2 children said that they particularly enjoyed finding out more at home, either by visiting museums, books or the internet.
- The children said that it is useful for their parents to receive the letter to tell them about their topic because then their parents can help them by getting books or taking them out to places such as museums.

We have tried to incorporate suggestions such as starting Street Dancing again, but unfortunately have not been able to accommodate a camel as a pet! .....Yet!

### **School Website**

We keep this updated throughout the term and this can be found at [www.oakleylowerschool.co.uk](http://www.oakleylowerschool.co.uk). Here, you will our school prospectus and information on term dates, school meals and all our latest events, including Chinese New Year, Pride in Bedford and Egyptian Day.

### **Text messaging and e-mail**

We have been finding our text message service very useful and would like to clarify that the message is sent to emergency contact number 1 only. If you would like to receive information by e-mail, please ensure that we have your e-mail address by completing the slip at the end of this letter.

### **Sainsburys Active Kids 2011 and Tesco Vouchers**

We are taking part in Sainsbury's Active Kids 2011 and Tesco for Schools and Clubs. Vouchers are available from Sainsbury's and Tesco stores, petrol stations and with online grocery shopping.

We would be really grateful if you could donate your vouchers to Oakley Lower School, as in the past we have been able to exchange these for some fantastic resources for school.

Collection boxes are in the Foyer.

### **Illness and Absence**

It is very much appreciated if any absence due to illness can be notified to the school before 9am so the registers can be completed accurately. In the case of sickness and diarrhoea, please note that we require your child to be kept away from school for 48 hours since the last bout of sickness or diarrhoea in order to keep the spread of any infections to a minimum.

### **Awards**

Handwriting awards were presented to:-

Reception	- Harvey Keir
Year 1	- Freya Gilbert
Year 2	- David Supple
Year 3	- Eleanor Fellows
Year 4	- Trevelyan Morgan

I would like to thank all staff and governors for their dedication and hard work. I would like to thank Mrs Roz Gray who took on the role of Chair of Governors in September; there is always much to do and it is good to know that we have people who are willing to take responsibility and put in effort to get things done.

To clarify, we come back to school after half term on Tuesday March 1st. I hope you have a lovely break.

Yours sincerely

Sarah E Lovett  
Headteacher

**DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

18 – 28 February	Half Term
1 <sup>st</sup> March	Return to school after Half Term
3 <sup>rd</sup> March	World Book Day
22 <sup>nd</sup> and 23 <sup>rd</sup> March	Parent Teacher Consultation Evenings
29 <sup>th</sup> March	Sing Up concert for Year 4 at Bromham
8 <sup>th</sup> April – 26 <sup>th</sup> April	Easter Holidays
27 <sup>th</sup> April	Summer Term starts

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**Suggestions and Comments Feedback Form**

Name (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Year Group of Child: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

**Reply slip for e-mail correspondence**

Child's name \_\_\_\_\_ Class teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Contact e-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

## **News from the Governors**

### **Who are we and why are we here?**

School governors are people from the school's community who wish to make a positive contribution to children's education. Governors are the largest volunteer force in the country and contribute to raising school standards through 3 key roles: setting strategic direction, ensuring accountability and monitoring and evaluating school performance.

The vacant posts on the governing body were filled last term so Oakley Lower School's governors are now:

Roz Gray - Chair (Parent Governor)	Tracey Gray (Parent Governor)
Jon Abbott - Vice Chair (Parent Governor)	Chloe Hall (Staff Governor)
Shaun Armstrong (Parent Governor)	Sarah Lovett (Headteacher)
Katy Beeden (Foundation Governor)	Pat Olney (Foundation Governor)
Zoe Bloodworth (Teacher Governor)	Rev. Jacqueline Owen (Community Governor)
Anthea Coghlan (Community Governor)	Ian Watson (Local Authority Governor)
Simon Daniels (Parent Governor)	
Sacha Fisher (Community Governor)	Clerk to the Governors: Karen Wille

### **How We Communicate**

The governing body is no longer required to produce an annual report to parents, instead we regularly update our online School Profile which can be viewed at:

<http://schoolsfinder.direct.gov.uk/pdf/8222115.pdf>

You will also be able to access it through the schools website:

<http://www.oakleylowerschool.co.uk>

We hope also to e-mail this link to parents who have registered their e-mail address with us. We will be increasing the amount of information sent home this way over the next term and a half and will then gather feedback from parents on its success. If you haven't registered your e-mail address with us and would like to, please complete and return the reply slip at the end of this newsletter.

### **Thanks**

Lastly, thanks to all those who contribute to making Oakley Lower the happy and successful place it is. Thanks to:

- Sarah Lovett and the staff who put in a tremendous amount of work to make learning fun, who bring in new ideas and make the learning environment stimulating and relevant.
- The pupils who have worked so hard this term and produced some beautiful work, including the Chinese artefacts that currently decorate the school.
- The parents who support their children through their reading, spelling and homework and support the school through volunteering and fundraisers.
- Governors whose continued hard work behind the scenes supports the work of the staff and helps set direction for the terms ahead.