



Oakley Lower School



Station Road, Oakley, Bedford, MK43 7RE

Headteacher
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21st October 2011

Dear Parents

We have now reached the end of our first half term and have been very pleased to welcome new families and staff to our school; we hope that they will enjoy their time with us at Oakley Lower School.

Home School Communication

We welcome and encourage parents to come into school to talk with the class teacher. We do ask however that you talk to the teacher at the end of the day unless you have an urgent message. The class teacher is busy preparing lessons or settling in the children at the start of the day.

- **Homework** – we thank you for the support that you provide with homework and this is a very good way of keeping in touch with what we do in school. May I remind parents that homework is normally set each Friday for return to school by the following Thursday.
- **Absence** – please contact the school office **before 9 a.m.** if your child is unable to attend school giving the reason.
- **Notice Boards-** We display posters/information in the noticeboard at the entrance to the school and also on the windows outside the library. Please take the time to have a look at the information around the school so that you can keep up to date with what is happening.
- **E-mail-** it is our aim to try to send letters by e-mail as well as by pupil post in the hope that you will receive at least one copy on time! We do realise that pupil post is not always the most reliable.
- **School Website** – we have a lot of information on our school website including newsletters. This can be found at www.oakleylowerschool.co.uk

Parents of children in Year 1 to 4 may be wondering why we have not been using the Learning Platform that we launched last year. This is because the company are in the process of upgrading and so we have decided to wait until the upgrade is complete and re- launch after Christmas.

Arrival at School

To enable a calm start to the day we try to stagger entry to school and to the cloakroom. We open the doors at 8.45 a.m. and children should arrive at school **between 8.45 and 8.55 a.m.** when the register is taken.

Children should not be left on the playground without the supervision of an adult.

Celebration of Achievement

A special assembly is held in school every Friday when we celebrate birthdays and Headteacher Awards. We encourage children to share with us achievements gained out of school. We invite children to bring in awards on a Friday from activities such as swimming, dancing, football, Brownies, Beavers and other out of school activities.

Harvest Festival

Members of the Oakley Rural Day Centre were delighted with the gifts they received from our Harvest collection and wrote us a lovely letter to say thank you to everyone who contributed. They also enjoyed joining our assembly, meeting all the children and being entertained by some Year 4 children at break time when they had a coffee and a chat.

Jeans for Genes Day

This year we received a fantastic £215 for this worthy cause and thank you for your generosity.

World's Biggest Coffee Morning

Just to confirm that this year we raised an amazing £242 for Macmillan Cancer Support. On mornings like this, we rely heavily upon your support to bring in cakes to sell and help with serving tea and coffee. Without this help, we would not be able to support charities like Macmillan Cancer Support so a huge thank you to everyone who contributed and helped out on the morning. We really do appreciate your help and support.

Parent Consultation Evenings

I am pleased to report very good attendance this week for parent consultations. We hold these evenings early in the autumn term to give parents an opportunity to meet the class teacher and discuss how their children have settled into their new class.

School Visits

Stibbington

Mr Protheroe, Mrs Lambert and Mrs Balsom's classes enjoyed a very full and educational day at Stibbington where they experienced life as an evacuee in the Second World War. Many thanks to parents who helped provide costumes for their children and to the parents who helped on the day.

Rockingham Castle

Miss Molloy, Miss Mead and Mrs Stelling's class benefited from the experience of travelling to Rockingham to visit a real castle. We are extremely grateful to the many parents who offered to help on this day. We had over 20 offers of help for this visit so thank you! We have kept a list of parents who offered their assistance so if you were not able to accompany us on this occasion we hope that we will be able to call on you at another time.

Values Ambassadors

At Oakley Lower School we have introduced values to be emphasised by the whole school community throughout school life and beyond. This month our value is Friendship and the following children have been nominated as Values Ambassadors.

Acorns	Millie R
Willows	Lauren D
Cherry Trees	Charlotte S
Junipers	Hatti L
Redwoods	Chloe H
Maples	Ennis R
Chestnuts	Toby R

School Council

A big thank you to the many children who put themselves forward for School Council. We were very pleased to receive nominations from 34 children who had some lovely ideas about how we could improve our school. Following assembly when the children explained why they should be chosen we held a ballot and the following children were chosen.

Year 1	Harvey K and Lana M
Year 2	Lola R and Elisha G
Year 3	Connor P and Mark T
Year 4	Lewis P-M, Emily W and Rhys M

We look forward to supporting them in fulfilling some of their plans.

Handwriting Cups

This half term the handwriting cups were awarded to the following students:

Year 1	Sophie V
Year 2	Harrison P
Year 3	Analise H
Year 4	Katherine S

Congratulations to all of them.

Street Dancing Club

We have had 26 replies in total from children wishing to take part in this club. All children have gained a place and the first session will take place from 3:15 until 4:15pm on Thursday 3rd November. It will continue to be held every Thursday night for six sessions in total.

Family Photographs

This year we have organised another opportunity to have family photographs taken and this will be held on Saturday 5th November in school from 9am to 1pm. We will put up a list in the front office when we return after half term for you to select a time slot.

Healthy Schools

We thank you for your continued support to encourage children to lead a healthy lifestyle.

- **Packed Lunches** - We have a number of children who have an allergic reaction to nuts and would appreciate it if parents avoid putting any nuts or nut products (including peanut butter and pesto) into packed lunch boxes. This is because the children eat in close proximity and there is a danger of a child inadvertently eating something from another child's lunchbox that could cause a reaction. **A severe reaction is life threatening.**
- **Snacks at breaktime** - please remember that children should only bring fruit or prepared vegetables to eat at break time.
- **Water** - all children should have a clear water bottle and these require washing out at home. If you do need a replacement these can be purchased at cost price (£1.10) from school. We also stock replacement lids at cost price of 30p. Please send only water in clear bottles to school for use throughout the day. Children may bring a bottle or carton of squash or juice in their packed lunch box to be consumed at lunch time. We would be grateful if you could ensure that children do not put drink bottles in their book bags.
- **Birthdays**- some parents like to send a treat to school when it is their child's birthday. Please consider a "healthy" option when doing this.
- **Holidays** - we would like to request that children do not bring treats into school when returning from holiday as this is difficult to manage and can get out of hand.

Scooters/Bikes

Please can I remind everyone that **scooters/bikes are not to be ridden anywhere in the school grounds** as it is hazardous with so many people around. Scooters/bikes may be left at school during the day but must be placed **by the hedge at the back gate or at the gate on Station Road.**

Car Park

Please enter school following the path around the back of the school and not across the front by the office, across the access road to the kitchen. Vehicles are using our car park all the time and **children are not permitted to walk across the car park.** Care should be taken when coming to the school office.

If you do use the gate through to Lincroft School from our playground please ensure that you close it after you.

Thank you to the parents who exercise care and consideration when parking. For the safety of our children we do request that parents/carers:

- Please do not turn in the gateway or come into the car park when children are being brought or collected from school.
- Please do not park on the yellow zig zag lines on the road outside school on Station Road.
- Please do not park in Lincroft School car park.
- Please show consideration when parking in Lincroft where residents live.
- Please make sure that you do not park across people's driveways or anywhere that would make access awkward.

A child's life may be at risk

Free School Meals

I have attached a form for Free School Meals. If you feel you qualify for free school meals but have not previously claimed for them, then please do not hesitate to complete this form and return it to school for action. If your child already receives Free School Meals you do not need to return another form.

Dinner Money

The price of a school dinner is £1.85. Please make sure that cheques are made payable to **Caterlink** and not Oakley Lower School. Please can you make sure that you have your child's full name and class teacher clearly written on the

envelope in order that we can track payments accurately. It has been good to see dinner money coming in at the beginning of the week as this is really helpful so thank you for this. If you have any queries with dinner money, please contact the kitchen direct on 825914.

Lost Property

A big thank you to the large number of parents who are naming their children's clothes. We now have a much greater success rate with "Clothes re-united". Sometimes belongings are put into Lost Property and not claimed. We usually empty the box each Friday but I would like to make parents aware that we really don't mind if you come into school to look in the box and help your child to look for their belongings.

Halloween

As Halloween approaches **Bedfordshire Police** is reminding parents and guardians to keep their children safe. If possible, parents and guardians should go out trick or treating with their children, sticking to well-lit areas and only knocking on the doors of people they know. Some people may have 'No trick or treat' posters up at their doors and we ask that these are respected. Bedfordshire Police is also reminding children and parents to be mindful that some of the more vulnerable or elderly members of the community may feel intimidated by people calling at their doors and appeals to all residents to look out for their neighbours who may feel frightened during this time.

Extra patrols will be on hand over the Halloween and Bonfire Night period to ensure that the evenings can be enjoyed safely. For more advice about Halloween please visit www.bedfordshire.police.uk

Remembrance Day

Poppies will be on sale in the front office after half term.

Christmas Gifts

This time of the year can be a very expensive time and whilst staff are always very grateful and overwhelmed by the generosity of parents and children, we are concerned that this may cause difficulties such as pressure on parents to buy gifts, especially those with a number of children, and awkwardness of feeling for those children who do not bring gifts.

We know that parents are keen to express their thanks to staff for their hard work and commitment and we value enormously your kind words, notes, letters and cards. A home-made card or a letter means a great deal to us. As a school we are encouraging the children to support the charity Operation Christmas Child and I would like to thank you for the generous donations you have already sent in to school. The closing date is Tuesday 8th November and we very much hope that you will be able to support us in this way.

Arena Theatre Company

We are fortunate in once again having the Arena Theatre company visiting the school this year. They will be coming on 16th December and I am sure everyone will enjoy their performance.

News from the governors

As you will all be aware nominations were requested this term for two new parent governors. We are pleased to announce that Ms Emma Halls and Mr Kieran Grimshaw have now filled those posts. We would like to welcome them to the governing body and look forward to working with them.

Our thanks go to Mrs Tracey Gray, who has reached the end of her term of office, for being a valued and committed member of the governing body for the past few years and for the work she has done on behalf of the school. Our thanks also go to Mrs Jody Williams for her hard work during her time with us. We will miss them both.

We would like to thank all the parents who completed the questionnaire at the end of last term. We had a fantastic number of families reply. The governing body values the results from the questionnaires as they help inform future planning. The results from the questionnaires along with end of year results etc. will be available next half term via the school website under the title 'School Profile'. We will let you know once it becomes available to access.

Our thanks also go to the staff. It has been a brilliant start to term with much effort put into making the new topics, WWII in Key Stage 2 and Castles in Key Stage 1, vibrant and exciting. We know the children have all enjoyed their topic linked school trips.

As many of you will have seen at parents evening a lot of effort has been put in by all the staff to the new displays, particularly striking was the Olympic themed values board in the main hall. We would also like to thank them for a very exciting and informative maths evening. There have been so many very positive comments back from parents who attended, but I think nothing sums it up as well as the parent who said,

"I'm really looking forward to the next Numeracy homework so I can try it all out!".

Dates for your Diary

Monday 31 st October	School Closed to children Staff Training Day
Tuesday 1 st November	First day of term PTA AGM – 7:30pm. All welcome
Friday 4 th November	Swimming commences for Year 4 children for 6 weeks
Saturday 5 th November	Family group photographs
Tuesday 15 th November	KS1 visit to the Gurdwara
Friday 18 th November	BBC Children In Need
Saturday 26 th November	Christmas Fete 1-3pm
Monday 28 th November	KS1 visit to Barn Nativity
Monday 5 th December	KS1 Christmas Play (2 pm)
Tuesday 6 th December	KS1 Christmas Play (2 pm)
Wednesday 7 th December	Reception Christmas Play (9.30 am) KS2 Christmas Play (2 pm)
Thursday 8 th December	Reception Christmas Play (9.30 am) KS2 Christmas Play (2 pm)
Monday 12 th December	Christmas Church Service (10am)
Wednesday 14 th December	Christmas Lunch
Friday 16 th December	Arena Theatre Visit Last day of term



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Dear Children of OLS,

I am going to organise an afterschool Chocolate Club in the run up to Christmas. I shall be looking at creating some fabulous chocolate treats for you and your parents to indulge in!

I only use very good quality Belgian chocolate in white, milk and dark!

I will teach the children how to handle the chocolate (in its melted form).

We will taste test!

We will create flavoured and marbled chocolate

We will make chocolates in moulds

We will make French Bark (nut free)

We will make truffles!

If you would like your child to attend the club, please sign below, it is first come first served and there are only 12 places.

It will be held on a Monday night from 3:30 – 4:30pm.

Chocolates created will be sent home the next day (they need chilling time!)

A voluntary £5 contribution would be very acceptable.

Yours sincerely

Mrs R Lambert
Acting Assistant Headteacher

I would like my child _____ (Name) in _____ (Class)

to attend the Chocolate Club on Monday evenings. I understand that my child will need to be collected from

Oakley Lower School at 4:30pm.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

FREE SCHOOL MEAL APPLICATION
for pupils attending **BEDFORD BOROUGH SCHOOLS ONLY**



Use **BLOCK CAPITALS, SIGN IT**

Title						Surname					
Other Names											
National Insurance No						OR NASS					
						No					
Email:											
Contact Tel number:					Your date of birth						

Your Address
 **POST CODE** Write below
 the details of each dependent child who is living with you at home and in full time attendance at school.

Surname	Other names	Date of birth	Name of school	Relationship to applicant

I am entitled to claim free school meals. **(Tick the box to indicate which benefit you receive.)**

- Income Support
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Income-based Job Seekers Allowance
- Child Tax Credit but **no Working Tax Credit** is being received by me or my partner and our combined annual income as assessed by HMIR on my TC602 form is not above £16,190
- The Guarantee element of State Pension Credit.

Declaration I have read the information overleaf and agree that you will use the information I have provided to process my claim for free school lunches and will contact other sources as allowed by law to verify my initial and ongoing entitlement. I understand that if I give false information I may be prosecuted. I undertake to notify FSM administration IMMEDIATELY if:

- My Income Support/Income-related Employment and Support allowance or Income-based Job Seekers Allowance stops
- I start to receive Working Tax Credit
- Household income as assessed by HMRC for Child Tax Credit exceeds annual income limit of £16,190.
- **I change my address**
- I wish to cancel my application and withdraw my consent to the above.

Signed..... Date.....
 (The person making the claim)

NOTE: Incomplete forms will result in unnecessary delays

Complete the form and return either to your child's school to be forwarded to the return address or post direct to:

Return Address: Free School Meals Administrator
Education Welfare Service
Borough Hall
Cauldwell Street
Bedford
MK42 9AP

Contact numbers: Telephone: 01234 **228948**
Fax number: 01234 **276014**

Important: We cannot refund the cost of any school meals taken before you make this application.

Please continue to pay for school dinners or provide a packed lunch until your entitlement has been confirmed.

We will contact your child's school as soon as we have been able to confirm your entitlement. This may be on the same day as your application.

We will check on a regular basis that you still meet the qualifying criteria. Data provided by the Department for Education and collected from the Department for Work and Pensions, the Home Office and HM Revenue and Customs will be accessed to do this. If we find you no longer qualify for free school meals, we will write to you.

The authority is under a duty to protect the public funds it administers and to this end may use the information you have provided on this form within this authority for the prevention and detection of fraud. It may also share this information with other bodies administering public funds solely for these purposes.

Data Protection Act Personal information that you have provided will be used carefully and may be held on computer systems at the school/college and in the Children's Services Department. These uses of personal information are covered by registration under the data protection legislation. Under this legislation you have the right to obtain a copy of the information we hold about you.