

Spring Term 2021

Dear Parents,

Welcome back! As I said on my final remote learning slides, I cannot thank you enough for all your hard work to support home learning since January. You have been absolutely amazing. Thank you for all the uploads, the messages and the endless logging little people in to Google Classroom for our meetings. Thank you for putting up with our tech glitches, overwhelming mountains of Powerpoint slides and for managing Google Classroom so well. I have enjoyed working alongside you all to support your child's learning.

The transition back to having all of Oak Class together is going very well. The first weeks been based around engaging, settling in activities, observations and assessments to ensure we are pitching learning correctly for all children as we move forward. It is important to ensure that children who have been in school have the opportunity to adjust to a full classroom as much as it is to allow children who have been at home to settle back in at their own pace.

The Oak Class Day

As before, Oak Class registration is at 8.40am (I know a few children have siblings in an 8.30 starting class so come in at that time) and we finish at 3.00pm. We try very hard to be on time when dismissing children to ensure that our socially distanced staggered start and end times are effective. Many thanks for ensuring that any different pick up arrangements are shared with staff.

Team

The Oak Class team this term remains as Mrs Holden (Class Teacher), Miss Collins and Mrs Ridley (Teaching Assistants), Mrs Kerr (PPA cover) and I am sure you will join us in welcoming Miss Borne, a final placement trainee teacher from Plymouth University who will be with us until July.

Curriculum

I hope you find the Spring Term Curriculum Overview on the website informative and those of you who have had your home-schooling hats on will certainly recognise elements of it covered earlier in the term. We will of course focus heavily on activities that reunite Oak Class again and spend time reminding ourselves of the class routines and give children the tools to negotiate being part of a group of 28 again. Between now and Easter we will focus on our World Book day activities linked to The Gingerbread Man, our big learning question 'Why can't a meerkat live at the North Pole?' and Easter activities. Everything will be at a pace that supports our transition back to school with a firm emphasis in English and Maths on basic skills, independence and confidence building. We are working within Phase 5 Phonics and Bug Club reading continues to be an important tool in home school reading.

Reading

We are in the process of renewing our benchmark assessment of reading for all children. This gives us a clear indicator of reading levels and key areas for development. You may find that your child's Bug Club reading level alters in the light of this.

We will continue to use Bug Club in place of paper copies for the time being. **If you are unable to access this please let me know as it is really important that our home school reading programme continues effectively despite Covid restrictions.** The texts are identical and we still share the books as part of our guided reading in school. Books read at home should give children opportunities to consolidate their skills and the books we work with in school tend to be more challenging in order to maximise progress. As previously recommended, please share two texts weekly as this is what I would have been sending home. **Please ensure your child's reading record booklet is in school every day as phonics, key word and other activities will be added as appropriate. It is vital that parents make a brief comment in the appropriate section and that children complete the relevant page about a recent text at least once a week. Your**

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contribution to the reading process is valued and the record is an important element in planning our next steps.

P.E.

Just a reminder that PE is on Monday and Tuesday and children should continue to come dressed in their kit on these days.

Outdoor Learning

On Thursday afternoon Mrs Kerr will be teaching outdoor learning so wellies and suitable waterproof coats will be vital as they like to access the outdoor space in all weathers. Hopefully by the end of term our thoughts will be turning to sun hats and SPF cream!

Snack

Our free fruit scheme is still running and every child is offered a piece of fruit each morning. Children may bring their own fruit or vegetable snack if they prefer. Some children are bringing plain cheese and crackers or bread sticks as a healthy alternative and others have a very healthy cereal bar (of course not chocolate or high sugar items). We usually ask children just to have one snack that they can peel or manage themselves, we are always on hand to open fruit bags etc but peeling many oranges can be tricky!

Water bottles.

Children are able to access their bottle of plain water at any point during the school day and are reminded to do so at regular intervals. We do ask that these bottles contain water and not squash or other drinks. It is really important that bottles are non-spill or sports cap style rather than screw top as we have had frequent spillages recently. **It is important that every child brings a fresh water bottle daily, we do have access to fresh water for top ups but not bottle brushes etc so we are not in a position to effectively wash bottles left over night.**

Names

Please continue to name everything that your child may take off or put down at school in a font they can recognise, initials or surnames are less easy for them to claim as their own. Lots of children have the same or very similar school shoes and most in Year 1 are a similar size. Please write inside each shoe to prevent a mix up! We will always endeavour to return named items but have little hope of returning unnamed items. We also have a lovely collection of little snack pots!

We will shortly have Parent Teacher Consultations and I look forward to meeting with you for those in due course.

As always, communication is key. A brief chat before or after school is fine but for a lengthier or more confidential discussion please contact the office and we can arrange a discussion at a mutually convenient time.

We are very much enjoying having the Oaks back together again and look forward to the remainder of the Spring Term.

Yours sincerely,
Catherine Holden