
Newsletter

4th October 2021

There is much planned for the next few weeks.
Here are the diary dates and some explanation of
what is to come this term.

A busy Autumn Term

We are already 5 weeks in to this term and it has been very busy both inside and outside of the classrooms. The zoo trip last Wednesday was a real highlight. The children (and adults) all had a fantastic time and it was so lovely to do something different for a day. The weather was also on our side as it would have been miserable in last week's rain, but thankfully we had lovely weather for walking round all the animal enclosures and watching the animals running around. I think it definitely lifted everyone's mental health – a very important aspect to keep talking about and keeping healthy.

We have had problems with the photos – they were taken on the ipads in a format that our computers would not recognise, so we could not access them to share or print. I seem to have managed to get this sorted now (it was not good for my mental-health last week!) so we can get some photos out to you soon so you can see what fun we had!

Thanks for supporting us with this trip. We look forward to more trips out of school during the coming year.

Diary Dates

This is a list of dates – please see sections for further information about each event.

October

Tuesday 4th & Thursday 7th – Fly Trap coming to Kingfishers

Wednesday 6th – Flu immunisations

Wednesday 6th – Kingswood information meeting for Kingfisher parents. 3.30pm

Friday 8th – Mr Jones (HCL Catering) 3.15pm

Saturday 9th – 9am Dismantling old playground equipment. All welcome, please come and help if you can.

Monday 11th – School Grid will be active for choosing and paying for school dinners

Wednesday 13th – School Photographer, individual and family photos

Friday 15th – 9am Harvest Festival

Monday 18th – Thursday 21st - Mini London Marathon

Friday 22nd – School closed for training day

Monday 25th – Friday 29th – Half-term holiday

November

1st – Return to school

1st -5th – Kingswood residential

Fly Trap – Wellcome Trust

We are very excited to be only one of 6 schools that are working on a new science project with the Wellcome Sanger Institute. The Wellcome Trust are wanting to map the DNA of all insects found in the UK and are setting up a schools programme to get young scientists involved in this project.

We are one of the first schools that they are going to visit. They will be working with our Kingfishers class. They will bring a 'Fly Trap' net to place in our school grounds. When they return 2 days later, the children will be able to view the insects they have trapped through microscopes and learn more about the fauna of our school. Miss Brown is working alongside the other schools and scientists to make this a sustainable programme going forward for all schools to participate in.

Later in the school year, Kingfishers class will be visiting the Wellcome Sanger Institute near Cambridge to see the next stages of the project and work alongside the scientists in their labs.

Flu Immunisations

Thank you for returning your forms to the school. The NHS Immunisation team will be in school on the afternoon of Wednesday 6th to administer the nasal spray to those children that have been signed up. This will be happening during the school day.

Mr Jones – HCL (Caterers)

Mr Jones from HCL, our new caterers, will be out the front of school from 3.15pm on Friday. He will have examples of food and some tasty nibbles for you to try. He will be able to answer any questions you have regarding our school dinners. Please pop along and see him.

Kingswood Residential – 1st-5th Novemeber

Kingfishers class will be heading off on their residential visit to South Yorkshire straight after half-term. There is a meeting for parents on Wednesday 6th October at 3.30pm where Miss Brown will distribute forms and share information regarding the residential. Residentials are fantastic opportunity for children to gain new experiences and have fun with their school friends away from home. We are really pleased that the whole of Kingfishers are able to join us on the 4 night residential where they will be doing many different activities including canoeing, abseiling, playing laser tag and a high ropes course. Hawks class will have the opportunity to attend a two day residential in March to Burwell House, Cambridgeshire. Letter will be sent out shortly with more information.

School Photographer

The school photographer will be in school on the morning of Wednesday 13th October, so remember to do fancy hair-dos that day!

All children will have an individual photograph taken and we will arrange family photographs where siblings are in school.

If you have a child that is under 5 and so not at the school and would like a family photograph taken, please contact Sarah Brown in the school office (office@offordprimaryschool.org) and she will arrange a time for you to come in to school at the beginning of the day to facilitate this.

On the day your child will bring home a card to enable you to order the photos online.

School Playground – Latest

I have already told you that the order has been made for our new playground apparatus and it is due to be installed in the week beginning 8th November.

This is very exciting and it will be lovely that the children can watch the apparatus been built and see what their hard work in fundraising has been able to achieve.

We will have a grand opening when it is complete and we will also have a cheque presentation ceremony, to present the money we raised for Love 2 Move.

We need to dismantle the existing playground equipment and move the wood to the other side of the building (this is going to get reused in the EYFS area). More hands make light work, so if you are available to help the group of people that have already offered to assist, then please do come to school on **Saturday 9th October** from 9am.

I have also been informed that my request to get the playground resurfaced is being financed by The Cam Academy Trust. We will also therefore be having a nice smooth and shiny playground to go with our new equipment. This is very much needed as the surface of our playground is getting very rough. The new playground surface is being laid over the October half-term. The next stage will be to choose and organise new playground markings, which we will hopefully get painted in the Spring term.

This is all very exciting and will really enhance the outside area of our school and enable the children to have more enriched playtimes.

Bikeability – Kingfishers Class

Those children that have signed up for Bikeability, will be embarking on their course in the week of 18th October. They will be learning to ride their bikes safely on the roads – a fantastic course to give them confidence and an introduction to the rules of the road.

More details will be being sent to the children and their parents that have signed up.

School Grid – school dinners

Emails have been sent out for parents to sign up to School Grid. As from next Monday, all school meals will need to be chosen in advance via School Grid.

Payments for meals will also be through this system. Please activate your accounts so that you can choose your child's meal with them. We will be having a fancy computer screen installed at the hatch which tells the kitchen what each child has ordered. Fingers crossed we don't have too many teething problems next week!

Harvest Festival

We will be holding an outside Harvest Assembly at 9am on Friday 15th October. Hopefully it will be dry. We are holding it outside so we can invite parents to join in our celebrations.

We will also be collecting food to send to Godmanchester Food Bank.

We'll let you know more details soon.

Christmas

Apologies to bring up the 'C' word, but it isn't too far around the corner.

We are planning events to celebrate Christmas in school. These will include Christmas dinner, a virtual Christingle service, a visit from Father Christmas (hopefully, if the children are good!) and a Nativity play.

We will send details and dates out once we have finalised everything.

COVID – Guidance and Testing

Unfortunately Covid has not gone away but fortunately we seem to be managing to avoid it here at Offord Primary School. I know of many schools in the area that have a significant amount of children and adults testing positive and it is spreading through classes.

Guidance says that if someone has symptoms that they need to get tested. Lateral flow tests are good indicators and can be obtained for free from pharmacies or by post. If a lateral flow gives a positive result it must be followed up via a PCR test. All double vaccinated people and anybody under 18 years can continue to attend school or work if someone in their household tests positive, but only if they have a negative PCR themselves. It is important to keep checking household members as it is likely that it will take a few days for the virus to show up in a newly infected person.

Please keep your child off school if they have any Covid symptoms and organise a test. If you are unsure what to do, please ask.

To minimise the risk of infection and to keep our staff as safe as possible, on advice of the Local Authority, we are still restricting visitors into the school building. All visitors are asked to wear a mask, including those that are just popping into the school office. Thank you for your understanding.

Mini London Marathon

As part of the Virgin Money London Marathon that was held yesterday, we have signed up to be part of the Mini London Marathon.

The Mini London Marathon is all about inspiring children and young people of all ages and abilities to be physically active. Regular exercise has a positive impact on children's health and fitness and taking part can help start a habit that stays with children for the rest of their lives. Physical activity also supports good mental health and wellbeing – everyone feels happier after they've been for a run!

Although this could be a fundraising event we have decided to use it purely as a challenge in school. Every child will be asked to walk, run or wheel 2.6 miles over the 4 days. We will organise this in school and will take the children out daily for their mileage. All we ask is that the children have trainers in school every day that week.

The children will get certificates to celebrate their participation and hopefully pin badges too – the first 500,000 school children that registered and complete the challenge will receive the badges from Virgin Money. We have registered, but do not know if we are in the first 500,000 – so we'll just have to wait and see.

It will be a fun way to work together as a whole school and complete a challenge that everyone can achieve.

OPTA - AGM

OPTA will be holding their AGM shortly.

The time and date will be sent out and all are invited.

They are always looking for new members to join and help with fundraising over the year.

Hopefully more activities will be able to take place this year and fun events can be organised not only to fundraise but for the children and their families to have fun at too.