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## Newsletter

### 9<sup>th</sup> November 2021

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We are in the second-half of the Autumn Term and school remains as busy as every in the run up to Christmas. Here are the diary dates and some explanation of what is to come for the rest of this term.

#### Covid Update

The Local Authority remains extremely concerned around the Covid-19 position in our area. In response to the rising levels of COVID infection across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, they have had their application to be designated as an Enhanced Response Area (ERA) approved. This means that schools are having to adhere to extra measures to try to limit the spread of COVID-19. The majority of these apply to secondary schools but at primary level these are:

- Reintroduction of face coverings for staff in communal spaces but not in classrooms.
- Staff socially distance from each other within school buildings including in shared spaces such as staff rooms, where possible. Teaching will continue face to face as normal.
- All visitors to schools must wear face coverings in school buildings.
- All non-essential events where parents visit schools are moved to being held virtually.
- School staff will continue their twice weekly LFD testing.

We are still managing to get away quite lightly with cases here at Offord. Please continue to be vigilant, undertake LFTs if unsure and if your child has COVID-19 symptoms do not send them to school and organise a PCR test. Please keep us informed of any illnesses and any positive results – Thank you.

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#### Diary Dates

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

##### November

Mon 8<sup>th</sup> – Playground being installed

Mon 15<sup>th</sup> – Start of Anti-bullying week  
Odd Sock Day

15<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> – Parent Consultation week

Fri 19<sup>th</sup> – Children in Need

22<sup>nd</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> – Y2 Phonic Screening Check

Thurs 25<sup>th</sup> – OPTA AGM

##### December

Mon 13<sup>th</sup> Ely Cathedral Virtual Christingle

Tues 14<sup>th</sup> Christmas Jumper Day for our Christmas Dinner and visit from special person

Wed 15<sup>th</sup> Wrens and Robins Christmas Performances

Wed 15<sup>th</sup> Carols in the Playground led by Hawks and Kingfishers 5.30pm

Fri 19<sup>th</sup> Last day of Autumn Term

##### January

Tues 4<sup>th</sup> – Professional Development Day

Wed 5<sup>th</sup> – First Day of Spring Term

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#### Odd Sock Day & Anti-Bullying Week

This is a special day to launch the Anti-Bullying Alliance's Anti-bullying week which we will be joining in with from 15<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> November. Activities will be taking place in class and in assemblies to promote anti – bullying. Regarding Odd Sock Day - All you need to do is wear odd socks! It's a great way to celebrate what makes us all unique in Anti-Bullying Week! It will be held on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> November 2021.

We look forward to seeing all those odd socks!!

Anti-Bullying Alliance say that 'Kindness is more important today than it has ever been. The isolation of the last year has underlined how little acts of consideration can break down barriers and brighten the lives of the people around us. This is one of the reasons, that 'One Kind Word' has been chosen as the theme of this year's Anti-Bullying Week.'

The Anti-Bullying Alliance produce some fantastic resources including information for parents and carers. Information can be found here:

<https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/anti-bullying-week/parents-and-carers>

There is also a pack that can be downloaded that discusses bullying, what it can look like and handy hints on how to support your child.

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## **Christmas plans:**

### **Robins & Wrens Nativity**

Robins and Wrens would like to entertain everybody with a Christmas production again this year.

Due to the current restrictions we have decided to hold this outside again this year. Rather than in the orchard, we are going to use the outside classroom.

Audience numbers will not need to be restricted as much as last year, therefore we are just having two performances.

Both of these will be on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> December, one in the morning and one in the afternoon (exact times will be confirmed shortly).

Information about costumes, help with learning lines and tickets for the performances will be sent nearer the time.

### **Carols on the Playground with Hawks and Kingfishers**

Hawks and Kingfishers will be leading Christmas Carols and Christmas Celebrations on the school playground at 5.30pm.

We will sing carols by torchlight and have readings and poems performed by the children.

We will be inviting you to join us to join in with this Christmas celebrations.

### **Christmas Dinner**

We will celebrate Christmas at school on the Tuesday of the last week. Following our lunch we will have a visit from a very special man (please keep this a surprise for the children). We will make this our Christmas Jumper day too to make it nice and Christmassy.

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### **Children In Need**

We will be joining in with the annual BBC Children in Need day on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> November. We will be making this a non-uniform day and asking for a donation in return for not wearing uniform.

We are suggesting a donation of £1 per child. The children can give their donations to their class teacher on the morning. This will have to be cash donations only, please.

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## **School Playground – Latest**

The playground was resurfaced over the half-term break and looks lovely – it is very flat and smooth now, two words that we definitely couldn't use to describe it before! It needs to 'harden' (I'm sure there's a more technical word) before we can put any playground markings on. We will work with the children to decide what we would like on the playground and these will hopefully be able to be laid in the summer.

The builders from Playscheme arrived Monday morning and have begun the installation of the new equipment. So far a digger has been removing the lumps of concrete from the old equipment and dug holes for the new posts.

Hopefully it will be finished this week, so we can start using it next week. The children are very excited and it is lovely that it is being installed while the school is open so they can watch the build progressing during the week.

I must say a massive thank you to the people that helped remove the old equipment a couple of weeks ago. The chosen weekend ended up being when there was our little Covid outbreak and lots of illness, so volunteers were rather depleted, but we did it. Thank you so much.

We are going to organise an official 'Grand Opening' of the play equipment. I have invited Jane from Love to Move to come to cut the ribbon. We can also present the cheque to them for the money raised through the marathon. We are just trying to settle on a date but will let you know once it's been organised.

Thank you again for all your fundraising efforts last year to allow this to happen.

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## **School Dinner Ordering**

School dinners need to be ordered and paid for via School Grid in advance of the day of the meal.

School meals can be ordered now up until the end of the school term.

If you have ordered a meal and your child is absent, the meal gets cancelled by the office so you will not be charged for the meal.

If you have already ordered a meal for Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> December, please can you have another look as this has now been changed to our Christmas Dinner menu, so will need re-ordering. Thank you.

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## Parent Consultations

Last year we trialed School Cloud as a platform for holding Parent Consultations. Although the feedback was very positive from both parents and staff we decided to not take out a full subscription as we thought parent meetings would return to 'normal'.

Well here we are again, wanting to hold meetings but being discouraged from allowing parents into the building, therefore we have bought the package and will use School Cloud for this (and possibly future) parent meetings. Meetings will be available at various times during the week of 15<sup>th</sup> Novemeber.

To book an appointment you need to go to <https://offord.schoolcloud.co.uk/> and either log in or sign up. Everyone found it very easy last time, so hopefully it will be again. We're just organising all the appointment slots and will let you know when it goes live and send some extra information out as reminders for what you need to do.

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## Kingswood

Kingfishers class had an amazing week at Kingswood, Dearne Valley (near Doncaster) last week. Thankfully all the children had recovered from their pre half term illnesses and were able to attend. Unfortunately this wasn't the case for Miss Brown, who has a Covid scare at the beginning of the week.

This meant that I was quickly called to action and went on the trip. I was so pleased that I did as, I was so lovely seeing the children work together and try new things. The children really threw themselves into the activities and had a wonderful time.

Thankfully Miss Brown got the all clear and was able to get to Doncaster on the Tuesday night.

I think she summed up her experience in her ParentHub post. She wrote: *Thank you for lending me your children for the week! I hope they have had a wonderful time and have told you all about their adventures!*

*They certainly made me very proud this week with their bravery, wonderful attitudes, friendships and good manners. I am so pleased I got to have this opportunity with them. I am one very lucky teacher to be able to say that they are my class.*

Residential trips could not take place without the staff willingly to attend, so thank you to those that attended and also to everyone back at school for covering extra breaks and lunch to keep everyone there safe too.

Many photos were taken and Miss Brown is going to put them in a google drive so parents can see the numerous activities the children took part in and the great time they had.

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## Y2 Phonics Screening Check

This is one of the statutory assessments that all schools have to complete.

Usually phonic screening checks take place in the summer term of Y1, but as all assessments were cancelled last year, this test is taking place now for all year 2 children.

It is a reading exercise that happens 1:1 with a teacher. The children are asked to read a list of words, both real and 'nonsense' or 'alien' words. This allows their phonic understanding to be checked.

If a child means the expected level, then no further tests will be carried out. If they are not meeting the expected level, they will retake the test in the summer term. The Year 1 children will be taking this test in Summer 2022.

Reading using phonics is the way we teach children in school and the process behind our Read, Write Inc books. The children are used to this type of test and should not be worried about it.

Assessments in maths, and reading will continue to happen termly for all children from Y2 to Y6. We use the results to target learning in school and to ensure the children are familiar with tests for when they need to take the statutory Standard Assessment Tests (SATs). The SATs for Y2 and Y6 will be taken next summer. We will have a meeting with parents to explain these tests in the new year. If we can't hold a meeting in person we will ensure that we still share the information with you in another format.

If you have any questions about assessments please get in touch.

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## OPTA - AGM

OPTA will be holding their AGM in Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> November at a time yet to be decided. Keep your eyes out for the invite.

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.

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## Ely Cathedral Virtual Christingle

We will be joining in with the Christingle service from Ely Cathedral over zoom to kick start our Christmas week. This will happen during the afternoon at school and all the children will be able to get involved.