

Newsletter

28th April 2022

There is lots planned for the last term of the 2021/22 academic year. Here is some information about what has been planned. Please put the dates in your diary and more details will be sent out throughout the term.

I cannot believe that we have just begun the Summer Term. After the last two years have been so disrupted it is lovely that it looks like everything is returning to normal and schools can open up their doors to the wider community. We have tried to ensure that we have kept the extra-curricular activities running as much as possible and last term we had our Hawks residential trip, the Mother's Day lunch and our first in-door performance for two years, which was just brilliant. We have got lots planned for the coming months, so read on to see what will be happening.

Covid update – just a quick update. It seems that the DfE have decided that Covid is now not an issue in schools. Since returning after Easter, we do not use any Covid coding in our attendance figures, therefore if a child is off because they have Covid symptoms or because they have tested positive (there is no expectation that you administer tests) then the absence is recorded as 'ill'. If your child is well enough to be at school (eg has a snuffly nose) then they are expected to be here. As in the past, if they are too poorly, then keep them at home. Please ensure you inform the school about any absence by either ringing the absence line (01480 810308 – opt 1) or by emailing absence@offordprimaryschool.org - thank you. We are ensuring that we still regularly wash hands and use sanitiser and ventilate the school. Hopefully any symptoms people have will be mild and we can get through the summer term without much of an impact from Covid.

Diary Dates

April		June (cont)	
Friday 27 th	Kingfisher's Visit to the Greek Galleries at The Fitzwilliam Museum	Thurs 9 th	Whole school visit to church - am Rotary Quiz – Y6 6pm
May		Thurs 16 th	Last day for Mr Stein & Miss Buchan (student teachers)
Monday 2 nd	Bank Holiday	Fri 17 th	Father's Day Lunch
Tuesday 3 rd	Y5 Maths Challenge - pm	Sat 25 th	School & Church Summer Fete
Wed 4 th	Wrens and Robins – visit to Cambridge and the Theatre to see The Smartest Giant in Town	July	
Mon 9 th – Thurs 12 th	Y6 Statutory Assessment (SATS) week	Tues 5 th – Thurs 7 th	Y6 Transition Days to Hinchbrook School
Mon 16 th	Young Voices concert in Birmingham	Wed 6 th	Open afternoon for parents of Wrens and Robins and next year's Reception class
Mon 23 rd	Wet Felt Workshops – all classes Part of our Platinum Jubilee Celebrations	Thurs 7 th	Morning spent in new classes
Tues 24 th	Street Party – 1950s style Special lunch and party to 'celebrate' the Coronation	Thurs 14 th	Kingfishers Performance
Thurs 26 th	Street Party – 2022 style to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee	Fri 15 th	Hawks and Kingfishers theatre visit – Gangster Granny Written reports sent to parents
Fri 27 th	Break – up for Half Term	Mon 18 th	Y6 leavers trip (provisional date)
June		Tues 19 th	Sports Day (am)
Mon 6 th	First Day back after the holiday	Wed 20 th	Y6 Leavers' Party (5.30pm – 7pm)
Tues 7 th	Kingfishers Trip to The Welcome Trust – part of the School Flytrap Project	Thurs 21 st	Leavers' assembly – invitation to parents/carers of Y6 children 9am Last day of Summer Term

The Queen's Platinum Jubilee

We are planning to hold various events at school to mark the special occasion:

In school we will be having an art workshop day on Monday 23rd May. Each child will be learning how to make a picture out of wet felt. These Jubilee-themed pictures will be displayed as part of our celebrations and our exhibit that we are displaying at St Peter's church over the Jubilee weekend. The children will have their picture as a keepsake. OPTA are also planning to present the children with a Jubilee keepsake.

We are planning two special parties in school in the week before the half-term break. The Tuesday will see us having a 1950's day at school. We will be asking the children to dress up in 1950's style clothing and we will be celebrating the new Queens' coronation. We will be having a special meal at school followed by games and cakes 1950's style, watching the coronation and enjoying the beginning of the Elizabethan era.

On Thursday 26th we will be asking the children to dress in red, white and blue. That day we will be celebrating 70 years of the Elizabethan era. Again there will be a special lunch available and then parties and food 2022 style. During that afternoon we will plant our commemorative Jubilee tree.

We do hope these events will be great fun and last in the memories of the children. A platinum Jubilee is a unique experience and we feel that it should be celebrated and remembered.

Theatre Trips

We have decided to put the vaery kind donation of £500 from one of our neighbours towards the cost of a theatre trip for all the children.

Being able to experience live theatre and have books brought to life on stage is an experience that we believe every child should be able to do.

The younger children are heading off to Cambridge on Wednesday 4th May to see The Smartest Giant in Town. They will be spending the morning in Cambridge itself before the show. Letters are being sent home this week. Hawks and Kingfishers will be seeing the stage version of David Walliams' Gangsta Granny on Friday 15th July. Letters will come out nearer the time.

Staffing Update

Martha Wilson – you may remember that Mrs Wilson left us about this time last year as she prepared for the arrival of her second child. Mrs Wilson has very much enjoyed her maternity leave and she has enjoyed being able to spend time with her children. Unfortunately she has made the difficult decision not to return to school at the end of her maternity leave.

When she left last year, we were in the pandemic and were having to ensure that we were protecting pregnant ladies and so we did not give her a proper send off. Mrs Wilson with therefore be joining us on Thursday 26th May at our Jubilee celebrations so we can give her a proper goodbye. She has said that the current Y6 children were the first class that she worked with, so she is really pleased that she will be able to see them before they move on up to secondary school.

Laura Johnson – unfortunately Mrs Johnson is still not well enough to return to school. I am sure you join me in wishing her all the best and a speedy recovery so that she can return back to us soon. Miss Hartland and Mr Stein are continuing to lead the teaching in Robins class.

Mr Stein & Miss Buchan – our student teachers have been with us since January and are still very much enjoying their teaching roles in Robins and Hawks class. They will be finalising their courses in June and will be leaving Offord Primary on 16th June.

Father's Day Lunch

Our lunch for female relatives was such a success that we are going to repeat it on the Friday before Father's Day for any male relatives that would like to come to school to have lunch with their child.

The menu is being finalised and will be soon available on School Grid. We'll let you know when you can sign up for this fun event and we look forward to welcoming all the men in for lunch. So kept the date free – Friday 17th June.

SAT Tests

The Statutory Assessment Tests (also known as SATS) are being held this year after being put on pause for the last 2 years.

Children in Y1, Y2, Y4 & Y6 will be taking a government test of some kind over the next few months.

Y6 SATS take place during the week of 9th May. These tests cover the 3 subjects of: Reading, Maths and Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling. There are 5 tests that have to be taken in 'exam conditions' on set days during the week. The tests are sent off for marking with results being returned to the school mid-July. Results will inform us whether a child has reached the expected level to be at 'Age Related Expectations' (ARE) or below ARE for each subject. A Teacher Assessment grade will be awarded for a child's writing level. The teacher needs to also give a Teacher Assessment for Reading, Maths and Science.

Y4 children will be required to take the Multiplication Tables Checker. This electronic test can take place anytime between the 6th and 24th June. Each child will answer 25 times table questions. There is no 'pass' mark, each child just gets a score out of 25.

Y2 children have SAT tests in Reading and Maths. These will take place in exam like conditions but can happen on a day of the teacher's choosing anytime between the 3rd and 27th May. These are marked by the class teacher and just like the KS2 SATs, the result will be reported to say whether a child is below ARE or at ARE. Teacher assessments are also recorded for writing, reading and maths.

Y1 children will be taking their Phonics screening check during the week beginning 6th June. They will be required to read 40 words which are a mixture of real words and nonsense words. Children 'pass' their Phonics screening check if they can read at least 32 of the words correctly (although this pass mark is subject to change on a year to year basis)

For each of these tests, the children will have had practice as part of their normal classroom lessons. All results will be reported to the government and to the parents of the individual child.

If you have any questions about any of these tests, please do not hesitate to get in touch with your class teacher or Mrs Ruddock.

Transition

The Y6 children will have 3 days to spend at Hinchingsbrooke school before the end of term. We work closely with the staff at Hinchingsbrooke to try to ensure a smooth transition process. We will also liaise with Longsands or any other secondary school that the Y6 children move to.

The rest of the school will spend the Thursday morning when the majority of Y6 children are not here (7th July) in next year's classes to meet their new teacher properly and spend a morning with their new classes.

As an addition to this, we would like to invite all current Robin and Wrens parents in for an afternoon on Wednesday 6th July. We will also be inviting the parents and children of next year's Wrens class. During the afternoon we will be provide tea and coffee so there can be some social time for the new parents to meet existing parents. There will also be some organised activities during the afternoon, so parents can do some learning alongside their children. We do hope you will be able to join us for this afternoon – we will send some more details out nearer the time.

We will confirm the staff in each class for September when final decisions have been made. If there are any questions in the meantime, please do ask.

Early Years Outside Classroom



You will have seen that we have a new Mud Kitchen in the outside Classroom. The Wren children have loved playing there this week and there have been some lovely 'mud' meals cooked for us all to share! The Outdoor classroom is slowly but surely taking place. There will soon be a new playhouse (kindly donated by one of our families – thank you very much the Tanner family). Hopefully before the end of the summer we will also have some physical play equipment installed. The outside classroom is an extension of the learning that happens in the classroom and we are very pleased that we are improving our facilities so the education of the children in the first year at Offord Primary School can be an enriched one.



A Glint of Gold – Hawks Production

Well done to Hawks class for putting on a great production at the end of last term. A Glint of Gold was based around Harold Carter's discovery of Tutankhamen's tomb. The children not only entertained their audience with their brilliant acting and beautiful singing, but educated them too. It was lovely that we could have the audience in the hall – our first indoor performance for 2 years. A truly enjoyable and memorable experience.



Residential Trip to Burwell

Hawks had a fantastic time during the last 3 days of school before the Easter holidays. They went on their residential to Burwell House just the other side of Cambridge. There they enjoyed various activities in the grounds of the house including orienteering games and team building activities. One evening they had a story-teller visit them to tell them stories about the local area, and I also understand that they ate lots of very nice home cooked food.

A big thanks to the staff that accompanied them on the residential trip and made it all possible.

We hold our residential trips every two years. The next trip to Burwell will be in March 2024 when the then Y3/4 children (current Robins class) will be able to go away for 3 days/2 nights.

Y5/6 are offered a 5 day/4 night residential. The next one is taking place in Autumn 2023 when the current Hawks class will be Kingfishers.

Residential trips are great for building independence, experiencing new activities, and just having a great time with their friends and away from mum & dad.

We hope you'll support your child in these trips – details will be sent in good time before the visits.



Eggs Hatching in Wrens Class

We are the very proud adoptees of 24 fertilised eggs and they are being looked after in Wrens class. We have kindly been loaned an incubator by and are raising the eggs (do you raise eggs?) for Mr & Mrs Hartop. The eggs will take 21 days to hatch, so we are expecting to be able to watch them emerge from the eggs on 16th May. Although it is Wrens that are currently ensuring the eggs have all they need for the chicks inside to grow, all the children will get a chance to see the newly hatching chicks and hopefully see some hatch.

The picture of the incubator is a bit boring, I'm afraid – but we'll send you photos when the chicks hatch.



Safety in the Car Park

Please can you ensure that your children are kept safe in the car park after school.

We use the car park as a collection point for the children, and do ask cars not to move around the car park at school drop off and collection times. However, some of the children have been running between the cars and we do not want them to hurt themselves or any of the cars get damaged.

Please also drive carefully and take care when driving along Miller's Close. The pavements are not designed very well for pedestrians leaving our school site. We understand that people are sometimes caught up in traffic or at the railway crossing, but please ensure you drive carefully if having to use Miller's Close to collect your children.

The one-way system does not need to be in place anymore, so if it is safer, please feel free to exit the site via the High Street gate.