

21.5.21

Mrs Jones' Newsletter

Dear parents and carers,

It feels like a long time since I have written to you but I was aware that you were receiving lots of information during lockdown and sometimes it can feel like overload.

Now we are back into the swing I will be sending my newsletters weekly on a Friday to all families, with general news, updates, relevant information and celebrations.

I truly hope you are all feeling well and enjoying normality creeping back into your lives. Please ensure you are taking time for you and your family and please come and talk to us if you need to.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Jones

Changes in our Covid risk assessment

You can now find our most up to date risk assessment on our school website. Please feel free to read how as a school and as a Trust we are working to keep families and children safe. We are very lucky to not have had to close any bubbles during this year, so far and ideally, we would like this to remain the case. Please be just as careful as you have been and never feel like you cannot ring up the school office and check symptoms out or ask for clarity of instructions. There are no stupid questions when dealing with Covid and my advice is as always – err on the side of caution.

The wearing of masks, outside the school building at drop off and pick up is now down to personal choice. Can I remind you to respect our one-way system in the playground – I get it's a pain to walk round and as soon as we can remove this I will but the Trust has asked us to ensure this is in place especially as masks are now voluntary – thank you for your patience with this.

Lost Property

Un-named lost property will be available outside on Monday the 24th and Tuesday the 25th (weather permitting!). Any named lost property will be given back to your child. Please feel free to take any un-named uniform for your children – but please, please, please put their names in it!

Any un-claimed, un-named lost property will be sent to the charity shop on the 28th.

Celebrating children's effort

At Oxenhope we take great pleasure in celebrating children's effort and championing children to do well. We are still presenting children with our certificates each week – these are star of the week, citizen of the week and presentation star. Hopefully we will be able to start inviting parents and carers back into school to share in these celebrations soon. We publish the videos of the presentations on our website for you to see.

Classes are going to be rewarding children at the end of the week with a special 'always' celebration. These are treats for the children who are always learning, always being kind, always being thoughtful. This came as a response from our children that they felt that the children who find learning more challenging sometimes get recognised more or receive more praise. This special time is to show the children that we see them and thank them. If you feel this is your child, your teacher will have noticed them and will be making plans to ensure they receive this treat but because we have so many 'always' children at Oxenhope, they will be accessing the treat in groups.

I am also going to be having lovely time myself with 7 children chosen by the teachers weekly. Each teacher is going to choose a child who has gone over and above in the week to come and have afternoon tea with me on a Friday. This will be a special time for the children and myself. Your child will receive a special invitation and a headteacher's award certificate. This time is not limited to once so your child could end up coming a few times!

Social distancing will be in place.

Please encourage your children to work hard and be kind at school.

Attendance

Throughout this year our attendance has been above national which is amazing and I thank you for that. I have noticed rather a lot of holiday request forms coming into the office. Now, I get it, I need a change of scenery as much as anyone and I also appreciate the cost of school holiday-time holidays but I am restricted in approving family holidays by Bradford Council and the Trust.

We will have to fine families for holidays which are for 5 days or more – **this money does not come into Oxenhope, it goes to the council, much like a parking fine.**

I also cannot authorise family holidays without extenuating circumstances – see the attendance policy for information about what ‘extenuating circumstances’ cover. Any absence will affect your child’s attendance percentage unfortunately. Again, all of this is standard policy across Bradford.

Can I also ask you to be honest with us about your holidays. There are safeguarding procedures in place around absence and if we cannot get in touch with you about why your child is not in school we would do a home visit. If there is no answer at the home then we could end up informing the police. Also, please don’t encourage your child to lie about their holiday by saying they are ill. This breaks down the trust relationship between the child

and school staff. This could prevent them from talking to us in the future about safeguarding concerns, and to be quite honest they usually tell us or another child and we usually find out and then that breaks down the essential partnership between home and school. My advice is just to tell us where you are going, its easier all round.

If your child’s attendance falls below the national average of 96% we begin our internal monitoring of their attendance. At this stage we don’t inform you, we just monitor for a few weeks and in most cases no further action is needed. If your child’s attendance falls below 90% we send you a letter bringing this to your attention explaining that improvement is necessary. In some cases, I speak personally to families and on occasion we have involved the educational social working team. Late marks are also monitored.

The best thing to do is promote school to your children. We are working hard to create a curriculum which is vibrant and exciting which will them inspire the children to want to come to school. The children need to understand that regular attendance promotes healthy life skills and prepares them for the world of work. If your

child is repeatedly late or off school then this can have lasting impact on the social, emotional, mental health, their friendships and relationships and their academic progress – it really is true – Every School Day Counts!

Covid isolation and illness is marked differently at the moment and this is something we would talk you through when you speak to the office about covid related absence.

Our Curriculum and the next half term

I am working with the Trust to see if we can start things such as parents' events, sports day, assemblies, performances and church services again. I am wanting this as much as you and as soon as it's possible I will let you know. However I am sure you are used to things changing and developing as we know more about different variants and strains developing. We are reacting to the information as it is given to us.

From September hopefully we have lots of events where you can come into school. I really want this to be a hub of family work. We are looking at family workshops, family events and fundraising events.

We are also developing our curriculum for September the staff are working hard to ensure that we have a curriculum which is inspiring for September. You can view our curriculum documents on our website.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Jones