

Newsletter



Autumn Term: Issue 1
7th September 2018

We work together, we play together, we laugh together, we pray together.

Forthcoming dates

- 14 Sept** Secondary Transfer meeting 2.30pm
- 17 Sept** Parent Forum
- 19 Sept** Meet the Teacher Evening 6.30pm
- 25 Sept** coffee morning
- 28 Sept** Y6 cake sale
- 10 Oct** Reception and Year 6 class mass 2.15
- 22 Oct** Half term week
- 29 Oct** Back to school
- 6 Nov** Coffee Morning
- 8 Nov** Year 6 Assembly 9.15
- 9 Nov** Y5 cake sale
- 20 Nov** Year 5 and 2 class mass
- 23 Nov** Year 2 Assembly 9.15
- 26 Nov** Parent Forum
- 27 & 28 Nov** Parent Teacher Meetings
- 13 & 14 Dec** Nativity Plays 2pm
- 19 Dec** Carol Service 6.30pm
- 20 Dec** Christmas Lunch
- 21 Dec** Break up at 2.30

Please note that class trips are not added here, please check your child's bag daily for letters from the teacher.

Get thinking!

If you could make everyone in the world follow one rule, what would it be and why?

What do you think? Take a moment to discuss this at home, or with your friends. Don't worry about whether your answer is right or wrong. It is the process of thinking, and trying to explain your ideas that is important.

Dear Parents,

A very warm welcome to you all. I do hope you had a lovely summer and were able to enjoy a peaceful and relaxing break as a family. It was lovely to see all the children on Tuesday, there were many smiles, and they have all grown so much! I hope you will all have a great Autumn term, full of laughter and learning. I would especially like to welcome our new children and families, we hope you will be very happy with us here at Oratory.

I have some very sad news to give you I am afraid. Mr Julian Flanagan, a former parent of the school, and governor for many years, sadly passed away last week. He was a wonderful man, and a great support to me and the school, and Mr Ward before me. I will miss him very much. Father John will be saying a Mass for him this Sunday at 10am. Please keep Julian, his wife and children, in your prayers.

Best wishes, Mrs Griffiths, Headteacher

Communication

Good communication is vital to the smooth running of any school. We thank you in advance for supporting us in the following ways:

- Each day your child is sick, please telephone the office before 9am to inform us. Otherwise, we need to call you, which uses the time of admin staff unnecessarily.
- If you need to give a note or letter to the school office, please use the letter box in the door on Bury Walk rather than ringing the bell. There is a box behind the door to store the post securely, which will be emptied twice a day. This will save us precious time.
- Please do not email urgent information to us, as our email accounts are not monitored throughout day; please telephone the school instead.
- Please telephone the school if you will be late to collect your child. Otherwise, we have to call you, which uses teachers' time unnecessarily.
- The school forum is the place to offer suggestions to the school; please see the information on the next page of the newsletter about how to raise issues at the the parent forum
- Replying to emails takes up a lot of the teachers' time, which is much better used preparing for lessons. If you can speak to them in the hall at the end of the day about a small concern, it would be much appreciated. Of course, we recognise that this is not always possible for working parents and therefore we endeavour to reply to emails within 5 working days.
- Social media sites, including Whatsapp, are a wonderful way for parents to communicate with each other. Class groups on Whatsapp are a good tool for sharing information. However, if any parent has a question, concern or suggestion about the school, this should be raised through the correct channel of communication.
- Non-urgent suggestions and questions should be brought, in confidence, to parent forum via class reps, but queries or complaints concerning individual children or members of staff should be raised with the teacher, or with Mrs Griffiths. The school's complaints policy can be found on the website if parents are unsure. The school will always listen to parents' concerns and try its best to resolve any problems, or alleviate any worries.
- Using social media as a platform for discussing complaints is counterproductive, and can make other parents feel awkward. Effective communication following principles of mutual respect sets a good example to the children, and is the correct route to ensuring the best learning experiences for them.

Parents Association, Parent Reps and Parent Forum

The PA is where parents and teachers work together for the good of the children in order to organise events throughout the year. All parents and staff members are welcome to be involved whenever they wish. Particular thanks to all of our parent reps this year; they will be emailing you all in due course. The role of the parent reps is to send emails to rest of parents in class to cascade information, to organise procedures for events tailored to their own class (e.g. 1st Holy Communion), and to represent their class at the Parent Forum meetings.

The school's **Parent Forum** was introduced last term in order to make it easier for parents to raise questions and make suggestions about the school. Our parent forum aims to represent the views of all parents and to be a voice to inform our school of the needs of children and families. Each term, the parent reps from each class meet with Mrs Griffiths to raise questions, suggestions and concerns. Mrs Griffiths may also consult parents on future plans for the school. The forum facilitates communication between parents/carers and staff and governors, offer a parent's perspective on current policy and practice and input into decision making and planning for future provision.

How can I raise something for discussion at the forum?

- By emailing your class rep before the meeting
- By writing your query and posting it in a Parent Forum box available at coffee mornings

How will I find out what was discussed?

The questions and suggestions raised at the meeting, along with the school's response and any actions taken will be recorded in the minutes, and uploaded on the school website.

What sort of things might be raised at the forum?

The forum will be a valuable way to share ideas, views, concerns and make suggestions for improvement. Possible topics might include after school clubs, school routines, school lunches, school events, fundraising, school uniform and general curriculum questions.

What sort of things should not be raised at the forum?

The forum is not in place to address specific concerns about an individual child or issues relating to individual members of staff. Parents who need to discuss these issues should approach their class teacher or the Deputy/Headteacher. The school's complaints policy can be found on the website.

The school's next parent forum will be on Monday 17th September.

Attendance

Please remember the following:

- All planned absences (including music exams, doctor's appointments and secondary transfer visits) should be requested in advance in writing.
- Children's attendance and punctuality is vital to their academic and social development, and children with poor attendance do not progress as well as their peers. Please make every effort to ensure that your child attends school every day. Parents whose children have attendance below 95%, or are regularly late will be contacted as part of our routine monitoring.

Birthdays

Children's birthdays are very important, and at Oratory we celebrate them in the following ways:

- Classes have birthday charts
- Classes sing happy birthday
- Children can collect a birthday sticker from Mrs Griffiths

Please remember that:

- We do not give out birthday cakes/food for many reasons. Please do not bring them in to school
- Birthday parties are at the discretion of families. They can be very expensive and time consuming, so many parents often ask a small group of the child's close friends for tea, or to an outing. In this situation we ask that you do not send invitations to school for your child to give out, as it cause misunderstandings and confusion in the playground. Please contact parents by email or send invitations some other way.

Homework

Learning at home is an important part of a child's education and can add much to a child's development. One of the aims of our school is for children to develop as independent learners. We believe that homework is one of the ways in which children can acquire the skill of independent learning. Learning at home can encompass anything that children do outside the normal school day that contributes to their learning. Homework encompasses a whole variety of activities instigated by teachers and parents to support children's learning. Homework plays a positive role in raising a child's level of attainment; however, we also acknowledge the important role of play and free time in a child's growth and development. While homework is important, it should not prevent children from taking part in the wide range of out of-school clubs and organisations that play an important part in the lives of many children. Time spent following a personal interest, making new friends and enjoying time spent as a family is vital to a child's development.

- **Please read the school's homework policy on the school website for further details of homework for your child's class**
- **Reading journals are being introduced in the junior classes this year. Mrs Steinart will soon be writing to parents with further details.**

Uniform

Children should now be wearing winter uniform, including long sleeved shirts, and long trousers. Tracksuits should have the school logo, and trainers should be white. Hair should be cut short, or tied back, and jewellery is not allowed. Any missing items of uniform should be purchased this weekend. Thank you for your cooperation.

Club information

Our updated club list will be available on the school's website shortly. Each club will have their own start date and procedures for joining, which you can find out on the club list. Please communicate regularly with the club tutor, and let them know if anyone else will be collecting your child, ensuring that they are picked up on time. Registration for the St Luke's clubs is online at 'Fit for Sport'.



We have several children with severe nut allergies in our school. Nuts are not allowed to be brought into school. This includes nutella type spreads, nut butters and cereal bars containing nuts.

Secondary Transfer

Mrs Griffiths will be holding a meeting about secondary transfer on Friday 14th September at 2.30pm in the hall. Parents from Year 5 and Year 6 are most welcome to attend. Parents of Year 6 who attended in Year 5 do not need to come again, but you are most welcome to join us if you would like a refresher!

The eAdmissions website is now open for Year 6 parents. Please register as soon as you can to apply for a secondary place for your child; the closing date is 31st October.

Meet the teacher evening

Our annual information evening for parents is being held on Wednesday 19th September, from 6.30pm. The evening begins in the hall, where Mrs Griffiths will inform parents of the school's priorities for the year. Afterwards, the teachers will welcome you to their classrooms, where they will explain routines and expectations for the class. The evening will finish by 8pm. If you are unable to come, the teachers will send home all information given with your child the next day.



Scooters

- There are many scooters which have been left in our playground for some time. The area is becoming cluttered. Next Friday, 14th September, ALL scooters should be taken home. Those left behind will be removed. Please don't forget!
- Please wait until you collect your child in the afternoon before picking up their scooter. Scooters should not be brought into the hall. Many thanks

Routines at the beginning and end of the day

At the beginning of the day

Children are admitted from 8.30 am to the side playground. Staff are on duty at that time and their role is to supervise the children and to make sure that the building is kept secure from the public. Parents are asked to drop children off at the door; however, scooters may be fixed to the rack if necessary. If parents need to enter the school during this time, to deliver a letter, give a message to a teacher or to sign up for parents evening for example, they are asked to do this by pressing the buzzer on the door in Bury Walk. The office staff will speak to them over the intercom, before letting them in.

At 3.30 pm

The door will be opened to parents at 3.30. Benches are placed across the middle of the hall and parents should remain on the side of the benches nearest the double door. The children sit in their lines with their teacher on the other side of the benches. Children will wait with their class until the teacher has seen the parent, they will shake hands with their teacher before being dismissed. This is to ensure that children leave safely with their parent or carer. We would ask that parents wait until all children have been safely dismissed before approaching the teacher to ask a question or provide information.

Other security reminders

- School staff are on duty from 3.45 Tuesdays- Fridays to monitor the door. They will ask parents which child they are collecting and from which club, before they are admitted. On Mondays, club leaders will open the door for you.
- If someone different is collecting a child, we must have parental permission. The school office is to be contacted by phone, or in writing **by 3pm** on the day in question, so that a memo can be passed to the teacher before bedtime.
- If older children are allowed to leave school on their own, we must have parents' written permission.
- At 3.30pm, parents are asked to leave the hall as quickly as possible after collecting their child so that space can be freed up for other families.
- Parents are asked to share this information with whoever collects their child from school. The school should be introduced to new childminders so that we can recognise them.
- If parents enter or leave through the door in Bury Walk, they should make sure no-one enters behind them before closing the door securely.