

# Newsletter



Autumn Term: Issue 1  
6<sup>th</sup> September 2019

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

## Forthcoming dates

- 12 Sept** Secondary Transfer meeting 3.45pm  
**13 Sept** Blue house mufti  
**16 Sept** Parent Forum 2pm  
**18 Sept** Meet the teachers evening 6.30  
**27 Sept** Y6 cake sale  
**3 Oct** National Poetry Day  
**11 Oct** Y5 cake sale  
**13 Oct** Canonisation of Blessed John Henry Newman  
**14 Oct** International Week  
**16 Oct** International Evening Years 4,5,6 6pm  
**21 Oct** half term week  
**28 Oct** back to school  
**30 Oct** Flu Immunisations  
**7 Nov** Year 6 Assembly  
**11 Nov** Anti Bullying Week  
**13 Nov** Class Mass: Reception & Year 6 2.15pm  
**15 Nov** Y4 cake sale  
**19 Nov** Class Mass: Year 5 & Year 2 2.15pm  
**20 & 21 Nov** Parent/Teacher Meetings

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

## Get thinking!

Autumn or Summer?  
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 back after the long summer break. It has been wonderful to see the children once again, who all look very rested and ready to learn. A special welcome to our new children, parents and staff! We hope you will be very happy at our school. Please just ask someone if you have a question- we'll all be happy to help you.

Please take a look at some of the key dates in the column to the left. We look forward to seeing you at our events this term, especially at the 'meet the teachers' evening in a few weeks. We will be setting dates for coffee mornings and the parent social when the PA meet Mrs Griffiths on the 16<sup>th</sup> September. Watch this space!

The newsletter is full of information, but I do have two extra requests. Firstly, please take a look on your child's class page for their curriculum map for this term so you can understand what they will be learning. Secondly, please make sure you arrive at the school at 3.30pm to collect your child. Some children have been collected late this week with no prior phone call. Have a super term everybody!

**Best wishes, Mrs Griffiths, Headteacher**

## 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 contact parents via 'classlist' to cascade information, to organise procedures for events for their own class (e.g. 1<sup>st</sup> Holy Communion), and to represent their class at the Parent Forum meetings.

The school's **Parent Forum** is our school's way 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 16<sup>th</sup> September.**

## 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 parent forum is the place to offer suggestions to the school; please see the information on the previous page of the newsletter about how to raise issues there
- 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.
- Parent Reps will use Classlist to send communicate information. Social media sites, including Whatsapp, are a wonderful way for parents to communicate with each other but class groups on Whatsapp are not the official channel for sharing information
- 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.

## 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**

## Meet the teacher evening

Our annual information evening for parents is being held on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> 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 pass on information to class reps to cascade to you via Classlist.

## 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.

## Attendance

Please remember the following:

- All planned absences (including music exams, doctor's appointments and secondary transfer visits) should be requested well 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.

## Uniform

Children should now be wearing winter uniform, including long sleeved shirts, and long trousers. Slip on shoes are not practical and shoes should have laces, a buckle or Velcro. 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'. Please consider whether the club is suitable for your child before signing up- if your child is very active, perhaps it would be better to sign them up for sports after school than for a club which involve sitting down for a long time!

There are two new clubs this term:

- Ms Martin will be offering saxophone and clarinet as well as flute this term. Letters will go out today.
- Chess will be offered on Tuesdays after school by Toni Johansson from SW Chess for children from years 3-6. Please contact him on 07718883285 or email [toni.johansson@swchess.co.uk](mailto:toni.johansson@swchess.co.uk). There are 14 places available and priority will be given to children who have attended the club which was run last term at the library.

## Secondary Transfer

Mrs Griffiths will be holding a meeting about secondary transfer on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> September at 3.45 pm in the Year 5 classroom. 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 31<sup>st</sup> October. Keep an eye on the websites of local secondary schools for any open days coming up soon.

## Food in School

- We have several children with severe nut allergies. Nuts are not allowed to be brought into school. This includes nutella type spreads, nut butters and cereal bars containing nuts.
- Pieces of fruit or vegetable crudites are the only snacks children should have at morning break. Snacks made from pureed fruit are not allowed at this time. Healthy lunches are important, in order to give your child energy for learning and sport. Fizzy drinks, crisps and chocolate are not allowed.
- When collecting your children at 3.30, please do not give them snacks until they are outside the hall.

## International Week- coming soon!

Our school is very fortunate to be made up of families from a variety of countries- each bringing a unique culture, heritage and language. We will be holding our biennial International week from 14-18<sup>th</sup> October to celebrate this and to learn about parts of the world we might not understand so well. This event relies heavily of the experience and expertise of our parents. If you would like to be involved, perhaps by cooking, dancing, telling a local folk tale or something equally as wonderful, please contact Mrs Griffiths directly, as she is coordinating the timetable for visitors.



## 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 hall 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 hometime.
- 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.