

Newsletter

9th September 2022

Welcome to the start of the new academic year. I do hope you had a lovely summer break. We have had a super start to the new year. The children seem to have come back to school ready to get stuck into the year ahead. The staff at Offord look forward to continuing to work with you all and look forward to getting to know the new families at Offord.

The Year Ahead

We have begun planning for the year ahead. As we looked in the diary we got excited as we have been able to reintroduce events that we started 3 years ago and had to cancel due to the Covid Pandemic and couldn't reinstate until now. Even this week we have held in-person parent meetings in the school building which seems very strange but very welcome.

I am sharing diary dates for the whole year with you now. These are current plans and could be subject to change if unexpected events crop up. Events and activities will be added to throughout the year, but I hope sharing this with you now helps you to plan for the year ahead. More information about each item will be sent out as needed nearer the time.

Autumn Term:

September		November	
Wed 7 th – Fri 9 th	Information sharing meetings for children new to class (Year 1, 3 & 5)	Tues 1 st	Hawks visit to Flag Fen
W/B Mon 12 th	After school/before school clubs and music lessons starting	W/B Mon 7 th	Parent Consultation Evenings (late night appointments on Monday)
October		W/B Mon 14 th	
Wed 5 th	SATS information evening for Y2 & Y6 3.30pm	Thurs 17 th	KS2 Whistle-stop Tour: History and Music session in school
Friday 7 th	Flu Immunisations	Wed 30 th	Welcome Weekday 2.30pm
Mon 10 th	Harvest Festival at the church 11.15am	December	
Wed 12 th	Individual and family group photographs	Mon 12 th	Virtual Christingle Service from Ely Cathedral
Thurs 13 th	Robins visit to Cambridge Botanical Gardens	Wed 14 th	Snowman Drive (Evening event)
Tues 18 th	Welcome Weekday 2.30pm	Mon 19 th	Wrens and Robins Nativity - Morning and afternoon
Wed 19 th	Kingfishers Virtual STEM day at Ely Cathedral	Mon 19 th	KS2 Carols at Church 6pm
Thurs 20 th	Kingfishers visit to West Stow	Tues 20 th	Christmas Lunch and visit from Father Christmas
Thurs 20 th	OPTA AGM 2pm	Wed 21 st	Last Day of Autumn Term
Fri 21 st	Last day before October Half Term		
Mon 31 st	Return from October Half Term		

Spring Term & Summer Terms:

January		March (cont)	
Wed 4 th	Staff Training Day	Fri 31 st	Last Day of Spring Term
Thurs 5 th	First day of Spring Term	April	
Thurs 5 th	Swimming session 1 – Hawks & Kingfishers	Mon 17 th	Staff Training Day
Thurs 12 th	Swimming session 2 – Hawks & Kingfishers	Tues 18 th	First day of Summer Term
Friday 19 th	Swimming session 3 – Hawks & Kingfishers	May	
Thurs 26 th	Swimming session 4 – Hawks & Kingfishers	W/B 8 th	Y6 SATs week
Thurs 26 th	Young Voices to Birmingham	Mon 22 nd	Welcome Wednesday
Fri 27 th	Welcome Weekday – 2.30pm	Fri 26 th	Break up for May Half Term
February		June	
Thurs 2 nd	Swimming session 5 – Hawks & Kingfishers	Mon 5 th	First day back form half term
Thurs 9 th	Swimming session 6 – Hawks & Kingfishers	W/B 5 th	Art Exhibition at school
Fri 10 th	Break up for February Half term	July	
Mon 20 th	Staff Training Day	Mon 10 th	Reports published
Tues 21 st	First day back after half term	Thurs 13 th	Kingfishers Play (afternoon and evening)
March		Fri 14 th	Sports Day
Thurs 9 th	Welcome Weekday 2.30pm	Mon 17 th	Y6 Leavers Trip
Thurs 23 rd	Hawks Play Performance (afternoon and evening)	Tues 18 th	Y6 Leaver's Party
W/B 27 th	Parent Consultation Evening	Wed 19 th	Y6 Leaver's Assembly 9am Last Day of Academic Year

Welcome Weekday

We introduced our Welcome Weekdays three years ago and they sadly had to stop because of the Covid Pandemic. We are really excited that we will be able to start these up again.

From 2.30pm we invite parents and carers to join the afternoon lessons in school. This will allow you to see the school in action and to be able to join in your children's learning.

There are five Welcome Weekdays across the school year, one on each of the weekdays. We do hope that you will be able to join us for at least one and join your child's class for the afternoon.

Y2 & Y6 SATS Information Evening

The children in year 2 and year 6 have to take Standard Assessment Tests (SATs) in the summer term.

We will be holding an information evening on Tuesday 5th October so we can share more information about these tests with parents and carers. There will be an opportunity to see examples of tests and discuss what level of work and understanding is required to 'pass' the test in English, Maths and Writing (and Grammar and Punctuation in Y6 too).

We plan to hold more workshops and information evenings on different topics including phonic teaching and online safety during the year (dates to be confirmed)

Sports at Offord

Following feedback and our own observations, we intend to improve our PE offer this year. We are still having Mr Puckey from Primary Sports Stars delivering one lesson to each class once a week. This will be supplemented by another lesson taught by the class teacher each week and Miss Charlotte will also be working with Robins, Hawks and Kingfishers for one half term each.

We are also employing Mr Puckey to be our 'sports champion' and ensure that we can take advantage of the sports festivals and competitions that are held in the local area. The hope is that every child will be able to experience at least one out of school sporting event this year.

I know that we have already signed up for the St Ives Football festivals and tournaments, we will be sending a team of children from each year group during the year. The first event will be for the Year 6 children in a couple of weeks. We will be asking for a couple of parents to attend these days too to support our staff. We may also be requiring help with transport as we look at the most cost-effective way of attending the sports meets (these events will be free of charge to parents.) Some of the festivals and tournaments allow adult spectators. We will obviously let you know if you can attend to watch and support your children.

I know you have already been informed of the different clubs that are taking place. Our new running club on a Friday morning will hopefully be popular and enjoyable for the children. This is a free of charge club as we are running it to promote sports for all in school. There are a couple of running events that we can get involved in during the year. I am also wondering about having an 'Offord does Junior parkrun' day where the children can be introduced to parkrun. If you have any ideas for another running-type fund-raising/community events we could do, then please speak to me. The children enjoyed the marathon event in 2021 so much, it would be good to do something similar but maybe without me running a full marathon! Please do chat to me if you have any ideas and watch this space.

The Curriculum

Each class will share more details of their curriculum this term soon.

Main topic for History and Science this term are:

Robins: "Heroes from the Past" and Plants (Heroes is part of both the history and geography curriculums)

Hawks: "Stone age to Iron Age" and Rocks and Soils

Kingfishers: The Anglo Saxons and Living Things in their Habitats

We have arranged trips for each class this term to enrich the learning in either their history or science topics. We are trying to be mindful of the costs that this involve but do feel that these enrichment activities to support the in-school learning is beneficial and very powerful for their learning. We hope by letting you know well in advance about these costs, it will help you budget.

The staff have also asked me to write in here that they are very thankful for your very kind gifts that they receive from their classes each Christmas and summer, but again realise that the cost of living is rising. They would much prefer this money to be spent so that your children can have these wonderful enriching experiences rather than on them.

OPTA – Offord Parent Teacher Association

OPTA had a very successful year last year, raising money through various events and using it to enrich the learning that is happening in school.

A massive thank you needs to be said to Claire Faux who stepped down as Chair after many years at the helm. She has left a big hole in the committee that needs to be filled. The committee are a very friendly group of parents and teachers that work together to come up with ideas and put on events to either raise money or to entertain the children and enrich their learning. They are always looking for new people to join their team.

OPTA will be holding their annual AGM on Thursday 20th October at 2pm in school. We would like to invite you all along to have a cup of tea and cake and hear about what OPTA have been up to over the past year and plans for the next and also to form the new committee. We look forward to seeing you there.



Offord Primary School

Class of 2022-23

