



Message from the Headteacher

Dear Parents and Carers,

It does still feel very strange to have a school timetable that has been cleared of all calendar events. No sports day, no summer fair, no disco, no father's day lunches, no leavers' assembly. I'm hoping that in a year's time we look back on this period as being a 'one-off'; something that we just had to get through. I'm also hoping that we savour and enjoy all of the traditional events and don't take them for granted.

I think that there have been some disturbing comments in the press and from Government about the impact that this period has had on children. I'm not sure what research was done before announcing '79%' of teachers believe attainment gap suffered by poorer pupils has worsened under lockdown and 31% say it is becoming a 'gulf', or 'Four in 10 pupils in England are not in regular contact with their teachers', or even 'Third of pupils aren't engaging with schoolwork'. I think these make for great newspaper headlines but are probably drawn from a relatively small sample size.

What is clear is that ALL children will have been impacted in one way or another since we went into lockdown. Even the children who have been in school week in, week out, have not had a 'normal' experience. What we also know is that many of our children have been engaging in the work we have set for home and have been learning other important things during their time out of school.

Our job as teachers and school leaders will be to make sure that we do the right things for your children when they return to school. As one teacher posted on Twitter this morning, 'Just finished my catch up plan: When all the kids are allowed back I'll teach them the stuff they don't know'. It's as simple and as complicated as that, which is what we have always done.

We had already planned to revamp our curriculum further this year having made changes to which topics we study. As you know, we created new topic plans which we share with you as well as termly curriculum updates. Behind the scenes, each subject leader has now created a detailed subject plan for their curriculum which outlines the Knowledge, Skills, Understanding and Vocabulary we will cover in each term, in each year group. We are now in the process of creating Knowledge Organisers for children so they know what we want them to know, understand and do each term, in each subject. All of these will be made available on our website so parents can see for themselves what we are teaching. This represents a massive increase in the level of detail we share with you

These detailed plans will prove invaluable when it comes to us planning how to 'teach them the stuff they don't know'. We won't be able to start where we would usually start in September as we will need to assess where the children are at, spend time re-establishing school routines and systems as well as looking after their mental well-being. We may decide that we need to devote more time to help 'fill the gaps'. We may use additional adults in other ways to help do this.

Please rest assured that we are already thinking about all of this. I do, genuinely believe that my team are working more closely than ever before and that they have risen to the challenge. I also feel that we have been well supported by you, the parents at the school.

In this newsletter, we have tried to set out some of the things that we are doing to get things right for your children in the coming weeks and months. We have had to come up with some new ways of doing things, after all, necessity is the mother of invention. We hope that by the end of this term, the children staying with us next year will know what to expect.

Simon Eardley
Headteacher

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Parent Questionnaire

In a normal year, we would have issued parent questionnaire throughout the year. This isn't a statutory requirement but something that we feel is important. Unfortunately, I was about to send out a questionnaire when we went into lockdown.

I don't want to miss out on this important part of our work with you so there will be a Parent Questionnaire coming out in the next few days with a deadline of completion by Friday 3 July. I'm mentioning this so that you can prepare yourself as it is going to be a bit of an epic questionnaire. Ofsted have changed the questions that they ask parents as part of the inspection process and I want to include these in our questionnaire, alongside the questions that we would normally ask. I may also include some questions about the period of lockdown and what we have provided as a school.

Thank you in advance for taking the time to complete the questionnaire. We have always been very fortunate that so many parents complete our questionnaires, much more than usually complete questionnaires for Ofsted.

Staffing Update

I am pleased to announce that Mr Newton will be Acting Year 3/4 Team Leader from September to cover the post until Mrs Fidgett returns from maternity leave. Her class will be covered by Mrs Chapman, a new teacher who we appointed earlier this year.

Transition Arrangements

We would normally be planning our transition days and information evenings now but due to the current situation we are unable to do this in the normal way. However, we have thought about what we can do to aid your child's transition into their new year and class at Orton Wistow.

Wednesday 1st July would have been the day that we got all the children together in the hall and told them their new class. We shall send home a message to all the children with this information on that day. This is how they will find out who their new class teacher is. We are not allowed to share class lists so you will not receive a list to show you which other children are in your child's class.

We will also be send home a presentation put together by the teachers of each year group, with information about your child's next year at OWPS.

We would encourage you all to watch these presentations alongside your children and talk about the changes they may experience in September, moving into a new year group or even a new Key Stage.

End of Year Reports

This year we will be sending the end of year reports home via email. We will do this for all pupils, whether they are currently in school or not.

Although teachers have been unable to write a report that reflects your children's learning over a full three terms, they have used their knowledge and assessments from the Autumn and Spring terms to write the general comment and there are teacher assessments for all subjects for these two terms included.

Your children's report will include:

- Letter from Mr Eardley
- Front cover – This will have a teacher assessment for each element of the PRIDE code and the Learning tools plus which class they will be in next year.
- Teacher comment – This is the main part of the report and has been written by their class teacher. It includes information on how they have progressed in reading, writing and maths plus other areas of the curriculum. It also includes information about their social skills, behaviour and attitude in school.
- Data sheet – For Years 1-6 this has teacher assessments for all curriculum areas for the Autumn and Spring term. There is also some information included to help you understand this table.
- Staffing structure for next year
- Due to the coronavirus epidemic, the DFE advised schools on end of year reports and have stated that attendance data does not need to be included. All statutory assessments (EYFS, Year One Phonics screening, Year Two and Year Six SATs) haven't taken place so are also not included in this year's reports.

Reports will be sent home on Monday 6th July.