



# Oakhyrst Grange School

PREPARATORY SCHOOL FOR BOYS & GIRLS

STANSTEAD ROAD • CATERHAM • SURREY CR3 6AF • TEL: 01883 343344 • FAX: 01883 342021

HEADMASTER: MR. ALEX GEAR B.Ed

26<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Dear Parents

*"This is probably the most unusual end of term letter that I am ever likely to write as a result of the pandemic that we are all now experiencing."* This was the opening statement of my Spring Term 2020 end of term letter to parents. Strange to think that while we are working our way out of the pandemic we are still, 12 months later, wrapped up in all of its consequences.

How pleased we all are to have the children back in school again. The last three weeks of this term have given us an opportunity to get together again and to try and find some kind of normality to our lives. Children are incredibly resilient and Oakhyrst is ticking along quite happily despite all of the pressures and problems that everyone has to face.

I would like to take this opportunity to inform you that Mrs Lynne Coppin will be leaving us after 17 years faithful service as our Bursar and School Accountant. Mrs Coppin will be leaving us as one of the longest serving members of staff in my recollection. Her attention to detail and genuine care for everyone were key features in making her a much loved and respected team member. Lynne Coppin will be greatly missed and I am sure that you will all join me in wishing her a long and happy retirement.

As you know Miss Hayley Plant left us in May 2020 to go on maternity leave. Miss Plant has decided to spend as much time as she can with her little boy, Arlo, and has therefore reluctantly resigned from the staff. Miss Plant has a strong desire to remain in teaching and I know that she has a brilliant career ahead of her. In the two years that Miss Plant was with us, she had a tremendously positive effect on her pupils and the wider life of the school. Her involvement in the school plays, trips and outings was considerable. Her role as E-safety Officer and indeed all things IT related added real value to the curriculum. Miss Plant is a remarkable teacher and she will be greatly missed. I am sure that once again you will join me in wishing her and her family every happiness and success for the future. Mrs Emma Harbott, joined us on a temporary contract to cover Miss Plant's maternity leave. I am delighted to say that she has accepted the role of Year 6 Class Teacher on a permanent basis. Mrs Harbott has already achieved great things with the current Year 6 and is actively working within the school as a successful and popular member of staff.

I am pleased to say that our Year 6 pupils have all achieved significant successes in their next school selection process. As always, we will publish the details at the end of the Summer Term as a part of the Prize Giving programme. In referencing the Prize Giving we are still uncertain as to where we will stand with regard to public events next term. It is my sincere hope that the Prize Giving itself, Sports Day and the school play, Dr Doolittle, will be open for parents to come and enjoy with us. These events will all go ahead and we depend on Mr Johnson's road map to give us clarity about the form that they can take.

*Mighty oaks from little acorns grow*

EMAIL: OFFICE@OAKHYRSTGRANGESCHOOL.CO.UK • SECRETARY@OAKHYRSTGRANGESCHOOL.CO.UK

WEB: WWW.OAKHYRSTGRANGESCHOOL.CO.UK • CHARITY NO: 325043



As I write this the Year 5 and 6 pupils are preparing for their Easter Assembly that will be performed and recorded. It is sad to report that parents will not be able to attend the assembly in person.

The annual Year 5 Bushcraft and Year 6 PGL residential trips are still possible, but of course, we can only confirm that they can go ahead nearer the time. The same is true for the several individual Class trips and outings that would normally happen in the Summer Term.

We were able to celebrate World Book Day a little late. We have managed to start taking school assemblies and have had a couple of whole school zoom assemblies for good measure. Mr Kim Wells, Director of Teaching and Learning at Caterham School hosted a webinar on home learning and I am pleased to say that over 50 parents attended online.

As we are in the process of getting things back to normal I would like to encourage you to consider the importance of music in the school. Our Peripatetic Teachers Mrs Baker - flute, Miss Bucknall - violin and piano, Mrs Byers - cello and Mr Gardner – brass, guitar, saxophone and clarinet are all very keen to provide plenty of opportunities for children to learn new instruments or indeed to extend their existing skills. I would like to pick up where we were once before with a full school orchestra and a wide range of ensemble groups. The three lock-downs have had a detrimental effect on peripatetic music teaching, online zoom lessons have been going on, but I would like to encourage everyone to book slots for next term with the various teachers. Please contact Mrs Debbie Stevens, our Head of Music on [debbie.stevens@oakhyrstgrangeschool.co.uk](mailto:debbie.stevens@oakhyrstgrangeschool.co.uk) in the first instance.

My first assembly back this term was based on the message 'that every day is a new beginning'. We all have opportunities to start with fresh hope and big ambitions for the future. The children at Oakhyrst Grange School have shown tremendous resilience and adaptability over the last 12 months and I am very proud of all of them. As we end this particular school term, we have the prospect of a bright new beginning when we enter the Summer Term on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2021.

I wish you all a very happy and safe Easter holiday. We should all be in a position to share more quality time with our immediate families and circles beyond as we move from March into April.

With sincere best wishes and stay safe

Mr Alex Gear  
Headmaster