



Oakhyrst Grange School

PREPARATORY SCHOOL FOR BOYS & GIRLS

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HEADMASTER: MR. ALEX GEAR B.Ed

7th December 2021

Dear Parents

You will note that I am writing the end of term newsletter on Tuesday 7th December, 3 days before the end of term. My thinking is that with things as they are with the new Omicron COVID variant we are still a little unsure as to whether or not we will have our usual Carol Service. At this time we are all systems go and very much looking forward to our annual festive treat.

I am going next to mention our Year 6 pupils who have, under extremely difficult circumstances, been preparing for and are now embarked upon the process of next school examinations. At this precise time three of our Year 6 pupils are having to isolate because of positive PCR tests. They are of course not alone, but my heart really goes out to them at this most critical of times. This being said, I have absolute confidence in their personal abilities and in the flexibility of the systems that we have established with all of our next school senior colleagues.

As you can see from the previous paragraph we should be very proud of the fact that we are maintaining as much by way of normality as we can. We have managed already this term a PFOG coffee morning. PFOG have, as always, been instrumental behind the scenes in helping us with our Christmas parties. These are taking place even as I write this newsletter.

After a lot of extremely difficult circumstances being thrown in our way it is a real pleasure to report that the Year 5 Bushcraft trip was able to go ahead as usual. My sincere thanks to everyone in the office, Mr Burke and Mrs Gorman for making it possible. The Year 5 children had the most wonderful of times. Year 4 children were able to go on the annual Bough Beech reservoir trip and they too learned a lot and had a good time.

We got together at St Mary's Church for our annual Harvest Festival Service and this was marked by a wonderful collection of food supplies that were ultimately donated to the Caterham Food Bank. Thank you all for your kindness and generosity. Mrs Carter, one of the PFOG team, was instrumental in enabling this all to happen. It was a pleasure to be able to invite parents in to watch assemblies that were delivered by Years 2, 3 and 4 respectively. I have to say it brought a tear to my eye when I acknowledged in front of the parents that this was Mr McInnerney's last Year 2 Form assembly. We will be saying goodbye properly to Mr McInnerney on the last day of term. Years 5 and 6 performed a Remembrance Day assembly in front of parents. On the Remembrance Day itself Mr Gardner and Emma R played the Last Post and the Reveille and the children observed a perfect two minute silence. Year 5 had a class concert that was well attended. The school Nativity play was particularly special this year in the light of current events. All of the Early Years children and the Year 1 Class performed magnificently. Well done to Miss Cockbain and everyone involved in the production.

I am pleased to say that on the sporting front our children have been involved in representative fixtures for cross country, football, netball, hockey and swimming. In ISA competitions our U11 girls' competed at the National Hockey Championships at the Lea Valley Stadium and our swimmers represented the London South region at the Olympic Pool in London. Five of our children were selected. Three were able to compete on the day and major congratulations to Scarlett K, Year 4 who won a gold and silver, and to Emily S and Joseph L, Year 5 both of whom narrowly missed out on a place on the rostrum. Congratulations also to Mrs Evans, our lead Swimming Coach.

Mighty oaks from little acorns grow

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We did have, on the most lovely of days our Inter-House Cross Country Championships. It was a wonderful day all round. Miss Dance led our anti-bullying week assembly and everyone enjoyed Odd Sock Day. Mr Burke posted a website news article that summed up well the purpose of the week. We were able to invite parents into the school for face to face parents meetings. Our children were able to take part in the LAMDA examination process and we are awaiting the results after Christmas.

Tomorrow we will be enjoying our Christmas lunch and then we will spend the afternoon watching the pantomime that PFOG have kindly provided for us. We are hoping to enjoy a Carol Service on Thursday evening.

I close by offering a sincere thank you to you, as parents, for all your support and understanding during this extended difficult period. A special word of thanks to for every member of staff at Oakhyrst Grange School for their professionalism and care. My final word is for the ladies who so wonderfully turn up each and every day to assist with the drop-off arrangements. They are simply invaluable.

With season's best wishes and greetings.

Mr Alex Gear
Headmaster