



Friday, 11th September 2026

NOTES FROM MRS MITCHELL

Dear Parents,

Welcome Back to Oakhyrst Grange!

There is something rather special about the beginning of a new school year. After the quietness of the summer holidays, it has been wonderful to see Oakhyrst come alive once again, filled with laughter, excitement and the energy of pupils ready to learn.

It has been a real pleasure to see everyone return this week, and I would particularly like to extend a warm greeting to the pupils and families joining our community for the first time. We have been so proud of how quickly they have settled, with friendships already forming and older pupils showing such care towards younger members of the school.

One of the highlights of my week has been spending time with pupils during break times and getting involved in some of their favourite activities. From Jenga and Jammy Dodgers to Dominoes and Donuts, there have been plenty of opportunities for fun, smiles and getting to know one another. I have thoroughly enjoyed joining in and seeing so many personalities shine outside the classroom.

Across Oakhyrst, pupils have made a fantastic beginning to the academic year. Classrooms have been filled with curiosity and enthusiasm as they meet their teachers, explore fresh ideas and look ahead to all that the year will bring.

At Oakhyrst, we are committed to excellence in every area of school life. Alongside academic achievement, we place great importance on developing confidence, character, independence and resilience. Our values have already been clearly evident, with pupils demonstrating kindness (Capy the Cabybara), responsibility (Archie the Acorn) and independence (Larry the Teddybear) as they embrace their roles and routines.

A huge thank you to our wonderful staff for all their hard work in preparing for the term ahead, and to our parents for their continued support. The partnership between home and school plays such an important part in helping every pupil to flourish.

There is already a wonderful sense of excitement about the year ahead, and we look forward to all the opportunities, challenges and memories that the Autumn Term will bring.

Here's to a fantastic year ahead at Oakhyrst Grange!

Mrs Mitchell





Pre-Reception

The newest and youngest children in the school have all settled so very well into school life. We have had lots of firsts and have already made a brilliant impression on the staff body. We are learning the different rules of the classroom, about all the different areas of the school and getting used to the Oakhyrst Grange way. We have enjoyed sharing stories, growing our confidence in a new environment and getting stuck in with our learning. It has been wonderful to see so many happy faces coming in in the morning, long may it continue.



Reception

What a fantastic first week we've had in Reception!

The children have settled in beautifully and have taken to their new classroom, timetable and routines with confidence and enthusiasm. It has been lovely to see them already beginning to build friendships, explore their new environment and feel at home in their new class.

Our topic for this week and next is 'Settling In', and we have been thinking about what makes school a happy and welcoming place for everyone. We have enjoyed reading *Kind* and *The Colour Monster Goes to School*, which have given us lots to talk about! We have been exploring the different ways we can be kind to one another, help our friends when they are feeling a little unsure, and spread happiness throughout our classroom and wider community.

We have also had our first French, Art and Swimming sessions, all of which the children have absolutely loved! It has been wonderful to see them throwing themselves into every new lesson with such excitement.

I couldn't be prouder of how wonderfully they have started their Reception journey — what a super first week!



Year 1

We're so happy to be back!! Year 1 have settled wonderfully into their new classroom and routines, it feels like they've been here before! The children have especially enjoyed their new areas for playtime as they are now able to use the tennis court, trim trail, top field and...the WOODS!!! They have enjoyed reading "The Gruffalo" as our class text in English, using it to help them understand adjectives and describe the characters as well as answering comprehension questions about the story.

We have begun our new Geography topic! The children all enjoyed making their own passports to show who they are and where they live. In Science we began learning about different types of materials and whether they were man-made or grew naturally in the world.

We have already had success in Numbots, with every child earning certificates for “Stages completed” and have begun to explore the phonic games available on our new Phonics platform “Spelling Shed”.

In PSHE we thought about different emotions, what they can look like, how to recognise them and what could cause them. The children really enjoyed using facial expressions in pairs to work out what emotion their partner was trying to show!! In RE we began thinking about “creation” and the children enthusiastically drew something they have created themselves either at home or in school.

Year 2

It has been a great start to the Autumn term and Year 2 have settled in brilliantly to their new class routines!

This week, we have started our first English text, ‘The Tunnel’ by Anthony Browne. The children have been using rich, descriptive language to bring the mysterious tunnel to life in their writing. We have explored how to use our senses to describe what it might look, sound, and feel like inside, and the children have enjoyed acting out scenes and producing some imaginative sentences.

We have been strengthening and building on our understanding of place value in Maths. Using base ten blocks, number cards, place value charts and part whole models, the children have been building, partitioning and representing numbers.

We have also started our exciting new Geography and History topics! The children enjoyed talking about their favourite toys with the class in History, and in Geography, locating and sharing facts about continents using globes and atlases to develop key geographical knowledge and skills.

Keep up the great work Year 2!



Year 3

It was lovely to welcome the children back after the holidays and hear the highlights of their summer adventures. Considering the long break, they settled back into school well, warmly welcoming our five new starters!

To help us get to know each other better and to get the year off to a good start, we invested time establishing a Class Charter. This allowed the children to share the values and expectations that are important to them, so we start the year as we mean to go on. We then created and added our hand signatures to share our agreement.



The introduction of the marble jars to earn Golden Time has caused much excitement and added to the children's determination to work hard, be punctual for lessons and show responsibility for keeping their cloakrooms tidy.

Year 3 has already had a birthday to celebrate – Happy Birthday, Dominic! There are two more to come in September... Our challenge is to remember all the birthdays in chronological order by the end of the year including the July and August birthdays, of course! (We made sure we sang them a belated Happy Birthday on our first day back.) The year really does pass so quickly...

Year 4

And Year 4 are off to a flying start! Day one started with some slight nerves mixed in with excitement and anticipation for the year ahead. It was fantastic to welcome the pupils back after the summer holidays and invite them into their new classroom. Seats and pegs were found easily and then the classroom filled with chatter and stories of the last eight weeks. It was brilliant to hear about all the various adventures our class had experienced with their friends and families throughout the summer break.

The first morning was spent settling into our classroom; discussing our new routines, timetables and expectations. After a welcome assembly from Mrs Mitchell, the Year 4s sprinted out of the playground door ready for their first break time and being reunited with all their friends. After break, it was into our new timetabled lessons and the learning began. From Maths, to English, History to Science. Our new topics for this half-term are interesting and exciting and we are determined to have an excellent year with lots of growing and developing to come.

Year 4 have made a fantastic start to English since the start of the term, practising their prediction skills as we introduced our exciting new class novel 'The Boy who Grew Dragons'. The children had lots of clues to investigate around the classroom, including a dragon fruit, gardening gloves, mysterious footprints and a boy's bedroom. They did a brilliant job of joining the clues together and using evidence to predict what they thought might happen in the story.

They also had great fun completing their first loop card vocabulary challenge, using key words that we will come across during our new unit. They worked brilliantly together and managed to complete the challenge in under two minutes! We are looking forward to seeing how close their predictions are as we start reading.

We cannot wait to share our adventures, learning and highlights as we move through the year....watch this space!



Year 5

Year 5 have had a smashing start to the year! They have really got stuck into all aspects of year 5 at Oakhyrst.

In science we have been making mixtures, which got a little messy at times but was a lot of fun. In humanities, we have explored key features of mountains for the start of our topic and got to grips with the War of the Roses, roman numerals have become our best friends to keep track of monarchs during this period of history!

Miss Plant reports that Year 5 have thoroughly enjoyed making predictions about our new novel, 'The Highland Falcon Thief'. The children became investigators, using clues hidden around the classroom to work out what the story might be about. As it is a detective novel, the children stepped into the role of detectives and used the clues to predict possible suspects in the mystery of a missing jewel. They also studied the list of people travelling on the train and their different roles to help them develop their theories further.

The children produced some fantastic predictions, using evidence from the clues to explain and justify their ideas. We are now looking forward to beginning the novel and finding out whether any of our detectives were on the right track!

Mrs Dance's maths lessons are an absolute hit judging by the laughter coming from the classroom and the massive numbers written all over the classroom.

In Enrichment, pupils have taken on a range of activities but in the year 5 classroom creativity is striking with Claymation coming to life.



Year 6

Year 6 have had a fantastic first week back! They have already shown just how focused, mature and hardworking they can be. It has been wonderful to see them embracing their new responsibilities as the oldest children in the school and making such a positive start as role models for our younger pupils.

The house points are already adding up, with lots being awarded for excellent effort, attitude and behaviour. I have been particularly impressed by the way the children have approached their learning with enthusiasm and determination.

This week, Year 6 have enjoyed delving into their new class novel, 'Kensuke's Kingdom'. They used a range of clues to make predictions about the narrative, main characters and setting. There were some great ideas and discussions, and we are looking forward to finding out if any of our predictions are correct!

The children have also thoroughly enjoyed talking through the additional Year 6 roles and responsibilities and beginning to plan their letters of application. It has been great to hear their ideas about how they would like to contribute to school life and the changes they would like to bring to School Council if elected. We are looking forward to hearing more of their ideas over the coming weeks!

In science, year 6 have been exploring classification using the Linnaeus method. They played a game that tested their memory and their ability to work as a team. In geography we started to explore counties and physical features of the continent of North America.

Sport

It has been fantastic to see the children return with such enthusiasm and energy and a special mention to Reception and Year 2 who were back to doing double PE on day 1 last week! All the children have been working hard and adjusting to life in PE & Games, with lots of smiles and happy faces on show.

In PE, all year groups will be focusing on fitness this half term, developing their stamina, strength and speed in activities such as fitness circuits, cross-country and for the older year groups, the dreaded bleep test! During Games lessons, our upper school children are taking part in both football and netball, whilst in EYFS and KS1 they will be developing their fundamental movement skills through ball skills and team games.

A special mention goes to our Pre-Reception children, who have enjoyed their very first PE lessons this week. It has been wonderful to see their excitement as they begin their sporting journey at Oakhyrst Grange.

Our children have all returned to the pool, settling well into the pool environment. We have also started our swimming assessments, which will help us monitor progress and ensure each child is working towards their next personal target.

Here's to a great year of sport at Oakhyrst Grange.

Mr Smith, Miss Lomax, Mrs Kennedy & Mrs Harris

Music

We have a lot to look forward to this term. The children have started learning a couple of Harvest songs which have been written by Mrs Leyshon who also recently had a book published with all the Christmas songs that she has composed. Huge congratulations to Mrs Leyshon! Oakhyrst is very proud of you!

Year 6 and 5 have started learning about Music in the WW1 period and the role it had in helping people through that period of time. It brought people together, it gave them hope, empathy with each other, courage and a distraction from what was happening in the world. Music really is a powerful tool and helps in so many ways in life from one generation to another.

Year 3 had an introduction to discovering how music began in the woods this week. Imagining how it would have started. Utilising our woods is the perfect scenario to imagining sitting round a campfire and someone discovering a sound with two sticks/stones then voices. The children were then divided into groups to come up with a composition 'stone age' style.

Do please spread the word about Oakhyrst Music Community Orchestra which is open for Year 4 – 8 children who play an instrument approx. Grade 1 standard and above. This is on Wednesdays from 5.15 to 6.15pm at Oakhyrst in the Cameron hall and is a fantastic opportunity for any children in the area to experience playing in an orchestra and developing their musical skills.



We have many pupils trialling musical instruments this week to help them decide which instrument to learn. It is lovely to see so much interest and we look forward to seeing those budding musicians develop. If you would like your child to learn an instrument or take up a second instrument then please do contact Mrs Price.

OTHER NEWS

Copthorne Ski Trip

We are pleased to share an exciting opportunity for our Year 5 and Year 6 pupils to take part in a school ski trip to Italy this year. The trip is being organised in partnership with Copthorne Prep School, who are currently looking for a few more pupils to join the group in order for the trip to go ahead. Full details, including the itinerary and trip documentation, are available for interested families to review. If you would like to find out more, please contact Mrs Myers, who will be happy to provide further information and answer any questions you may have. This is a fantastic opportunity for our pupils to experience skiing in Italy, meet children from other schools and enjoy what promises to be a memorable trip.

Family of Schools Workshops and Webinars

We are currently putting together our Family of Schools programme of parent webinars and workshops for the year ahead and would really value your input.

We would like to make sure that the sessions we offer are useful, relevant and accessible to our families. We would therefore be grateful if you could complete a short questionnaire to let us know which topics you would find most helpful, as well as how and when you would prefer sessions to be delivered.

The questionnaire should only take a few minutes to complete, and your feedback will be extremely helpful in shaping the programme.

Please click here to complete the questionnaire: [Parent Workshops & Webinars – Fill out form](#)

We would be grateful if you could complete the questionnaire by **Monday 21 September**.

A gentle reminder of morning drop off times

Year 5 & 6	8.00am
Year 3 & 4	8.10am
Year 1 & 2	8.20am
PR & R	8.30am

If children arrive before these times, they are sent to breakfast club.
A charge will be placed on your account.

We also kindly ask parents and carers to be mindful when parking around the school at drop-off and pick-up times. Where possible, we would really appreciate it if the yellow zig-zag lines outside the school could be kept clear. Parking in these areas can create obstructions and make it more difficult for traffic to flow freely around the school entrances and exits. We completely appreciate that these times can be busy, and we are grateful for everyone's cooperation in helping to keep the area moving safely and smoothly.



ROTATIONAL WEEKLY MENUS

Week 1

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Main: Jacket Potatoes with Baked Beans, Grated Cheese & Sweetcorn	Main: Mince Beef Cottage Pie with Seasonal Vegetables	Main: Chicken Chow Mein in Soya Sauce with Seasonal Vegetables	Main: Roast Pork, Roast Potatoes, Yorkshire Pudding & Seasonal Vegetables	Main: Fish & Chips with Petite Pois
Vegetarian: As above	Vegetarian: Vegetarian Pasty	Vegetarian: Asian Stir Fry	Vegetarian: Plant-Based Roast	Vegetarian: Veggie Fingers
Dessert: Homemade Cake	Dessert: Yoghurt	Dessert: Pineapple & Melon	Dessert: Jelly	Dessert: Choc Ice
 Fruit Table	 Fruit Table	 Fruit Table	 Fruit Table	 Fruit Table

Week 2

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Main: Jacket Potatoes with Baked Beans, Grated Cheese & Sweetcorn	Main: Chicken Korma with Basmati Rice, Naan Bread & Seasonal Vegetables	Main: Spaghetti Bolognese with Grated Cheese & Seasonal Vegetables	Main: Pork Sausages, Potatoes & Gravy with Yorkshire Pudding & Seasonal Vegetables	Main: Chicken Goujons & Chips with Cucumber Batons
Vegetarian: As above	Vegetarian: Halloumi Curry	Vegetarian: Veggie Bolognese	Vegetarian: Plant-Based Sausages	Vegetarian: Vegan Nuggets
Dessert: Homemade Cake	Dessert: Yoghurt	Dessert: Pineapple & Watermelon	Dessert: Choc Ice	Dessert: Jelly
 Fruit Table	 Fruit Table	 Fruit Table	 Fruit Table	 Fruit Table

Week 3

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Main: Pasta in Tomato Sauce, Garlic Bread, Grated Cheese & Sweetcorn	Main: Margherita Pizza & Hash Browns with Cucumber Batons	Main: Chilli con Carne with Tortilla Chips & Seasonal Vegetables	Main: Roast Turkey, Roast Potatoes, Stuffing Balls & Seasonal Vegetables	Main: Fish & Chips with Seasonal Vegetables
Vegetarian: As above	Vegetarian: As above	Vegetarian: Veggie Chilli	Vegetarian: Plant-Based Roast	Vegetarian: Veggie Fingers
Dessert: Homemade Cake	Dessert: Yoghurt	Dessert: Pineapple & Watermelon	Dessert: Choc Ice	Dessert: Chocolate Chip Cookies
 Fruit Table	 Fruit Table	 Fruit Table	 Fruit Table	 Fruit Table