Oakwood Junior School September 2011

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Dear Parents/Carers,

We've had a really busy start to our school year – there's a lot for us to do and to remember (that's the adults in school as well as the children). The children seem to have settled back into the school routine very quickly even after the long summer break. I'm pleased with how smart and well turned out the children look in their new school uniform, I know it's an expensive time for parents, but a big thank you for supporting our school uniform policy.
Over the summer holidays we've had some more windows and tiles on the outside of school replaced, so it looks much better now. We've had some other work done on the courtyard pond and we are now able to see the fish! The chickens have returned from their holidays (thanks to Caroline for looking after them) and the allotments have been very productive – the crop of plums was especially good.

Staffing

Miss Baldi and Miss Winslow are on maternity leave and Miss Lawrence will start hers shortly.
Miss Mundi became Mrs Sahota when she got married over the summer and Mr Wild is a part time TA who will be working with year 5 classes.
We now have a regular full time caretaker (Andy Bird) who has already had a positive impact on our school environment. We hope he has a long and happy time at our school.
I'm really sorry that Jill, our school cook, has left. After all the uncertainty about school catering she has decided to become a cook in a private nursery. Everyone who knows Jill will understand what a loss this is as she always had the best interest of the school at heart and always went the extra mile, even when things were quite difficult. I'd like to thank her personally for her contribution not only as a cook, but as an associate governor and I know that you too, will want to wish her well. Children and staff alike will miss her. Mrs Emma O'Kane will be her replacement until the end of October.

Sponsored Walk

On Friday 23rd September we'll be holding our annual sponsored walk event. It will take place during the afternoon, providing the weather is suitable. The money we raise will go towards buying school equipment and resources. I hope you will support us. The children will be given more information nearer the time together with a covering letter and sponsor forms. If you would like to take part, do come and join us – the more the merrier.

Homework

All children will be given homework on a weekly basis and this will be starting before the end of September. All children will be set numeracy homework for the first ½ term and we will be changing the way that children will access the homework task as this will now be accessed on the school website. The task will be on the school website in a PDF format which is the same as the newsletters. The work will be completed in a homework book and checked by the teacher. We want to monitor how this goes as ultimately we're hoping that the homework will be completed on line and e-mailed to school, but this will be our next step, in the Spring Term. We will trial this first with some of our older children and we'll then take it from there,

We certainly do not want to disadvantage any family who don't have access to a computer, so paper copies will be available and in time we will enable children to have access to the IT suite in school as an after school club.
We encourage parents to help with the work if it is necessary and to ensure that your child completes the task on time. If there are any problems please do get in touch with your child's class teacher.
Reading at home is very important. In lower school your child will be issued with a reading record and we would ask you to sign this when your child has read at home. Our library is well stocked and children will be able to change their books from 8:45. You are welcome to come in the mornings – Miss Grundle will be happy to help.
In addition weekly spellings will be given. Improving childrens spelling is one of our school priorities this year and we will be running workshops for parent's this term – more details to follow.

Curriculum

At the moment we're finalising leaflets that will shortly be sent out to parents that will outline aspects of work that your child will be covering this term as well as information about the schools website which we hope will be useful for you. On the leaflet we've also let you know when your child will be having PE and Games. Everyone will have 2 physical activity lessons a week and it's really important that children have their kit in school; otherwise they will not be able to take part in the lesson. If this happens we will be getting in touch so that we can help with any problems that could be causing this. Just a reminder regarding PE kit for indoor PE., the children will be expected to wear black shorts and a plain white T-shirt. It's usual for the children to work bare footed for dance and PE, unless you get in touch with us if this is a problem. For outdoor games black shorts or black track suit bottoms with trainers or plimsolls are needed. Wearing black shoes in school, rather than trainers is also part of school uniform.

Clubs

Mrs Russell has organised a number of clubs for this term, which include Dance, Gymnastics, Pond Dipping, Cycling and Hi 5. Letters were sent out last week so thank you to all of you that replied. Your child will receive a confirmation letter by the end of the week to confirm that they have a place.

Dates for this term

20.09.11	8:30-9:00 – Tea and toast morning for children and their parents – details soon
23.09.11	Sponsored walk starts at 1:40pm
30.09.11	Mrs Stuart's class assembly
14.10.11	Mrs Langford's class assembly
17.10.11)	Parents evening, (individual appointments to find out how your child has settled
18.10.11)	and targets for this year)
21.10.11	Break up for half term
31.10.11	Return

Term Dates

Autumn 2011	Spring 2011	Summer 2012
05/09/2011 > 21/10/2011	05/01/2012 > 10/02/2012	16/04/2012 > 01/06/2012
31/10/2011 > 21/12/2011	20/02/2012 > 30/03/2012	11/06/2012 > 20/07/2012

INSET DAYS
21/11/2011
27/01/2012
21/05/2012
29/06/2012