

THE OTTER

THE NEWSLETTER OF OTTERBOURNE CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL.



Dear Families

It's been another great week in the school, with lots of children already bringing their brilliant work for me to see, praise and reward with a sparkly 'Headteacher Sticker'. I love seeing the children coming home with these proudly displayed on their uniform for you to see, but sometimes the older children prefer to have these stuck on their books as a daily reminder that they should be proud of themselves. You might see these during the upcoming parent consultation evenings, which are an opportunity to share with the class teachers that might help us understand more about how we can support your children. The booking system for these will be available from 5pm on Monday 21st September on Arbor.

The children are settled into their new classrooms now, and we have shared with you the overview of learning that they will be completing this term. If you have any questions about the start of the year, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Mr Geraghty

Year R Bell Ringing

A wonderful event to mark the start of school for our Otter Class children.



As they finished their first school day, our reception class children stood proudly in front of their parents, their Year 6 buddies, and children from across the school. One by one, they walked up (some nervously, some confidently) and they rang the school bell to mark the start of what we all hope will be a successful and memorable 7 years.

It really was a lovely moment for the families to capture for posterity, and we are all grateful that the miserable weather gave way just in time for us all to enjoy it.

Do you know someone looking to start in Year R next September?

Our school tours start very soon, and I would love to show any prospective parents around the school. If you do know of anyone looking for a school space, please send them a copy of the poster in this newsletter or ask them to call the school. If you didn't make it to a school tour and would like to have one, please let us know.

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Do you have a van and a bit of spare time?

We have the opportunity of upgrading some of our school furniture thanks to the support of a local business in Chandler's Ford. Before we plan to hire a van, which is money we really would rather not spend, I'm reaching out to see if anyone would be able to help us out at some point over the next week or so. If you think you can, please contact the school. Thank you!

Are you looking for a local party venue?

Our outdoor classroom, The OWL, is a wonderful space often described as a Hobbit House. It's perfect for small parties or meetings and we are happy to let it out as a venue. If you are interested, please contact the school office.

Lost Property

At the end of the year, despite helping the children bring home their belongings, we still ended up with a huge pile of lost property, much of which is still unclaimed. We have returned all that we can, but if it wasn't named, there really isn't much more we can do. If you know you are missing something, please pop in and take a look, otherwise it will be put out during the parent consultation evenings before being put into the pre-loved uniform boxes.

Are you in need of uniform items?

As mentioned above, if you are planning on buying items of uniform, please take a look in the pre-loved uniform boxes first. For a very small donation, you could even fill the wardrobe for the years ahead!

Lost Library Books

Each year, we have to 'close' the library for a stock take. Many of our books are provided by Hampshire Library Services which is the best way of having a good level of rotation, ensuring that the shelves are filled with good quality, engaging books, many of which are new releases. It takes a few weeks to collect the books in, and Mrs Redford will contact families to try and locate the books that don't come back to us as we fully understand that they can find their way into strange places around the house. Sadly, in July, we had a very high number of books that weren't returned, and as much as we can write off a few of these, the school has had to pay a fine for non-returns this year. As we start the year, it's the ideal time to put a routine in place at home so that you know which books you have, and where they are kept, so they can come back safely. I'm hoping that it won't be necessary but we will have to consider how lost books are paid for, if we have the same situation this year.

Earrings

For safety reasons, children should only be wearing stud earrings in school. Thank you.

Birthday Clothes

Just in case you aren't aware, we love seeing the children in their own celebration clothes when it is their birthday. If their birthday is at the weekend or in the holidays, they can choose the nearest day that suits them. This is even more special when the children dress up for the occasion.

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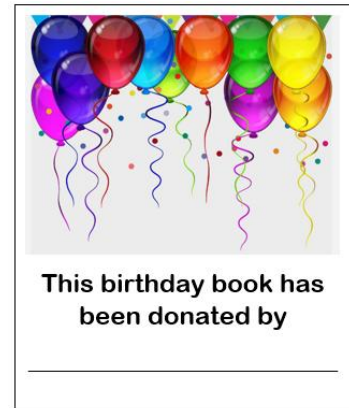
Birthday Books

In order to keep fostering a love of reading, we have a birthday book scheme in the school. When it is your child's birthday, you can use this to purchase a book for them to read. Then, when they have read it, and you are wondering what to do with the book they can bring it to the office. A special birthday slip will be stuck in the front and it will then be presented to the school librarians during celebration assembly. Anyone who then takes the book from the library will know who kindly donated it.

If you would like some ideas, the School Library Service (SLS) have created a list of new books that will enhance our library. These books have been added to a Wish List with LoveReading4Kids – this can be found on our website.

The school can earn money on all purchases made in order to buy further new books.

[My Wishlist](#) | [LoveReading4Kids](#)



Birds of Prey Talk

Last week, Year 5/6 had the honour of being visited by local nature photographer Steve Grundy. Steve Grundy is an expert in the characteristics and behaviour of the birds of prey he photographs. It was wonderful to hear him talk passionately about our class birds: Red Kites, Buzzards and Kestrels. He also gave us some fantastic wildlife photography tips. The children may like to use these tips to help them take photos of nature as part of the forthcoming Arts Fair which will be launched on the 6th October– more information to follow.



Making Bodies Stronger

Have your children come home talking about being lizards, bears, penguins and meercats in class? These positions are part of the Making Bodies Stronger element of our Kinetic Letters writing programme. Practising these positions builds physical strength to help with concentration and the ability to hold and use pens, pencils etc for extended periods of time without tiring.

These 'animal' positions are used throughout the school day e.g. sitting in the bear position for assembly, waiting in line like penguins and marking or writing as meerkats.

The children can also be encouraged to use these positions at home e.g. watching the television or using their tablet whilst in the lizard position, listening to a story in the lion position or reading their reading book in the bear position. You will find a poster for each position at the end of this newsletter.

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Wren Class have been practising their meercat and lizard positions in class as part of their work.



Year 5-6 have worked collaboratively to create some beautiful crosses in the woodland using natural art.



As a launch to their geography unit on Violent Earth, Year 5-6 explored volcanoes close up through VR headsets.

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The children loved sharing their holidays postcards, which helped develop our knowledge of place.



Hedgehogs Class have been learning the value of the tens and ones by creating two-digit numbers.



They also went on a Bear Hunt around the school grounds and got snowed on! This was part of the launch to their first English writing unit where they will create their own Bear Hunts.



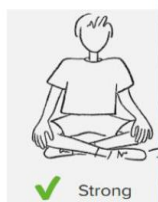
Squirrel Class have been learning how to control BeeBots as part of their computing lessons.

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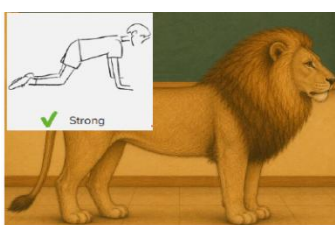
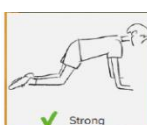


Otter Class have been exploring and discovering in their new classroom and outdoor provision. We're so impressed with how well they have settled into school life and their Year 6 buddies have been doing a fantastic job of playing with and supporting them at lunchtimes.



Be like a Bear

Sit Upright
Legs Crossed



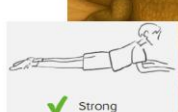
Stand Strong like a Lion

Back horizontal
Arms/ thighs vertical



Mark like a Meerkat

Kneel upright
Arms by side



Lay like a lizard

Legs straight and together
Forearms supported (elbows under shoulders)

Animal Positions that support children in making their bodies stronger.

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Starting school in September 2027?



Through our core Christian values of Trust, Respect and Determination, we provide all children with the space to flourish, find inspiration, know themselves and find their place in the world.

Choosing a school for your child is one of the most important decisions that you will make as a parent, and the only way to best understand which school is right for your family is to see for yourself. I welcome the opportunity to show you around our wonderful school, and our fabulous Otter Class, so you can understand just what makes Otterbourne a special school community to be part of.

Mr Geraghty

TOURS AVAILABLE NOW



September and October tour dates available.



Please visit our school website or phone the school to book a place.

www.otterbourneprimaryschool.com



01962 712020



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A DATE FOR THE DIARY FROM THE SCHOOL'S MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT TEAM

We would like to offer your parents our Emotion Regulation/ Managing Behaviour Workshop on Tuesday 3rd of November at 09:00AM. We anticipate this workshop will last for 90 minutes. It would be helpful if we could have a room with a screen/ projector as we will be using a presentation in the workshop.

Modelling good behaviour

Road Safety parent leaflet and supporting webinar

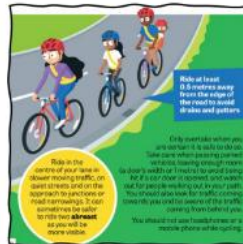


The Road Safety Team are launching support for parents - encouraging them to educate their children about road safety from a very early age. The leaflet and webinar will share what behaviours parents should model from an early age to ensure their children develop safe behaviours throughout their early years, and these behaviours continue into their teenage and adult years.

The idea of both the leaflet and webinar is to encourage parents to set a good example and model safe road safety behaviour at all times.

The webinar and leaflet will include the following messages and more:

- **Pedestrian safety**
 - Always find a safe place to cross
 - Use a crossing when there is one
- **Cycle safety**
 - Always wear a cycle helmet
 - Always dress bright and be seen on your bike
- **In car safety**
 - Always wear a seatbelt
 - Always concentrate - don't be a distracted driver and don't distract the driver



You are able to sign up to this webinar [here](#).

THE GREGG
Year 6
Activities Morning
Saturday 26th September
8.45am - 12.20pm

Year 6 children are warmly invited to a fun-filled morning of activities, where they can meet our teachers, make new friends, and explore The Gregg School grounds.

Choose from a range of activities when you book.

Book online
thegreggschool.org/open-events

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What Parents & Educators Need to Know about TOXIC GAMING

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Gaming should be a way for children to have safe fun with their friends. But anonymity and a lack of consequences can mean that corners of online multiplayer gaming are riddled with toxicity that makes them unpleasant at best, and damaging to children at worst.

A 2019 study found 74% of players had experienced harassment in online games, and such behaviour has become increasingly normalised.

GAMING WITHOUT THE FUN

Toxic gaming takes many forms. In live, multiplayer games, players can be targeted by strangers bullying them over voice and text, or deliberately sabotaging their game. It can also be present in spaces outside of the game such as Discord and Reddit, with players gatekeeping their community and making it deliberately unwelcoming to newcomers. In extreme circumstances, it can lead to physical threats, stalking and doxing.

WIDESPREAD TOXICITY

The Anti-Defamation League's 2019 study numbers are stark. At that point, 74% of players had experienced some form of abuse, with 65% receiving physical threats, stalking or sustained harassment. Nearly a third of players surveyed found themselves doxed while playing online, which means private or personal information was shared against their will in an attempt to intimidate or silence.

BIGOTED TRASH TALK

Such toxic tactics are especially prevalent against girls, LGBTQ+ players and players from minority ethnic backgrounds. In all, 53% of respondents reported being targeted based on their race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability. Another survey revealed that 88% of openly LGBTQ+ players have been harassed by their communities, while over half of women report using a non-gendered or male username while playing to avoid harassment.

EXTREMIST IDEOLOGIES

Extremist groups have been known to target gaming communities and streaming platforms as a way of spreading propaganda and recruiting young players to their cause. Even in 2019, the ADL's research found that 23% of players had been exposed to white supremacist ideology, with a further 8% exposed to positive views about Islamic State. Disinformation is also a problem, with 13% hearing conspiracy theories about 9/11 and 9% exposed to Holocaust denial.

A SAFE SPACE MADE UNSAFE

This toxic environment can lead to the same feelings of fear, isolation and depression that offline bullying can. Children exposed to toxic gaming can become withdrawn, anxious or irritable. They can struggle with sleep and find it difficult to focus on schoolwork and other pursuits, even after the game has been switched off and they're no longer playing.

COPYING HARMFUL BEHAVIOUR

At the other end of the spectrum, children can mimic the toxic behaviour and language they've seen online in offline settings. If bullying or bigoted chat is normalised as a legitimate part of online gaming, children may end up emulating it offline with classmates, seeing it as harmless banter. This could make other children's lives miserable or leave them feeling isolated at school.

Advice for Parents & Educators

PLAY WITH FRIENDS

While some games rely on playing with strangers to make up the numbers, there are plenty of titles that can be played on a private server with vetted, trusted friends, sidestepping the toxic elements of the wider gaming community. If a child encounters toxic behaviour in others while playing larger games, encourage them to block and report the players responsible.

USE THE GAME'S TOOLS

Many online games provide ways to limit interaction with strangers, either through the global settings on PlayStation or Xbox, or within the game itself. Look at the options, and make it so children can only communicate with their friends. If you can't see this level of control, you can consider disabling chat completely and, where age-appropriate, using a suitable separate service for communication with friends.

TALK TO CHILDREN

Most importantly, if children are gaming online or want to start, talk to them about the risks and how to deal with toxic behaviour. Explain the kinds of behaviour they may encounter, encourage them to report and block, and let them know they can talk to you about any concerns. Where appropriate, you may even want to play alongside them to get a feel for the community yourself.

FIND THE RIGHT COMMUNITY

If your child is at an age where social media is permitted, friendly communities exist. There are online groups for LGBTQ+ players, players from minority backgrounds and girls, where they can chat and find people to play with in more welcoming environments. Not everyone is who they claim to be online, so be sure to discuss the risks of online friendships, and maintain an open dialogue with children to ensure their ongoing safety.

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NON CONTACT KARATE
TAUGHT BY fully
QUALIFIED INSTRUCTORS



EVERYONE WELCOME
FROM 4 YEARS OLD



WE TEACH TRADITIONAL KARATE
ENCOURAGING CONFIDENCE, RESPECT,
DISCIPLINE, SELF AWARENESS AND AGILITY IN
A FUN & CONTROLLED ENVIRONMENT. All
classes are friendly, informative & cater to the
individual needs of the student.



Otterbourne Primary School
Tuesdays 7:50am-8:50am

£6.50 per class – pay as you go
Membership required after first class - £27.50 per year

MANY MORE CLASSES TO CHOOSE FROM, FIND THEM ALL AT: WWW.SOUTHERNKARATE.ORG

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO BOOK YOUR PLACE

EMAIL: info@southernkarate.org

Tel: 07764 478507



Child Protection
in Sport Unit



After School Art Club

Otterbourne Primary
School

Mondays: 3.30-4.30 pm

12 weeks

Book and pay on our website
www.flyingcolourededucation.co.uk

07387325331

hello@flyingcolourededucation.co.uk



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Open Events



Thornden Open Evening will take place on Thursday 8 October, from 4:00pm to 7:00pm. There is no need to book as this is a drop-in event.

Our Headteacher, Caroline Lowing, will be delivering presentations at 5:00pm and 6:30pm. Attendance is optional, but these presentations provide valuable information about the school and everything that Thornden has to offer.

Open Evening is our main admissions event and provides a fantastic opportunity to:

- Explore the entire school
- Take part in interactive activities with your child
- Meet and speak with our teachers
- Experience our school environment and community first-hand

For families who are unable to attend the Open Evening, we are also offering two Open Mornings on 15 and 16 October. These sessions run from 9:00am to 10:15am, and attendance is required for the full duration. As places are limited, booking is essential. To reserve a place, please email info@thornden.hants.sch.uk.

During the Open Morning, you will hear a short presentation from our Headteacher, Caroline Lowing, followed by a guided tour of the school. As lessons will be taking place, it will not be possible to visit classrooms. If you would like the opportunity to explore more of the school and speak directly with teachers, we recommend attending the Open Evening.

Consider an alternative choice for Year 7

Allington Lane,
Fair Oak, Hampshire

Small Class Sizes

Nurturing Environment

Excellent Academic Progress

Christ Centred Curriculum

"There is a culture of kindness throughout the school"

ISI

Independent Schools Inspectorate

ISI Inspection Report
March 2026



Open Evening

Weds 30th September | 4:30pm - 7:00pm



The King's School, Allington Lane, Fair Oak, Hampshire, SO50 7DB

023 8060 0986 | www.the kings school.org.uk

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October Timetable

All regular sessions delivered live online via zoom. 90 minutes long

£24 each or FREE with School Membership

Book online at facefamilyadvice.co.uk

Recordings available for 48 hours

Raising Self-Esteem	5 Oct 10am
Supporting Healthy Sleep	5 Oct 7pm
Decreasing Depression	6 Oct 10am
Introduction to OCD	6 Oct 7pm
Improving Family Communication	12 Oct 10am
What is ACT?	12 Oct 7pm
Understanding Addictive Behaviour	13 Oct 10am
Supporting a Child with ADHD	13 Oct 7pm
Understanding Anger	19 Oct 10am
Understanding the Teenage Brain	19 Oct 7pm
Supporting Healthy Screen Use	20 Oct 10am
Autism: Improving Communication	20 Oct 7pm
FREE - ADHD and Homework	22 Oct 7-8pm
Facing Defiance	26 Oct 10am
Cannabis & Ketamine Awareness	26 Oct 7pm
School Anxiety	27 Oct 10am
Anxiety Explained	27 Oct 7pm