



SHIRE OAK
C of E (VC) Primary School

Dear Parents and Carers

Happy New Year! I hope you all had a good break and didn't find the return to school this week too much of a shock to the system in the dreadful weather we've been having. Apologies to anyone who has had to wade through the lakes that formed around school. Even though our drains were cleared just before Christmas, they simply couldn't cope with the amount and speed of the rain that fell today and yesterday. It is a good idea for children to come to school in **wellies** or **waterproof shoes** at this time of year – and to keep a **spare pair of socks** in their PE bag for any accidental (or intentional) puddle splashing!

The **building work** we have started is going well and the **new library area** has already been completed. Responses



from the children have been overwhelmingly positive and we hope that the new larger, brighter space will really inspire them to enjoy reading, studying and researching independently. We have moved the staffroom into the old library space and have set up a kitchen in the room next to it, which used to be Mrs Whitehead's room. This will give the children a good space to cook in with Miss Corner. Mrs Whitehead has moved into the office that used to be Mrs Vollans' – but don't worry, the hatch has gone so conversations can be had privately. The room next to it is going to become a meeting room which will serve several purposes, including hosting School Council meetings. The new office, at the front of school, is now **wheelchair accessible** and is the point where all parents and visitors should enter school. The final phase of the work will see a porch added to the front entrance so there will still be a little disruption over the next few weeks, for which we apologise.

Class newsletters with details of this half term's topics as well as the leaflet with **homework** suggestions will be given out shortly. We are very pleased with the improving amount of homework that is being completed and we will be celebrating it again at a

forthcoming assembly once teachers have had enough time to read, watch, listen to and look at all the projects that are being handed in. The short tasks that are set are designed to be ones that help children to learn and practise the facts and skills they need. The other main benefit of homework is the link between school and home and the opportunity it gives to talk about learning. It also gives children the chance to work at something in a way that suits them and for a sustained period of time. So, please don't ever feel that homework should be completed in a certain way or be the same as a classmate's work to be valuable – it is the conversation that counts!

Robert Straw has sent out letters about **after school clubs and activities**, so please check your child has brought it home so they can send in the slip for any activities they are planning to join. Some of our clubs are run by volunteers, but there may be a fee if the club is run by an external provider or if there is a charge for materials. If the cost is a barrier to joining, please see Mr Straw to arrange to pay in instalments, or see Mrs Whitehead (Learning Mentor) if extra assistance would be needed: The governors have set up an **Opportunities Fund** and its purpose is to help children develop particular talents and skills or to provide opportunities that would help them to make better progress at school. Mrs Whitehead will be able to talk to you about whether the Opportunities Fund may be able to help with costs. The clubs and activities that we run at lunchtime are always free. If you, or someone you know, has a hobby or skill that could be shared with our children, then we would be very interested in hearing from you as we are always trying to make the range of things we offer as varied and engaging as possible.

Susan Koyuncu has asked me to let you know the cost of **school dinners** for those paying for the half term. For Reception through to Y4 it is £51:80 and for Years 5 and 6 it is £53:20. She has also mentioned that the Catering Agency have moved onto new menus, which can be seen on the noticeboard by the office.



Both KS1 and Lower KS2 are learning about the **environment** this term through their topics 'Going Green' (KS1) and 'Eco Warriors' (KS2). On Thursday 12th January KS1 will be a **Recycling Day** in Years 1 and 2 when the children will be doing lots of different activities on the theme of Re-use, Recycle and Repair. The teachers would really appreciate any scrap or found materials that you could donate that might be of use to their craft activities, e.g. fabric remnants, bottles and sweet wrappers (a good excuse to finish off the Christmas chocolates!) Children in Y1/2 have had a letter about what to wear and what to bring in that day so please ask if you haven't had it.



FOSOPS (Friends of Shire Oak Primary School) would love to see you at their meeting on Tuesday morning after the children have gone in to school. They will be planning their Shrove Tuesday Pancake Day event and any other ideas people have for the rest of the school year. Everyone welcome and small children can stay and play in the Kidzone room whilst the adults talk.

I'd like to just remind you that the only dogs that are allowed in the school grounds are **assistance dogs**, such as Guide Dogs. As well as the potential for dog mess, some of our children are rather scared of dogs – even well trained, obedient, tiny, cute ones!

Finally, this term we are having a **real focus on maths** and particularly in helping children to be confident about the way they use and talk about maths. The end of the term will see a Maths Across the Curriculum week which we are now starting to plan. My competition between the classes for children to be able to tell me their learning targets worked well last year, so this term we have moved on to see which class can most frequently tell me about the maths they have been learning and the progress they are making. You can help your child too by asking them what they have been learning and how they know they are improving and getting them to use sentences like "Today I learned how to ... and now I can ...". I look forward to seeing which class can race to the top of leader board.

Now I understand ... in maths because ...

The answer was ... and I knew it because...

Yours sincerely

Jane Astrid Devane

Jane Astrid Devane

Headteacher

devaneja01@leedslearning.net

We take the safeguarding of children very seriously at our school and we appreciate your help with this. If you have any concerns or observations regarding **health and safety**, please contact Jane Astrid Devane, Rachel Powell or Liz Craven. If you have any concerns or questions regarding **child protection** issues, please speak to Jane Astrid Devane or Hilary Whitehead.

The governors are always interested in hearing the views of parents. If you would like to speak to a governor, then please email the chair, Janie Percy-Smith janieps@aol.com (Janie is also in school most Monday afternoons if you would like to talk to her.)



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DIARY DATES

Friday 6 th January		10:30 – 11:30 Y4 football (and 23 rd)
Tuesday 10 th January		FOSOPS meeting in Kidzone, 9am (Younger children welcome to stay and play)
Wednesday 11 th January	*	Parents/Carers information evening for Y6 Robinwood Residential (meeting for current Y5 parents)
Thursday 12 th January	*	KS1 Recycling Day. Please wear old clothes & bring an old toy to swap/recycle. Children will be re-using scrap and found materials to make new things.
Friday 13 th January	*	Stay and Play in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2.
Friday 20 th January	*	Y2 Class assembly, 9am
Monday 23 rd January		Special Chinese New Year school lunch and Chinese New Year assembly, 9am
Friday 27 th January	*	Y5 Class assembly, 9am
Friday 3 rd February	*	Y1 Class assembly, 9am
Thursday 9 th February (t.b.c.)	*	Febru-hairy day in aid of Wheatfields Hospice
Friday 10 th February	*	Stay and Play in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2.
FEBRUARY HALF TERM (13 th to 17 th February)		
Mon 20 th – Friday 24 th February	*	Lineham Farm Residential for Year 4
Tuesday 21 st February	*	Shrove Tuesday Pancake Day event (FOSOPS)
Friday 24 th February	*	Reception Class assembly, 9am
Wed 29 th Feb & Thurs 1 st March	*	Parents and Carers Consultation Evenings
Thursday 1 st March	*	World Book Day – dress up as your favourite book or character
Friday 2 nd March	*	Y4 Class assembly, 9am
Friday 9 th March	*	Y3 Class assembly, 9am
Friday 16 th March	*	Stay and Play in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2.
Friday 23 rd March	*	Y6 Class assembly, 9am
Mon 26 th – Friday 30 th March	*	Maths Across the Curriculum Week with after school event on Wednesday
Friday 30 th March	*	Easter assembly, 9am
EASTER HOLIDAY (2 nd to 13 th April)		
14 th – 22 nd May		KS2 SATs
Saturday 16 th June		Headingley Music Festival Youth Day at Shire Oak (t.b.c.)
Friday 1 st June		TRAINING DAY
Monday 23 rd July		TRAINING DAY

New items are marked with *