

Curriculum information and homework expectations

Next week, each family will receive a booklet with details of the curriculum for the Spring Term. With this information, will be the expectations that the teachers have with regards to homework. The extra learning children do at home is a valuable supplement to a child's development. There will be deadlines set that children must meet. Please help your children to meet these, regularly.

Change to Inset day

It has become necessary for us to move the date of the Inset day, for this term, from Friday 11th March to Friday 28th January. The reason for this move is to allow time for the school staff to be trained on a new phonics and early reading scheme. Following the Ofsted Inspection in September, it has become crucial for the school to change the way we teach phonics and to find a new and approved scheme. We expect the new approaches will result in pupils making more rapid progress in their learning of phonics and, in turn, to becoming better readers, earlier. It will also give us more consistency to the teaching of phonics and early reading across the school. We apologise for any inconvenience that this change in date poses for you.

Cognitive learning

In our assemblies this term, Mr Cano will be exploring ideas of cognitive learning with our pupils and the difference between 'Growth' and 'Closed' mindsets. Cognitive learning is a type of learning that is active, constructive, and long-lasting. It also engages pupils in the learning processes, teaching them to use their brains more effectively to make connections while learning. This links closely to a highly informative staff Inset session at the end of last term that was led by Dr Gareth Bates, one of our school governors and a parent, on cognitive theory. During each assembly, we will add a new part to the learning Superhero we will be building! Why not speak with your children about learning and why it is important to adopt an 'I can do it' attitude?

Staffing news

At the start of this new term, we are delighted to welcome Mr. Brazier to our staff team. An experienced teacher, Mr. Brazier joins us as our new Year 3 class teacher. Sadly, we said goodbye to Mrs. Keohane last term and, also, Miss Pound who had been working as TA in Willow and Maple Classes. We wish them all the best in their future endeavours.

Year 6 pupil stars in Disney Classic

Congratulations to Ayana, from Oak Class, who made her debut performance recently in a Disney Classic! Ayana is starring as the brave, bold, sassy lioness cub, Nala, in the Disney theatre production of The Lion King. Mum and Dad, who have worked tirelessly, taking Ayana to countless rehearsals, watched the first performance and were overcome with emotion to see Ayana performing on the biggest of stages and in front of capacity audience. Well done to all of them for this special achievement. Who knows, it could be the start of even greater things to come!

Young Nala

Roadworks planned near school

Please be aware of some planned, surface preparation work, which will take place on Wilshire Crescent between Tuesday 25/1/22 and Thursday 27/1/22 between the times of 9.30 and 4.00 pm.

Taking holidays during term time

Another reminder to parents that you should not take your child on holiday in term time, as it is disruptive both to your child's education and to the school.

School closures – Winter 2021/22

As part of the school's planning for emergencies, parents are reminded that incidents that necessitate school closure include such things as extreme weather and loss of essential electrical, water or heating services. Details of school closures will be texted to parents via Schoolcomms. They will also be displayed on the front page of the school website and on Twitter. On days when the weather conditions are poor, but the school is open, parents are advised to walk to school, if possible, and, for those driving, it is advisable to park on Purwell Lane or Kingswood Avenue and walk the remainder. We hope you appreciate that the decision to close is never made lightly, as the safety and welfare of our children, school staff and parents/carers is of paramount importance, and no one would like to see this compromised.

STEM – Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths

As you will have seen on Twitter this week, we are encouraging the children across the school to be STEM Explorers as a cross curricular approach to science this half term. STEM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths. Through this unit the children will be presented with a series of challenges which they must work together on to design, produce, and then test within a time frame. Collaborative learning is an essential part of the unit to share and develop the skills they have within their teams.

For the unit to be successful, we need your help. Please can you collect these items from home over the next 3 weeks, so the children have a wide range of resources to use within the challenges?

Items needed are listed below. If there are other items you think would be practical to build with that are not listed below, please ask your child's class teacher.

Cardboard tubes - long and short.

Smaller cardboard boxes such as cereal boxes/shoe boxes/tissue boxes etc.

Larger cardboard boxes can be sent in, but they need to be cut down into smaller pieces first please to reduce the space they take up.

Bottle tops from milk cartons, water bottles, fruit shoot bottles etc.

Caps from de-icer tins, polish etc.

Small plastic trays / tubs / yoghurt pots from food items (please clean before sending in).

Bubble wrap, packaging noodles.

Netting from fruit.

Corks.

Toothpicks / Cotton buds - obviously unused!

Elastic bands.

Small plastic bottles, such as Fruit Shoot sized (uncrushed) but not large plastic bottles and no detergent containers please.

String/ ribbon / Wool.

Spare rolls of tape.

Foil / Cling film (not used).

Cotton Wool / Cotton Wool Balls.

Paper cups.

Straws.

Please bear in mind that if all children were to bring several bags of recyclable rubbish to school, we will be unable to store it in the classrooms, so we are just asking for a small contribution of items per household each week to replenish the stock as they use it. Class teachers will let the children know if they need to collect more or less of any item for an upcoming challenge.

Keep an eye out for more updates on Twitter, to see what challenges the children have been up to each week.

Thank you for your support.

Information for Parents

NEW Supporting Children with Additional Needs: Girls and Women. Funded by HCC, provided by NESSie and Angels Support Group Tuesday, 18 January from 7:30pm to 9pm Bookings: [Nessie Public Booking Platform \(procfu.com\)](https://procfu.com).

Families in Focus

Various training - see website ([Families in Focus - Looking forward together](#))

[Autism, ADHD & neurodevelopmental conditions/needs courses Spring 2022 / Parent Networks / Handling anger in child with Autism/ADHD]

HAPpy Hertfordshire Holiday Activity Programme

HAPpy Camps are free to children aged 5 to 16, in schools in Herts, in receipt of free school meals.

Family Lives Training

Getting on with your pre-teen or teenager (targeted at FFA, CIN, COP or Youth Justice Plan) 26 Jan to 9 Mar - see DSPL 1 website for details

Bringing up confident children for parents of children with ADHD/ASD (online group) 27 Jan to 10 Mar - see flyers (daytime/evening avail) - see DSPL 1 website for details

ADD-vance have many funded training workshops for parents and carers of children and young people with ADHD/ASC - [ADD-vance](#)

Supporting Links Spring Training open for booking [Workshops \(supportinglinks.co.uk\)](https://supportinglinks.co.uk), Includes: Talking Teens, Talking ADHD/ASC. More details: [All Training, Workshops & Events \(nhdspl.org.uk\)](https://nhdspl.org.uk)

Family Centre SEND Drop-In

First Thursday of each month

Dates for 2022

Dates for Spring Term 2022

Wednesday 5 th January	Pupils return to school
Friday 28th January	School Closed for Inset
14 th - 18 th February	Half-term
Friday 11th March	School Closed for Inset Day Moved to January 28th
Wednesday 30 th March	Parent Consultations
Thursday 31 st March	Parent Consultations
Friday 1 st April	Last day of term

Dates for Summer Term 2022

Tuesday 19 th April	School closed for Inset Day
Wednesday 20 th April	Pupils return to school
Monday 2 nd May	May Bank Holiday
30 th May-3 rd June	Half-term
Friday 1 st June	School closed for Inset Day
Friday 24 th June	Sports Day
Friday 22 nd July	Last day of term