



Overstone Combined School

Newsletter 1st April 2020

It has been a very strange few weeks which has meant that a lot of our communication has been through individual emails but I thought a bit of a return to normality through a newsletter would be helpful.

Staffing news:

You are likely to have met Mrs Carpenter who has joined us in the office since Mrs Edwardson left. She chose a very interesting time to start with us but has already started to get to know all of our children (from afar!).

We are sad to announce that Mrs Lewis has made the decision to leave the school. Due to the unusual times Mrs Lewis was not able to say a “proper” goodbye to all of the children but she is missing them greatly already.

Mrs Beer who has been such a wonderful teacher in Nursery has now moved on to a wonderful new role in Aylesbury. Mrs Bendall will be returning to her original teaching commitment each morning in nursery once we are back to normal.

It is also with great sadness that I tell you that I will be leaving the school at the end of this academic year. I will be moving on to a position as Headteacher at a local school. Mrs Eales and the school will be putting plans in place to replace me as the Deputy Headteacher for the next academic year.

Mrs Mercer

Message from the Governors

The Governors wish to take this opportunity to thank Mrs Mercer for the dedication and professionalism she has shown since her appointment. The situation into which Mrs Mercer arrived at Overstone was difficult; Mrs Mercer quickly gathered her team around her and, without hesitation, set about refocussing Overstone Combined School on the values we all cherish. The work is by no means complete and Mrs Eales will I'm sure build on the strong foundation created by Mrs Mercer. In due course we will appoint a successor as Deputy Headteacher.

We sincerely wish Mrs Mercer every success in her new Headteacher role, a role in which she is sure to excel, and look forward to continuing to work with her in partnership wherever possible in future.

In the unusual circumstance in which we find ourselves, the Governors also wish to place on record our deepest thanks to the dedicated staff at Overstone Combined School both for their work in transforming the school and in providing care for the children of key workers and those who are vulnerable.

The COVID19 response is unprecedented and, as with other public services, we are charting our way through the myriad situations that arise; clearly we will not always get everything right first time but be assured that we will always place the health, safety and welfare of our children, staff and families at the heart of our decision-making.

Please stay safe everyone.

Mark Watson, Chair of Governors

Whole School Projects

As a school we would like to introduce whole school projects to help us to feel as one even while we are all separate. These will be an opportunity for the school to work together where possible and in a small way help the community. If you have any ideas for these projects then please let us know.

The first project will be:

Wing Signs

During this week try to make a sign to say thank you to the people that help us. These could be put up in windows, on fences or on signposts outside to recognise how much people are doing for us. If families then decide to take daily exercise around the village we can look out for each other's signs.

Try to get these up by Friday if you can, and send a photo in to the school. We hope to spread these messages across the whole village- and if we get enough we will share it wider and might even make it to the local media!

Free School Meals

The government has recently made announcements about opportunities for providing for Free School Meals. Until this point we have been providing food from our school provider AIP, but we are now able to move towards providing vouchers. These will be available to those people who are entitled to Free School Meals, but not those who receive Universal School Meals (Children in Reception, Year One and Year Two). We will be contacting those individuals directly to arrange this.

If you are finding it difficult to feed your children due to a change of circumstances then please let us know by emailing admin@overstone-wing.org. We do not want to see anybody struggling during this time, so will see how we are able to support you.

Communication

You may have received emails from your teachers (from nursery to year 6) with login details for seesaw. This is a new platform we are trialling this week and over Easter to provide home learning activities for children. This platform provides more interactivity, allowing you to easily send tasks to teachers so that they can see what the children have been doing while allowing more interactive tasks to be set, for example your response could be via a photo or video.

At the end of the week I will send out an email to gain feedback about how home learning is working so far and would appreciate if you could reply to this as quickly as possible so that we can make decisions about the best longer term route for as long as this may be.

Reminders

- Please continue to use see saw or e-schools for looking at work set by your children's class teachers
- If you have any queries please email or ring the office during school hours (admin@overstone-wing.org)
- If you are in need of childcare due to being a key worker please let us know as early as possible so that we can plan our staffing



We have had an overwhelming number of photos sent in of all of your wonderful home learning so have not been able to include them all! Just look at what you have been doing!

Remember while academic work is important it is vital that children are happy and healthy and if you can't get everything done then do not panic. We just want you to have enough to support you.



Wellbeing

Wellbeing during this time is incredibly important both for adults and children.

The government has released guidance to support you during this time and within this there are a number of helpful links if you feel you need help. We also urge you to contact us if you feel your child needs any support with regards to their mental wellbeing and we will do everything that we can to support.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>



E-Safety

As parents spend time working while also home educating it is likely that many of our children will be spending time on the internet for their work. With this in mind we would like to provide you with some websites which will provide you with information about e-safety:

[Parent zone](#)

Share aware – [how to keep children safe](#)

Childnet international – <http://www.childnet.com/resources/know-it-all-secondary-toolkits/lower-secondary-toolkit/cyberbullying>

Think u know https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/8_10/cybercafe/

SWIGGLE- a search engine alternative to google

Youtube for kids – <https://kids.youtube.com> is recommended for children instead of regular Youtube app.

UK safer internet centre <http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/>

Internet Matters <https://www.internetmatters.org>

The children have all been taught clear strict rules about not talking to people that they do not know online and always telling an adult if there is anything they are worried about. Talking to the children about this during this time might be helpful.