



Normanhurst School

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HEADMISTRESS

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6 July 2021

Dear Parents

Re: July 2021 Headmistress's Letter

This year has definitely provided us all with challenges, whether be they academic, pastoral or personal. It has been a reminder to us all to make every day count. Our pupils, their resilience, positivity and gratitude make the final stages of this busy term all the more worth it. As we reach the final stages of this term, we are once again at the mercy of the British weather. Nevertheless, the pupils have much enjoyed the build up to performances, workshops and we are all very much looking forward seeing parents at this year's sports day.

ISA Success

A number of pupils entered the ISA Shakespeare Competition earlier on this year. Nicolas in Year 6 recorded a 'Shakespearean rap' and achieved Highly Commended in the Key Stage 2 category. Congratulations to Nicolas for being recognised in this national competition in which there were over 600 entries from ISA schools.

Bikeability

Congratulations to our pupils in Years 5 and 6 who have completed their Bikeability Road Safety Training. It is reassuring to know that they have increased their road safety knowledge, riding confidence and know how to keep themselves safe on the roads. This also helps us move closer towards achieving the gold TFL accreditation.

Pupil Voice

Empowering our pupils to use their voices is something we actively encourage. Pupils are proactive in making suggestions directly to teachers, via the suggestion boxes or in School Council meetings. The pupils have already been successful in suggesting dishes to improve the school menu, suggesting the inclusion of plain navy leggings to be worn with the PE skort as an option and asking us to create spaces for them to grow their own plants on site, for which the Year 6 Prefects are currently responsible.

Earrings

This year, the senior pupils have asked the school to re-consider the rule regarding wearing earrings to school. The pupils have presented themselves very well and communicated effectively their request for change. As a result, there has been a review of the earring policy across the Oak-Tree Group.

We have decided that Pupils in Year 5 upwards may wear one plain gold or silver stud in each ear lobe from September 2021. The pupils must be able to manage taking their earrings in and out independently and be able to take full responsibility for them. Pupils will be wholly responsible for any earrings brought into school.

No other year groups will be allowed to wear earrings in school, in line with guidance provided by the Borough's Health & Safety Team. There used to be a practice of taping over earring during activities, but this was withdrawn recently. Tape should no longer be used to cover earrings.

May I therefore encourage any families who are considering ear piercing to use the long summer holiday so that ears are pierced early enough to allow the earrings to be removed by the time we return to school in September and to give time for the children to become used to taking their earrings in and out.

Earrings should not be worn to school on PE days.

PE Kits

The current arrangement of wearing PE kit for the whole day when there is a timetabled PE or Games lesson has been very successful. We are, therefore, planning to continue with it in the Autumn Term reviewing again before Christmas. Pupils, parents and staff have found the current arrangement of removing the need to change into PE kit has given more curriculum time to the PE lessons and reduced the amount of lost property and mislaid kit. May I remind senior pupils to bring deodorant wipes or sticks (not aerosols) into school on PE days to support personal hygiene.

The Playground

The junior pupils have been working together with the Heads of Houses to redesign the line designs in the playground. They explained their ideas clearly to the designers who have now presented their plans. I am delighted to say that the NSPA have been equally impressed and have agreed to fund the playground lines project. This work will take place in the summer holidays and I look forward to sending out photos of the finished product.

I continue to be amazed at how convincing our pupils can be when making suggestions for school improvement, conducting research to support their proposals and strategically formulating their arguments. Well done to all the pupils involved, clearly leaders of the future. Once again we are incredibly grateful to the NSPA for their ongoing support and commitment to school projects and ideas.

Pencil Cases in the Juniors

Pupils may bring their own small, plain pencil case into school from Year 3 upwards. The pencil case should fit easily into their school bag and be without any embellishments. Once a pupil has received their pen licence, we ask parents to buy Frixion blue erasable pens for their children to use in school. These pens are inexpensive and widely available online and in store.

Pupils might also like to have pencils, colouring pencils, a small ruler, eraser or highlighter. Pupils should not bring mathematical equipment including pairs of compasses into school and pointed scissors.

Information for Parents

Parents will be receiving the updated Parents' Handbook towards the end of the summer holiday, ready for the start of term in September. Parents will also receive a copy of their children's timetable for the new year.

Wellbeing and Learning Ideas for the Summer Holidays

Everyone has worked very hard this year in school and deserves to have time away from screens and school work over the summer. However, if families are looking for some optional activities to support their children's wellbeing or to provide some consolidation and enrichment over the summer break, the Government has provided some useful resources for families to access.

- For children in Kindergarten or Reception: <https://hungrylittleminds.campaign.gov.uk/#3>
- For children in Year 1 – Year 6: <https://www.thenational.academy/enrichment>
- For older children: <https://classroom.thenational.academy/summer-learning-support>

GCSE Results Day Thursday 12 August

This year our Year 11 have worked really hard to perform in assessments for their GCSEs. We had a wonderful leavers' assembly and look forward to seeing Year 11 again for their Prom celebration.

Pupils have demonstrated their commitment towards their GCSEs and future steps and we are proud of them. I would like to thank the teachers for their ongoing support, commitment and feedback in helping the Year 11 remain focused and driven. This thank you is shared with parents of Year 11, who have supported their children on this journey: your assistance has been invaluable.

We wish all the Year 11 pupils the best of luck for results day on 12 August. Parents will be welcome to attend with their children.

New Year 7 Induction Day and Early Years 'Stay and Play' Friday 3 September

We look forward to seeing the Year 7 pupils for their Induction Day on Friday 3 September. The day will begin at 8.30am and finish at 2pm. Pupils should come to school in their full school uniform and bring their schools bags and pencil cases with them. Please ensure all items, including PE kit, are named before the start of term.

Pupils joining the Kindergarten or Reception classes also have an induction on Friday 3 September. They have a 'Stay and Play' session with their teachers from 10.00-11.00am.

Arrival time in September

Next year we have decided to keep the flexible arrival time, which has worked so well for us this year. This means pupils will be able to arrive from 8.25am, but should be in class by 8.40am at the latest for registration. We will also continue the staggered end to the day and lining up at dismissal. Further details of this and any other updates will be included in my letter to parents at the start of September before the first day of term.

Second Hand Uniform

Unfortunately, we are unable to have the second hand uniform sale this term. However, we wanted to remind parents that the NSPA have lots of good quality second hand uniform available. If you are looking for items with the school logo on, please contact the school office and they will be able to make contact with the NSPA to help you. The NSPA are keen to support the school parents and provide sustainable uniform as part of their group aims.

NSPA

The NSPA have continued to be unbelievable this year, even when they have not been able to host and run their programme of events. The NSPA have made the following contributions this year:

- New video camera and stand
- Table tennis table
- Giant Connect Four
- Revision workshops for Years 9 to 11
- A Shakespeare workshop by The Young Shakespeare Company
- Grow your own project
- Contributions to the Yearbooks for years 6 and 11
- Funding the playground lines project

Had we been able to hold our annual Speech Day, I would have been able to thank and acknowledge publically the considerable support given to the Parents' Association by two members of the team who leave us this year. Martin Bisiker, has been Co-Chair and committee member for many years. Sue McDonald has stepped down as treasurer after 12 years of service. We are extremely grateful for everything they have done during their time in the NSPA to support the school and our pupils. They have spearheaded fundraising events and supported the school in so many ways, from the iPad project, legendary family quiz nights to the annual school barbecues. We would like to say an enormous thank you to them both.

Last day of term

We plan to award certificates for house points and announce the house winner on the last day of term. Pupils should wear their school uniform on the final day of term, Friday 9 July.

Can you please note the dismissal times for the last day of term after the final house rewards assemblies:

- EYFS, Years 1, 2 & 3 at 11.30am
- Years 4, 5 & 6 at 11.40am
- Years 7, 8, 9 & 10 at 11.50am

Online Safety

As the holidays approach, we are reminding pupils across the school about online safety. It is also important to remind parents to check firewalls, and permissions on mobile devices to ensure pupils are able to stay safe. The Safer Internet Centre has some helpful tips for parents. The link is: [Parents and Carers | Safer Internet Centre](#). There are also many up-to-date resources on our website.

Key Dates for First Half of the Autumn Term

Fri 3 Sep	09:00 – 15:30	New Y7 Induction Day
	10:00 – 11:00	Kindergarten 'Stay and Play' session
Mon 6 Sep		First Day of Term for Pupils
Thu 9 Sep	08:30 – 16:30	Y10&11 Art/Graphics trip to Margate (Turner Exhibition)
Thu 9 Sep	17:00 – 18:00	16+ Y11 Transition Evening
Thu 9 – Fri 10 Sep		Y3 Overnight Camp at Oakands
Mon 13 – Fri 17 Sep		Junior Baseline Tests
	17:00 – 18:00	Y1-6 Maths Information Parent Meeting
Tue 14 Sep	15:30 – 16:30	EYFS 'Getting to Know You'/Read Write Inc Parent Meeting
Tue 21 Sep	08:30 – 09:00	Y1-6 'Drop In' morning for Parents
Thu 23 Sep		Individual Photographs
Tue 28 Sep	17:00 – 18:00	Y7 MidYIS tests / Informal Parents' Evening
Thu 7 Oct	18:00 - 20:00	Open Evening
Fri 8 Oct	09:15 – 10:45	Early Years Open Morning
Tue 12 Oct	16:00 - 18:30	EYFS/Junior Parents' Evening + specialist staff
Wed 13 Oct	16:00 – 18:30	EYFS/Junior Parents' Evening
Thu 14 Oct	16:00 – 18:30	Junior Parents' Evening
	18:00 – 19:30	Past Y11 GCSE Presentation Evening tbc
Mon 18 – Fri 29 Oct		HALF TERM

Final thoughts

This has been an unbelievable year and we have all embraced change to move forward in a positive way.

As the school year draws to a close, I look back and realise that this year has gone so quickly and I am extremely grateful and honoured to be leading such committed staff, engaged pupils and have the invaluable support of Normanhurst families. I am reminded that this is my first year as part of the Normanhurst community and although Covid has kept us all on our toes, I have loved being part of such a welcoming community. The warmth shown to myself and others new to the school, has been extraordinary and something to be acknowledged.

To all the children and families and staff who are leaving Normanhurst this term, I would like to thank you for your support and I wish you good health and the best of luck for the future.

I hope you have a restful Summer break whether you are able to get away or having a staycation. I look forward to seeing you again in September.

With kind regards

Yours sincerely



Jacqueline Job
Headmistress



OAK-TREE SCHOOLS is the group name of:

BRAESIDE SCHOOL, BUCKHURST HILL • COOPERSALE HALL SCHOOL, EPPING • NORMANHURST SCHOOL, NORTH CHINGFORD • OAKLANDS SCHOOL, LOUGHTON

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