



Dear Parents,

25th October 2024

What an incredibly long half term it has been! The summer holidays seem like a very distant memory as we begin to look towards Christmas.

Many interesting and enjoyable events have taken place over the past 8 weeks involving both pupils and yourselves.

One significant event that took place was a school review completed by the Oak Trees MAT central team. This two-day review confirmed the fantastic teaching and learning that is taking place at our school. In relation to this, pupils are now enjoying one day per week of non-core lessons. This is not only helping us to maintain a broad and balanced curriculum in school but also ensures that subjects are being taught by expert teachers in these subjects. Some parents have asked which teachers teach which subjects; therefore, I have listed them below.

	Year 1-3 (Friday)	Year 4-6 (Friday)
Miss Mallon	Oracy	Spanish
Mr Johnson	PE	PE
Mrs O'Kane	RE	RE
Miss Haworth	PSHE	PSHE
Mrs Crosthwaite	Music	Music
Miss McKay	Computing	Computing

During the review, we were able to demonstrate the wonderful opportunities that our children experience through our personal development and extra-curriculum events. Pupils were keen to learn about how Young Minds support mental health during our Hello Yellow Day and it has been great to see the fantastic uptake in our clubs this term, which also contribute to the positive mental and physical health of the children. Pupils have also enjoyed a Bike It Breakfast this term and all pupils in Key Stage 2 developed their swimming abilities in our swimming pool. A wide variety of children have also participated in events such as cross-country races, football tournaments at Activity For All and Liverpool Academy, a netball match at school and a rugby and netball festival at Birkenhead Academy.

Two weeks ago, I took the decision to remove football from the key stage two playground. This was influenced by the number of injuries and the high level of competition being displayed. We have bought a range of social games for the children to play with and early pupil feedback has been extremely positive about these changes. Some children may be disappointed with my decision (I know I would have been if I were them) but we are already seeing an improvement in pupil safety and behaviour at lunchtime.

It has also been lovely to see you in school this half term during events, including our phonics workshops, Macmillan Coffee Morning, SEND coffee afternoon, the parent forum and, this week, at our parents' evening. As always, I have been blown away by your generosity. We were able to give an impressive 202kg of food to Wirral Foodbank and £113 to Macmillan Cancer charity. I am also extremely grateful for the donations of toys that you have provided. These will be used in our foundation areas and also for a 'Baby Club' that we aim to begin next term. We continue to welcome donations of toys as we are also able to offer our other MAT schools donations so please consider passing any unwanted toys to school before throwing anything away.

I am sad to say that Mrs Bridge will be leaving us today as she begins her retirement. She has been a wonderful help to our school and is a brilliant teaching assistant. I had the pleasure of working with her for several years in my classroom, when I was teaching; we enjoyed many interesting conversations together as she cleaned up wearing her yellow marigolds. We wish her lots of happiness in her retirement. Mrs Gould is also leaving today on maternity leave. She has been a trooper this half term and she deserves to relax for a short period before the impending birth of her child. We wish her luck and we are very excited to meet her baby.

Because of the departures, we are welcoming several new staff into school. Miss Brown will replace Mrs Gould as class teacher in F1. Miss McCourt will also join our team in December as she will cover Mrs. Edward's maternity in F2. We also welcome Miss Tierney and Miss Fox, who are joining as teaching assistants. Mrs Hughes, our Office Manager, has also made the decision to enjoy retirement from Christmas and therefore we are currently advertising for a part-time admin assistant in our school office.

As our children enjoy a well-deserved break, school continues to stay open for our holiday club. The week will be staffed by members of the senior leadership team alongside our junior staff. Many of the activities will be Halloween and bonfire themed. We have taken the decision not to open holiday club over the Christmas period due to the way that Christmas and New Year fall in the middle of the two weeks. We will continue with the club in February, when a new club manager will begin the role.

Even though the weather will get darker and colder next half term, we won't let this dampen our school schedule. Next half term will see more great events take place. The PTA are holding a school disco and film nights in November and the children will complete their Christmas performances in December. We will also be visiting the Floral Pavillion for the pantomime while EYFS enjoy a Christmas treat here at school. Towards the end of the term, the PTA will also be holding the Elfridges Christmas market. Please see our parent annual schedule for event dates.

During Autumn 1, each year group selected a charity that they wish to support this year, alongside supporting national charities such Children in Need and Comic Relief. This half term will see Year 5 support their charity, St John's Hospice, by completing a Rudolph Run in December.

As mentioned earlier, we also intend to begin a baby stay and play morning at school so that families with younger children can come and enjoy some social time in the school hall. More information will follow after the break and this will be promoted on our social media platforms – Twitter, Facebook and Instagram – which we intend to use more frequently next half term.

Towards the end of the summer, we had a significant technology upgrade, which I am pleased to say is now complete. As part of this, pupils will now use Google Classroom (rather than Seesaw) to access homework such as spelling lists. Log ins along with instructions will be sent to you after half term.

Finally, I am pleased to announce that, for the majority of year groups, PE days will remain the same (I can hear you cheering now). The only change is to Year 4, who will have PE on Tuesday (rather than Thursday) and Friday. This change is due to having a specialist gymnastics company attending school to teach the gymnastics unit. All other year groups will remain the same.

As always, thank you for your continued support and for taking the time to read this rather lengthy letter!

Yours sincerely,

Mr Milne
Headteacher