

ASSOCIATE HEADTEACHER'S BULLETIN

September 2023 Edition

Dear Parents/Carers,

It gives me great pleasure in welcoming everyone back to this new academic year. Term 1 has started with a lot of enthusiasm and excitement as we begin our next chapter fully introducing our new curriculum across all four year groups.

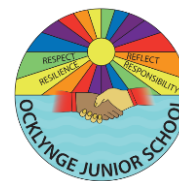
September is always an exciting month in school. An opportunity to start in a new year group, meet a new teacher, and - for Ocklynge specifically - welcome our new year 3 learners.

Over the summer, we had an extensive redecoration programme coupled with replacement lighting, new internet wiring and relocation of classrooms. Our year 3 children have settled beautifully into the new year 3 space which has a large landing of books and easy access to the theatre and playgrounds. It is always a pleasure to be in the classrooms watching the learning and speaking with children. Our year 3 learners have shown just how polite and respectful they can be; it is a perfect fit for Ocklynge Junior School.

The start of the school year is also a perfect time to revisit our Ocklynge School Values: **Respect, Responsibility, Resilience and Reflection**. Children learn about or revisit the values during a weekly values assembly delivered by a member of our Senior Leadership Team.

Our recent assemblies have concentrated on the value of 'Responsibility' and what that looks and feels like in our classrooms and around school. The value is then discussed further in class and used as a focus during the following week, with one child being identified as 'Star of the Week' for personifying the value. A certificate is shared with home by way of recognising this achievement, and also with the whole school as it is displayed in our theatre for all the children to see and celebrate.

Another key event in the Ocklynge calendar at the start of the year is classes voting for their **Ocklynge Member of Parliament**. This is how the learners at Ocklynge are able to have their voices heard, opinions listened to and raise concerns or worries. Members of Parliament meet weekly with our Deputy Headteacher, Mrs Bode, to discuss topics that they feel need raising. Our Year 6 MPs will be campaigning for the school to vote for them to be the Ocklynge 'Prime Minister', a prestigious position to lead all MPs and communicate directly with school leaders to raise concerns and make changes our learners feel passionate about. I look forward to the Ocklynge Polling Station opening for voting. Watch out on our social media platforms for the announcement of the new Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister!



Autumn is also a time for celebrating the **Harvest Festival** and, although we did this differently than in the past, our Harvest Assembly was definitely an opportunity to be thankful for. Last year, our #TeamOcklynge Members of Parliament chose their charity of choice for their Harvest Festival collection, being local charity '**Warming Up the Homeless**'.

Our learners and their families showed their huge generosity in bringing an item of food or toiletries to donate to those who find themselves in a difficult and less fortunate position to ourselves. We were overwhelmed by the amount of donations we were able to make, and this was further echoed by the response from the volunteers from the charity when they arrived to collect all the items. The volunteers had to work hard to find enough room in their van and commented at how helpful this donation was – *"It will make such a difference, I can't believe it!"*. Thank you to everyone who supported this great cause.

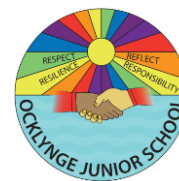
We were lucky enough to be visited by Rev David from St Elisabeth's, Eastbourne, who spoke at our whole school Harvest Festival assembly, explaining to the children all about the importance of Harvest, its meaning and why we take the opportunity to celebrate and collect for Harvest at this time of year. The children were **Respectful** (*one of our Ocklynge Values!*) throughout and enjoyed their joyful assembly, where we were treated to Harvest songs sung by our fantastic Ocklynge Choir. Thank you to Miss Jones for conducting a wonderful ensemble!

During the last academic year, school leaders worked hard to create and develop a new **curriculum** that meets the needs of our learners. Although aspects of the curriculum were introduced last year, as of September we have launched our new enquiry-based subjects across the school. It has been an absolute pleasure to see children involved in their learning and excited to talk to us about either the '**Big Question**' or the '**Enquiry Question**'. Our #TeamYear6 learners took great delight in telling me all about the circulatory system and how they had watched a heart dissection, taking the opportunity to visit the science labs at our trust secondary school, #TeamRatton, when they were learning *"How does my heart help my body function?"*.

Following our recent correspondence, we are looking forward to sharing more of our curriculum with you all during our upcoming **Open Events** that are planned for mid-November. **Details attached to this bulletin for reference.**

Our year teams are looking forward to welcoming you into the classrooms to share this term's learning. It is a wonderful opportunity for you all to see the classrooms and understand more about what your child has been learning and how you can talk about this at home. More details on this to follow via EduLink in due course. WATCH THIS SPACE.

It hasn't all been learning and classroom-based achievements this term. Our school football teams have had a tremendous start to the season, seeing wins from both the girls' and boys' teams. Last week they played at home to Heron Park Primary Academy, with the girls winning 8-1 and the boys winning 9-0. Well done to our competing teams, great work!



Long may this success continue. Our teams are hugely popular, with trials having taken place within the first 2 weeks of the term. I can't wait to further update you with the progress they are making. Do follow our social platforms for more sporting and learner achievements across the school.

Within our community we are very excited that Tesco has agreed to support us with the 'blue token' charity contribution running at all local Tesco stores until the end of the month. If we were to be voted most worthy cause, a huge donation of £1,500 would be made to our **'Nurture Garden' project**. Needless to say, this money would make such a difference and we hope that you can all support and get behind this wonderful cause. So, next time you tackle the 'big shop' please visit Tesco's and pop your blue token in the #TeamOcklynge box! Thank you.

Enjoy the rest of the term. As ever, please do not hesitate to come and speak to me on the gates (morning or afternoon). I will be pleased to speak to you in Mr Reilly's absence – we wish him a speedy recovery and hope to see him back at school soon.

Mrs Helen Emmett
Associate Headteacher