

Week 1 Newsletter 1st Sept 2023





Welcome!

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome back to another exciting school year! We hope you had a restful summer break and are ready for all the wonderful experiences that lie ahead. For those who are new to our school community, a warm and heartfelt welcome to you. We are thrilled to have you join us and hope that you will enjoy being a part of our close-knit family.

As we embark on this new academic year, we are eager to share with you all the incredible things happening within our school. From engaging lessons to captivating extracurricular activities, there is never a dull moment at our school. We are committed to providing a well-rounded education that nurtures the unique talents and interests of each and every student.

In addition to our fantastic students, we are also delighted to welcome some new faces to our staff. Please join me in extending a warm welcome to our new teachers and support staff who have joined our school community. They bring with them a wealth of knowledge and expertise, and we are certain that they will make a positive impact on our children's learning journey.

Throughout the year, we will keep you informed about various events, initiatives, and achievements through our weekly newsletters. It is our goal to ensure that you are well-informed about all the exciting happenings in our school community. Whether it's a class assembly, a sports tournament, or a nativity play, we want you to be a part of these special moments.

We also encourage you to actively engage with us and share your thoughts, ideas, and suggestions. Your input is invaluable in helping us create the best possible learning environment for our students.

We believe that education is a partnership between home and school, and together, we can provide our children with the best opportunities for growth and success.

Once again, welcome back to all our returning families, and a heartfelt welcome to our new families. We are truly grateful to have you as part of our school community. Let's make this year a memorable one filled with joy, growth, and endless possibilities.

Warmest regards,

Janine Stillwell

Vision and Values





Collective Worship Our focus for collective worship this week has been ... one of our very important school values ... RESPECT.

Collective worship is a very important part of our daily life as a school. We have a pattern for the week that looks something like this -

Monday - Whole school collective worship where the theme or focus is introduced to the children by either Mrs Stillwell or Mrs Ferey.

Tuesday - Classroom collective worship takes place at a convenient point during the day and is a time for discussion and reflection on a story, school value, topic or theme.

Wednesday - We are very grateful to our team of wonderful visiting speakers who share a story or challenge or thought for the day with us. Speakers come from one of our partner churches (Emmanuel Church or All Saints' Church) and sometimes Mr Munro from the SOAR project comes to speak with us. We always learn something new in these times together.

Thursday - Whole school collective worship again led by either Mrs Stillwell or Mrs Ferey. Sometimes in these times we think about an aspect of school life such as our OPAL playground project, or we think about a British Value like democracy, or we share a story that helps us to think about inclusion and diversity.

Friday - Whole school celebration assembly is the best way to end our week together. We celebrate children through our 'Golden Book' nominations, our 'Above and Beyond' certificates as well as other certificates and awards from time to time. Children who have had a birthday are celebrated too, and we pause to reflect on the successes and learning experiences during the week.

Birthdays

For new parents, please note that on the day of your child's birthday (or the nearest day of choice if at the weekend) your child can come to school in their own special clothes and not in their school uniform. This means that they are celebrated by everyone throughout the day!

Class Led Celebrations

At points through the year, each class has an opportunity to invite parents and guardians to a Friday Celebration Assembly, to share their learning, or present to parents about a trip or visit they have had. We will send out invitations to parents and guardians through Class Dojo so keep your eyes peeled!

OPAL PLAY PARENT AFTERNOON - FRIDAY 29TH SEPTEMBER



I am delighted to inform you that we are now in the second year of our OPAL (Outdoor Play and Learning) Project, which is helping us to transform lunchtimes for all our pupils.

The OPAL Outdoor Play and Learning Programme has been developed over the course of 17 years and has been successfully implemented in over 500 schools. It is not only used across the UK, but also in Canada, France, New Zealand, and other countries. In fact, work has already begun to adapt the programme for schools in Slovakia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Austria. In 2018, OPAL won first prize in an EU funded award for the best active school's programme in Europe, as well as two UK national playwork awards.

OPAL is based on the idea that children learn not only through good teaching, but also through play. With 20% of their time in school being playtime, which is equivalent to 1.4 years of primary school, we want to ensure that this time is as beneficial as possible for your children.

One of the reasons we have implemented this programme is because childhood has changed, and many children no longer have their play needs met outside of school. Shockingly, the average screen time per day for children is 5 hours, while the average outdoor play time per week is also 5 hours. Furthermore, 56% of UK children only play outdoors with other children at school.

There are numerous proven benefits for schools that have implemented the OPAL Programme. These benefits usually include increased enjoyment of school, less teaching time lost to disputes between children, fewer accidents, and greatly improved behavior.

It is important to emphasize that play is not just "messaging about." It is a crucial process that enables children to learn things that cannot be taught, all while having fun. In order for children to be able to play, they need certain things, such as clothes that they can play in, things to play with, and a certain amount of freedom.

As we continue to improve play opportunities for your children, we may ask for your support in terms of resources and making changes to how the children use the school grounds. They may have access to more areas of the grounds throughout the year and may also get a bit messier, face more challenges, and have greater freedoms to play where, with whom, and how they like. These

experiences are essential for their physical and mental well-being, and are in line with all current good practice advice on health, safety, well-being, and development.

If you would like to learn more about the OPAL Primary Programme, I encourage you to visit the OPAL website. Additionally, we will be hosting an event for parents on the afternoon of **Friday, 29th September**. This will be a great opportunity for you to come along and join us in finding out more about OPAL and how it is transforming our lunchtimes!

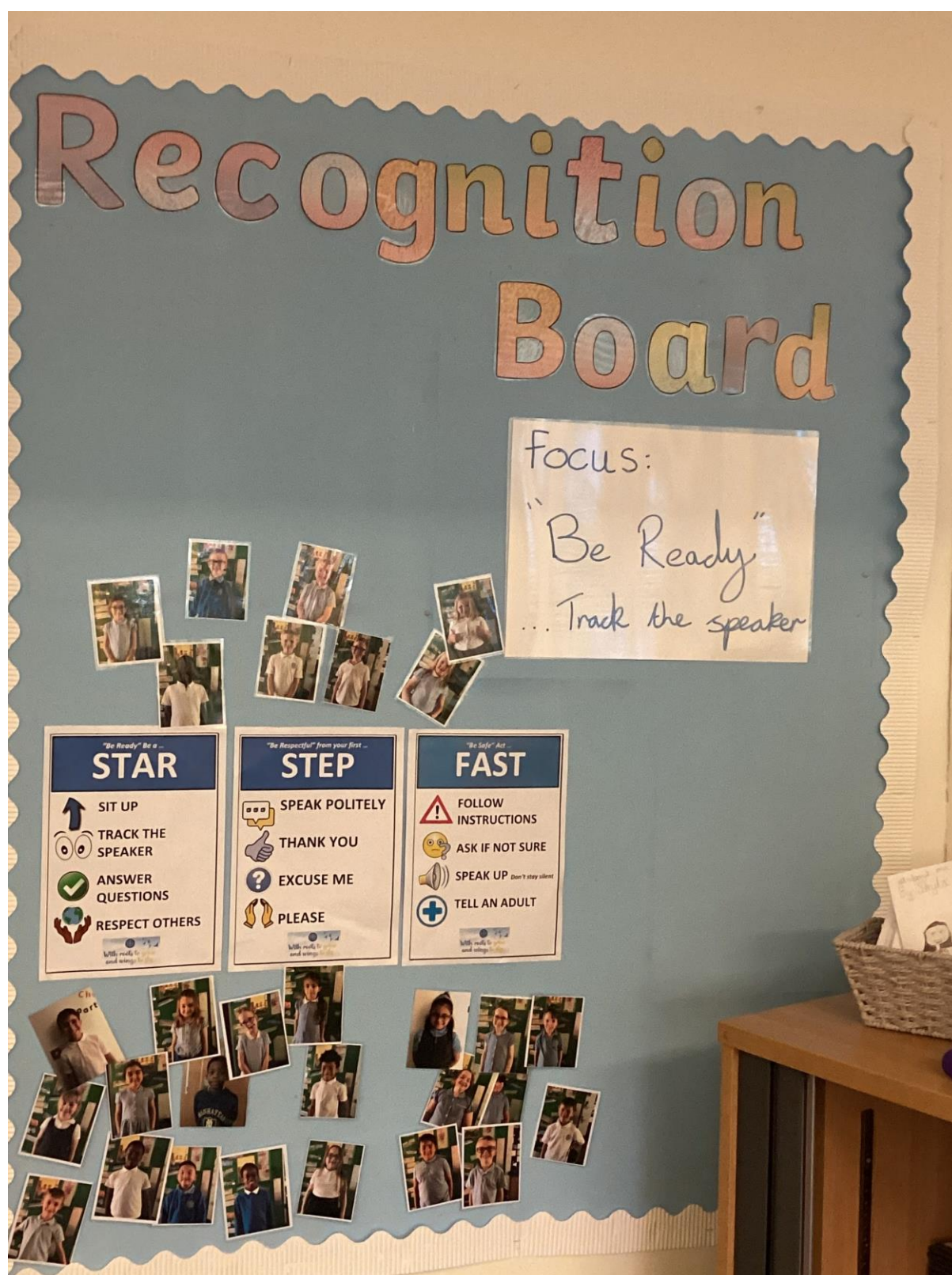
Lastly, if you have any old suitcases, storage trunks, or pull-along shopping trolleys that you would like to donate to help us with storage, they would be greatly appreciated. Please keep an eye out for other items that we may need your help in collecting.

Thank you for your continued support, and we look forward to seeing you at the upcoming event.

Wellie Boots

Please can you send a pair of wellie boots into school for your child, so that whatever the weather, they will be able to continue to use the outdoor spaces. Please write their name inside the wellies. Children will be trained to change from shoes into wellies and back again at the end of lunchtime. If you have any wellies at home that have been outgrown - please donate them so that we can help to provide wellies for everyone!

Please place in the collection box under the shelter on the playgroun or hand to a member of staff. Thank you!



We have very good standards of pupil behaviour at C of E, but there is always room for improvement, so we are always reviewing our behaviour policy and making changes.

Rewards

We know that rewarding children when they are behaving well, is a better and more effective way of encouraging high standards, than shaming children for their behaviour when this falls short of what we expect. To highlight to you the really fantastic behaviour that we see, we will be sending home lots of positive messages by Class Dojo, and also using postcards and 'notes from my teacher' in bookbags too. At the end of each week, our celebration assemblies will recognise children who we think have gone 'Above and Beyond' with special mentions and certificates.

Our School Rules

We have three very clear school rules.

- Be ready
- Be respectful
- Be safe

Consistent Expectations

To help the children to understand the school rules look like, we have shared our expectations with them. There are five posters with simple expectations for all children to follow. These are shared with you in the pictures below.

Recognition Boards

Every class now has a 'Recognition Board' so that when children demonstrate one of the expectations we are highlighting with them, their photograph is placed immediately onto the recognition board and they are given positive praise for this.



FIRST TIME



FIRST TIME



EVERY TIME



EVERYWHERE



EVERYONE



SHAPE



SENTENCES



HANDS DOWN



ARTICULATE



PROJECT



EYE CONTACT



BE A STAR



SIT UP



**TRACK THE
SPEAKER**



**ANSWER
QUESTIONS**



**RESPECT
OTHERS**



STEP



**SPEAK
POLITELY**



THANK YOU



EXCUSE ME



PLEASE



School Uniform



Thank you for all your efforts to send children to school in school uniform. We try to keep our school uniform as affordable as possible, and would ask you all to check labels are clearly written in every piece of clothing. If we find clothing that has not been labelled with your child's name, we will mark it ourselves to avoid so many items being lost.

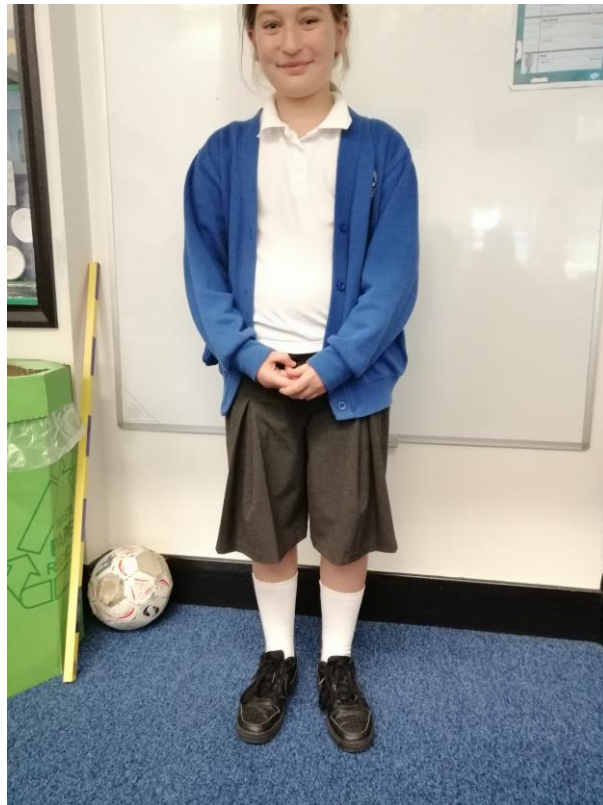
Please remember to send your child to school already dressed in their PE kit on the correct day as follows:

- Monday - Year 5 and Year 2
- Tuesday - Year 3 and Year 4
- Wednesday - Year 1
- Friday - Year 6

Reception children do not need PE kit until later in the year.

A full description of school uniform requirements can be found on the school website.





Skirts, pinafores, trousers and shorts

Grey or black only

Footwear

Black school shoes or suitable sandals, with white, black or grey socks or tights. Please also send a pair of wellies to school so that they can continue to play outdoors whatever the weather!

Shirts, jumpers, sweatshirts and cardigans

White or light blue polo shirt or shirts only please. Sweatshirts do not HAVE to have the school logo and can be purchased in royal blue from most major supermarkets.

Autumn and Winter As the weather changes, please make sure that you send your child to school with a warm, waterproof coat. On PE days, jogging bottoms or tracksuit trousers are a good idea. If you send any gloves, hats or scarves, please also make sure that they are labelled if at all possible!

PE Kit

Please remember to send your child to school already dressed in their PE kit on the correct day as follows:

- Monday - Year 5 and Year 2
- Tuesday - Year 3 and Year 4
- Wednesday - Year 1
- Friday - Year 6

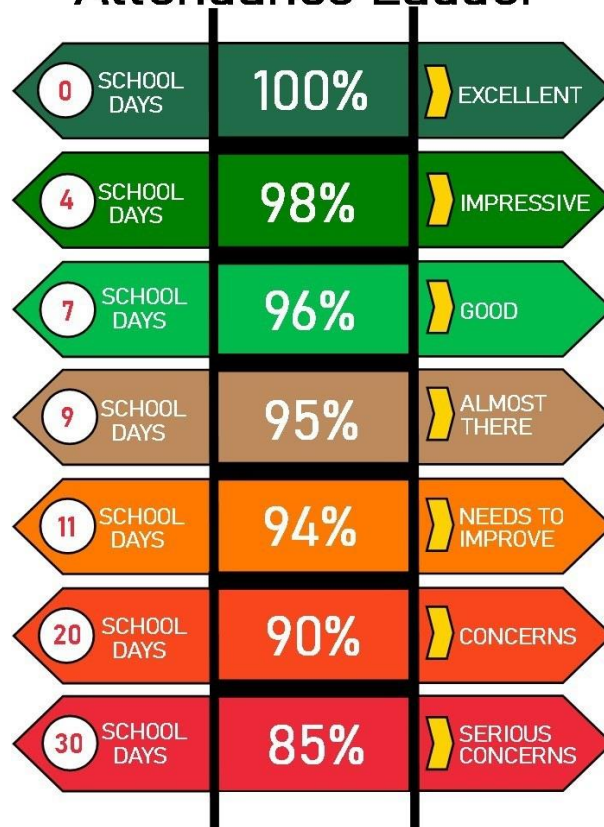
On PE days children can wear their school sweatshirt, cardigan or PE tracksuit top over their PE T-shirt. In colder weather, they can wear black, grey or dark blue tracksuit bottoms, joggers or leggings if they prefer these to shorts.

A reminder that long hair should be tied back for health and safety during PE lessons. Please send them with hair tied back or with a band or scrunchie to wear. **Jewellery and Earrings** No jewellery should be worn to school, except a watch if appropriate, or *small stud earrings*. Both of these items must be removed for PE. If your child has pierced ears, please remove their earrings on PE days before sending them to school. If not, please train them how to remove their earrings so that they can be prompted to do this before the PE lesson begins. If your child cannot remove their own earrings, school staff ARE NOT allowed to remove pupils' earrings for them and we are no longer allowed to apply surgical tape to cover earrings during PE. If the teacher feels that it is safe to do so, they will continue to join in with PE. The teacher will contact you if your child is wearing earrings on PE days and if this happens regularly and will discuss with you the risks involved.

Attendance



Attendance Ladder



1 - Attendance over the year adds up.

Holidays or absence during term time

Parents do not have an automatic right to withdraw pupils from school for a holiday and in law, have to apply for permission in advance. At Loughborough C of E Primary, holidays will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. Such circumstances could include:

- a short absence (maximum of 2 days) to attend a close relative's wedding
- a religious/cultural festival, may constitute an exceptional circumstance (maximum of 2 days)
- if a parent, due to the nature of their work, cannot possibly take time off during the regular school holidays, then this might constitute an exceptional circumstance. However, this will need to be evidenced by a letter from the employer (this letter must be on that company's official headed notepaper). A request of this nature will not be considered without a letter from employer, and repeat requests of this kind will not be granted.

Should you wish to make a term time request to take your child out of school for any reason, you must complete an 'Absence Application Form' available from the School Office. The request must be submitted **at least two weeks before your intended first date of absence. Your request will be considered and you will be informed of the decision in writing.**

Taking a child on holiday without permission is regarded as an unauthorised absence and each parent will be issued with a £60 fine - see Leicestershire Local Authority 'Pay a School Fine' here¹
Penalty Notices may also be issued for persistent absence and other forms of unauthorised absence.

Term Dates

Autumn Term 2023

Tuesday 29th August to Friday 22nd December

(Half term - Monday 16th to Friday 20th October)

Spring Term 2024

Monday 8th January to Friday 22nd March

(Half term - Monday 19th to Friday 23rd February)

Summer Term 2024

Monday 8th April to Tuesday 9th July

(Half term - Monday 27th to Friday 31st May)

School restarts again for children after the summer holiday on Tuesday 27th August 2024.

¹<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools-colleges-and-academies/pay-a-school-fine>

Pupil Premium



We receive extra funding, called **Pupil Premium**, for children who are eligible for **Free School Meals**. *(This is not the same as the **Universal Infant Free School Meal** that all children in Reception, Year 1 & Year 2 classes are entitled to receive.)* Pupil Premium Funding is used to support improving academic outcomes and closing gaps in learning for pupil premium children.

This academic year, we are making up to £50 of Pupil Premium Funding available to parents of eligible children, to help towards the costs of school activities.

The types of things the money could be used towards are:

- Cost of extra-curricular clubs or other organised activities including those outside of school time (eg. sports coaching, music tuition, drama or dance)
- Uniformed organisation subscription fees (brownies, cubs, beavers etc)
- School uniform items such as shoes, trainers or sweatshirts/cardigans
- Waterproof winter coat and/or wellington boots

As a school, we already use Pupil Premium Funding to reduce by 50% the amount that we ask eligible parents to contribute towards the cost of trips and activities.

If you think your child may be eligible to be registered for Free School Meals, because of the level of your income, this can be easily checked by the School Meals team at County Hall by phoning them on **0116 305 5000**. Even if your child gets a free school dinner because they are in Early Years, Year 1 or

Year 2, it is still worth checking your eligibility with the School Meals team. (Over the last two years the local authority has also provided eligible families with supermarket vouchers during school holidays.)

Once you have contacted the school meals team, they will confirm with us if your child is eligible. Your child can then have free school dinners and you will also be able to use £50 of Pupil Premium towards costs as outlined above. If you have more than one child in school, you must register them individually for Free School Meals. (Please note that any meals taken must be paid for until school receives confirmation directly from County Hall that dinners are free for your child).

Please speak to someone in the school office if you need more information.

PFA News



PFA AGM Thursday 21st September 2:15pm in the staffroom

I am delighted to announce that the Parents and Friends Association (PFA) will be holding its Annual General Meeting on Thursday 21st September at 2:15pm. This is a wonderful opportunity for all parents to come together, share ideas, and contribute to the continued success of our school.

We are actively seeking new members to join the PFA, as their enthusiasm and dedication are crucial in helping us organize various fundraising events throughout the year. These events provide essential funds that enable us to enhance the educational experience for all our children. Whether it's organizing a second hand uniform sale, a school disco, or a fun-filled family event, every effort counts and makes a significant impact on our school community.

Moreover, the PFA plays a vital role in welcoming new parents to our school. They provide a warm and friendly environment where new families can connect, ask questions, and feel supported during their transition. By becoming a member of the PFA, you will have the opportunity to extend a helping hand to those who are just starting their journey with us.

I would also like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the existing PFA committee members who have dedicated their time and energy in serving our school community. Their commitment and hard work have been instrumental in creating a vibrant and inclusive environment for all.

If you are interested in becoming a member of the PFA or joining the committee, please do not hesitate to reach out to us, or attend the Annual General Meeting. We warmly welcome all parents who share our passion for supporting our school and nurturing our children's growth.

Scooters and Bikes



We love it that so many children now use scooters and bikes to travel to school. We have lots of space to store these on site. Please can you remind children to push scooters and bikes across the playground and around the building and not continue to ride these once they come through the school gates. Given the volume of scooters, and the speed that children enjoy riding them, we want to avoid any accidents in confined spaces.

Meet the Teacher!



I am delighted to inform you about an exciting event that we have planned for next week - our Meet the Teacher event!

This event will take place after school next Tuesday, and it serves as a wonderful opportunity for you to meet your child's teacher and gain valuable insights into their classroom environment. It is a chance for you to say hello, ask any questions you may have, and get to know the person who will be guiding your child's educational journey this year.

We understand that as parents, you play a crucial role in your child's education, and events like Meet the Teacher allow us to foster a strong partnership between home and school. Our dedicated teachers are eagerly looking forward to meeting you and getting to know your family better.

(Miss Sulek is unfortunately on training next Tuesday so will be unavailable. We hope to reschedule this event for Year 4 soon!)

Dates For Your Diary



Tuesday 5th Sept - Meet the teacher!

Thursday 21st Sept - 2:15pm - PFA AGM

Monday 25th Sept - School photographer

Friday 29th Sept - OPAL Parent Afternoon

Tuesday 3rd Oct - Parents' Evening - 3:15 to 6pm

Thursday 5th Oct - Parents' Evening - 3:15 to 6pm

Thursday 5th Oct - Harvest Festival Service at Emmanuel Church 1:45pm - all welcome!

Monday 9th to Friday 13th Oct - Year 6 residential to the Peak District

Thursday 9th Nov - Flu immunisations

Friday 17th Nov - Children in Need Day - Children wear anything 'Pudsey' or anything spotty in exchange for a £1 donation

Tuesday 12th Dec - EYFS and KS1 Nativity Play - 9:30am

Wednesday 13th Dec - EYFS and KS1 Nativity Play - 2pm

Tuesday 19th Dec - KS2 Carol Service at All Saints' Church 6:30pm - all welcome!

Thank you for reading our Newsletter!

