



Friday 10th January 2025

Welcome back to the Spring Term!! We hope you all had a really enjoyable Christmas and New Year break.

Cold Weather!

Please ensure your child has a coat, gloves and a hat with them in school every day, all named please. The weather is going to be cold for next week too and we want them to be warm at playtimes, when outside.

After careful checking of the playground for icy patches this week, the children enjoyed playing in the cold weather and making mini snowmen!



Meal change

You may have noticed that School lunches on Thursday 16th and Friday 17th January have swapped round. This is due to it being Census Day. Please encourage your child/ren to have a school lunch on Thursday as this helps with school funding. Thank you!

Clubs

There are a few places still on some of the before and after school-led clubs. If your child/ren would like to attend any, please book them using the payment item in Parentmail, thank you.

Christmas stationery

A big thank you to everyone who ordered their children's christmas cards, gift wrap, mugs etc. we hope the children were proud seeing their designs come to life! We have received commission of £308.30 from the orders which will be put to good use in School. Thank you!

Dates for your diary:

- Parents Evenings

These will take place on Monday 10th of February and Thursday 13th of February. Please save the date. Bookings will go live the week before.

- Bedtime Stories

An opportunity for children to come back to school in their pyjamas and join us for an hour of bedtime stories. Children will have a drink and a cookie whilst listening to some fun and favourite stories before being collected and taken home to climb into bed. This will be on **Thursday the 30th of January** from 5-6pm. More information will follow nearer the time.

Term dates 2025/2026

We are currently reviewing the term dates for the next academic year (2025-2026) however we can confirm that the first day back for the children after the summer holidays, will be on Wednesday 3rd September 2025.

From the last newsletter:

Busy Bee Clubs

We are delighted to be offering a variety of clubs once again. This coming term we see the return of debating club. This is a great fun way to learn how to put an argument across in a respectful way – last year the children held a public debate with the whole school and voted to change the school uniform (or was it abolish it completely, perhaps?!) We also have some favourites such as Dodgeball, Dance, Lego and Cooking. On Tuesday morning, alongside Chill Club, there is also the possibility of Laser Tag. This is great fun and always popular – so book early!

The Clubs will be set up in Parentmail in time for our return to School on Monday 6th January so please look out for them.

Breakfast Club and Chill Club

Breakfast Club continues to run each day from 7:15am and includes breakfast. At 8:00am the children can choose to join one of the sports clubs if they are running, or chill club so please don't book onto these if your child is booked into Breakfast Club. Please note we have changed the cut off for bookings to 2 days before which will give you more flexibility to make bookings.

Chill Club runs from 8:00am each morning. For next term, this has been set up in the same way as Breakfast Club as a daily club so please book your child/ren in for the days you require. As with Breakfast Club, the cut off will be 2 days before.

Please book these clubs in Parentmail.

Class Updates

Oak	Happy new year- we hope everyone had a good break! The children have all returned full of enthusiasm and we have been amazed at how quickly they have settled back into the school routines. They have all read brilliantly this week, and we have been recapping the digraphs sh, ch, th, ng and ar. The children are wanting to use their phonics to write words independently now. In school
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	<p>we have sound mats with the letters on for them to use to remind themselves what the sounds look like. We have sent these sound mats home in their book bags so that they can use them at home when they are writing.</p> <p>This week we have been thinking about our feelings. We re-read 'Daisy's Dragons A story about feelings' by Frances Stickley and Annabel Tempest. The children may like to tell you about it. We spent lots of time talking about all the different kinds of feelings that we can have and that they are all important. We also talked about how sometimes some of these feelings get too big, like some of the dragons in the story and what we can do when this happens. We have a big set of new wooden blocks in the classroom, thanks to a donation from FOWPS. The children have really enjoyed exploring the different shapes and using them to build lots of creations. We hope everyone has a good weekend after a great first week back.</p>
Hornbeam	<p>This week we have been looking at one of the all-time great John Lewis adverts in English, Moz the monster. We have used that as a focus for our writing creating a description of the monster, his appearance, what he might eat and some of his favourite activities. We have also been looking at how we can add an -ing to the end of root words to change the word, for example play becomes playing. In Maths, we have been learning how to count up to 20 and organise items into groups of a certain number. On Monday, we performed our very own science investigation to look at what different substances melt ice the quickest, salt, sugar, water, or heat. After making our initial predictions we carried out the investigation and learn that 'warm' water was the fastest to melt the ice cube. Finally, in art we have been learning about primary colours and have combined this with learning about the artist Piet Mondrain (an artist who only used primary colours). We have created a collage in the style on Mondrain.</p>
Beech	<p>Beech class were delighted to receive a response from Father Christmas this week! He loved our letters and our hard work writing them certainly paid off. In science this week, we learnt how to tell if something was living, dead or had never been alive. This generated lots of discussion and we enjoyed debating our thoughts. In maths, we continued to add and subtract using column method and solved some tricky problems. At the end of the week we started a new maths topic looking at measuring length and height. We have been practicing our x5 table this week. In English, we played a game to help us learn how to use possessive apostrophes, and we are getting really good at using different conjunctions in our writing. During our Geography lesson we started looking at the different continents and oceans of the world.</p>
Ash	<p>We've had a busy start to 2025 in Ash Class, continuing our topic on Ancient Egypt. In our History lesson, we looked at hieroglyphics, how archaeologists broke the code with the Rosetta Stone and created cartouches using clay to display our names in hieroglyphs, like the Ancient Egyptian pharaohs. In Art, we have been drawing Queen Nefertiti style side-portraits and in English, we have started to share our class book 'The Story of Tutankhamun', creating mind maps about life in Ancient Egypt using the information we identified in this non-fiction text.</p> <p>Our P.E. lessons will continue to be on Mondays and Thursdays, both outside (weather permitting), so long layers and gloves will be needed.</p> <p>Wishing you all a good weekend.</p>
Rowan	<p>Welcome back! We hope you all had a lovely Christmas break. We want to take this opportunity to say thank you for the Christmas wishes, cards and gifts. It really is very kind of you.</p> <p>We have got straight back into our work this week. In maths, we have been working on multiplication, learning about factors and multiplying by 10 and 100. Please keep practising times tables at home. In computing, we have been learning word processing skills, practising skills such as 'snip and sketch', learning to resize windows so that we can view MS Word alongside a webpage and learning some keyboard shortcuts. In art, we have begun learning about Georgia O'Keeffe, looking at and discussing some of her artwork. In science, the lessons will be around 'living</p>

	or not living' - should prove interesting! Our focus in art this term will be developing our skills with watercolour paints. Have a lovely weekend everyone.
Maple	It's been another busy first week back in Maple Class. In English we've begun dipping into one of Mr Langley's favourite books, The Longest Night of Charlie Noon. It's full of adventure, mystery and one or two spooky moments! We're looking forward to writing our own mystery stories further down the line. Maths has seen us looking at fractions where we have been showing off our fantastic knowledge of equivalent fractions and how to convert between improper and mixed number fractions. We've been really impressed with the knowledge your children already have! Meanwhile, our afternoons have been dominated with singing rehearsals for our upcoming trip to the O2 Arena for Young Voices, but we've still managed to squeeze in some Geography through our new Topic, Human Planet, and a little Science where we spent some time looking at the stars. We'll be exploring both of these areas more over the coming weeks!
Willow	<p>Welcome back everyone and Happy New Year! We have loved hearing about everyone's Christmas and, as a team, would just like to say thank you to everyone for our lovely gifts, they were very much appreciated.</p> <p>Well done to those children who completed the Christmas challenge (remembering to bring the Block Magic back to school in a fun shape), we were impressed by the creativity of some of these. This week we have started our new class book - The Girl of Ink and Stars. You will be hearing a lot about this over the coming term. Our English focus this week was on 'If' by Rudyard Kipling, please make sure to practise reciting this over the weekend! We have also started our new topics in both Geography (Restless Earth) and Science (Light).</p> <p>Your child will be coming home with a Moon Diary today so please check bags for this and Teams for instructions if your child cannot remember what they have to do. We will begin the rest of our topics next week whilst also practising for Young Voices at the O2 Arena.</p>

Important dates

Wednesday 15 th January	Closing date for Reception 2025 School Place Applications
Friday 24 th January	Young Voices Trip (Years 5 and 6)
Saturday 25 th January	FOWPS Coffee Shop, Woodcote Community Centre
Thursday 30 th January	Bedtime Stories – All year groups 5 – 6pm
Monday 10 th February	Parents evening
Thursday 13 th February	Parents evening
Friday 14 th February	Cake Sale – nut free donations appreciated
Mon 17/02 – Fri 21/02	February half term holiday

FOWPS Update

We will be running the Woodcote Coffee Shop at the Community Centre on Saturday 25th January so a plea for anyone willing to bake for us! Please speak with Mrs Heath (Reception Class Teacher - Thurs and Friday) if you are able to help, thank you. We would love to see you on the Saturday so please do pop in for refreshments if you are able to. Second hand uniform will also be on sale so please call in and stock up!

Another plea!! If anyone has unwanted new christmas gifts we can always use them for future raffles, prizes etc. so please bring them to the School Office if you are able to donate anything, thank you.

Community News:

Shiplake College Schools Cross-Country

Boys and girls in Years 1 to 6 from any primary or prep school are invited to the Shiplake College Schools' Cross-Country Competition on Saturday 1 February 2025. No pre-registration required (please arrive 15 minutes before race time). The first race (Year 1 boys) is at 9.00am, with the final race (Year 6 girls) at 10.15am. A full break down of race times and distances is at www.shiplake.org.uk/schoolscrosscountry. Hot drinks and refreshments available to purchase from 8.30am.

See you there!



THE ORATORY

CROSS COUNTRY



SATURDAY 25 JANUARY

We're delighted to be hosting a cross country race on Saturday 25 January for children in Years 1–6 from any prep or primary school.

Approximate Race Timings:

- Year 1 – 9.00am
- Year 2 – 9.15am
- Year 3 – 9.30am
- Year 4 – 9.45am
- Year 5 – 10.00am
- Year 6 – 10.15am

Please arrive **at least** 15 minutes before your race starts.



Please note that by competing in the race, you give consent for your child to be photographed and shared on social media and in any associated press coverage.

The Oratory Senior School
Woodcote
Oxfordshire
RG8 0PJ

- Car parking and start line will be signposted.
- Refreshments available throughout the morning.
- No need to pre-register, we look forward to welcoming you on the day!

FOR ANY QUERIES, PLEASE EMAIL S.TOMLINSON@ORATORY.CO.UK