



Children enjoying the new OPAL music and stage area at lunchtime

Dear Parents and Carers



Welcome back to a new school year and a special welcome to any new families to Wessex. We hope that you had a lovely summer break and that everyone has enjoyed their first few days of the new school year.

Also, we welcome Miss Hussain and Mrs Szablowski to our teaching team. Miss Hussain is the teacher of Poplar Class and Mrs Szablowski is teaching alongside in Larch Class with Mrs Alfred and one day a week in Poplar class.

Whilst the school has been naturally very quiet over the summer break, it is lovely to hear the buzz of children in their classrooms beginning their learning for the new year and especially nice to see our children new to reception settling in and learning the routines in their new school. Mrs Corbett and the team have been very impressed with the children's enthusiasm for school.

Thank you to everyone who has ensured that pupils come to school in plain black shoes and with the correct uniform too. Children look really smart in their uniform or PE kit. A reminder of PE days is attached to this newsletter for when children need to wear PE kit. Please ensure that ALL uniform is named. We donate so much uniform each year which ends up in lost property and remains unclaimed.

To welcome the new school year, we want to remind everyone about our **welcome back BBQ**, which is organised by the PTA. This is a lovely event for families old and new to the school to catch up and share stories of their summer and for children and families to share being at school together. This event is next Friday, 11th September, starting after school. There will be a bouncy castle and some stalls as we had to cancel the summer fair at the end of last year due to the heat. We look forward to seeing many of you there. We are asking pupils to donate a bottle or sweets to the welcome back BBQ in return for coming to school in mufti clothes.

We are in the process of finalising the **school calendar** and hope to be able to share this with you next Friday with as many dates as possible for your forward planning. Do note that we have added an INSET day before and after May half term in 2027 so that families who wish to save money on a holiday can do so over the May break without taking any time out of school during the summer term.

Mr Beavan



Quotes of the week

"I really like my new classroom. I have enjoyed hanging my bag up on my peg and where my seat is in class" William, Year 2

"The new water play at lunchtime is so much fun, I love it" Isabella, Year 4

"I loved writing this week, we wrote a diary about a boy from the book The First Drawing" Delilah-Rose, Year 3

"I liked Art this week, we used pens and pencils to copy a famous painting of a bridge" Azaria, Year 4

"PE was fun, we were practising our football skills by dribbling" Delilah, Year 5

"Our new teacher gave us lolly sticks to write our names on & draw ourselves as little people. It was a fun activity" Autumn, Year 5

Diary dates coming up



Wednesday 9th September

Meet the New Teacher – 3:30pm and 4pm

Friday 11th September

Mufti Day in exchange for a bottle/sweets for the tombola

PTA Welcome Back BBQ

Thursday 1st & Friday 2nd October

Individual and Sibling Photographs

Monday 19th October

Childhood National Flu Immunisations
Programme Reception to Year 6 – more details to follow

Thursday 22nd October

Last day of Term 1 – 3.20pm Finish

Friday 23rd October

INSET DAY – NO SCHOOL

Medical reminders

To help us keep all children safe, please ensure that the school has up-to-date information about any **allergies, medical conditions and prescribed medication**. If your child has been diagnosed with a new allergy, if their medication has changed, or if there have been any changes to their healthcare needs over the summer holidays, please update Arbor and inform the school office as soon as possible.

Our school meal provider, Caterlink, has recently introduced a new Food Allergy & Intolerance Form. If your child has a food allergy or intolerance, please complete the form as soon as possible so that appropriate arrangements can be put in place. Caterlink also requires supporting medical evidence, which should be provided to the school office at your earliest convenience.

Further information can be found in the attached leaflet.

Attendance

Lower School: Cherry class winners with 99.4%

Upper School: Lime class winners with 98.8%

School attendance this week

95.1%



Last week = 91.1%
Last year average = 95%
Aiming for 97%

School Values

September gives us all a fresh start. In assembly, we thought about how every school year begins as a blank page. The achievements, friendships and memories are still to come, and each of us has the opportunity to help make this year's story a great one. We look forward to seeing the next chapter unfold at Wessex.

Our usual assembly themes, values and character curriculum will begin in the coming weeks' assemblies.

Meet the Teacher meetings

As usual, we have welcome meetings in each yeargroup next Wednesday 9th September 2026 at 3:30pm and repeated at 4pm. These will start after school once children have been dismissed and will be delivered by teachers. The meetings will give parents and carers the opportunity to meet the teaching staff, hear about the curriculum plans for the year, any trips already planned and an opportunity to ask any questions. You will notice that this year, the meetings are scheduled for 3:30 and 4pm for families with children in different year groups. All information from the meetings will be uploaded to the class pages on the school website.

School Clubs

There is still time to book a place in one of the clubs this term. In assembly on Monday next week, we welcome staff from the drama club, judo club and animation club to share more about the clubs. If your child is interested in attending, please navigate to the clubs page on the school website.

If your child is interested in a **FREE** guitar taster lesson, Mr Holwill, our guitar teacher is offering this to pupils. Please email him directly on GarethHolwill@berksmusictrust.org.uk to book a free taster session for your child.

Children in KS2 will again have the opportunity to participate in Young Voices at The O2 on Thursday 21st January 2027. Please see attached letter for more information.

Attendance

Thank you to all families who support good attendance and punctuality. Being in school regularly really does make a difference. When children miss school, they miss valuable learning, explanations from teachers and opportunities to connect with their friends. To achieve 95% attendance, a child can miss no more than 10 days of school across the year. That's a whole unit in maths or a week of DT lessons!

A reminder that lessons begin at 8:55am, so children should aim to arrive between 8:45am and 8:55am. Arriving even a few minutes late can mean missing important instructions, learning activities and can be awkward for a child entering the classroom.

We have also noticed that some families are arriving on site well before 8:45am. We therefore ask families not to come onto the school site before 8:45am.

If you are waiting with your child before the doors open, please keep them with you and **do not allow them to play on the grassed area around the flagpole** at the front of the school. Your support helps us to keep everyone safe and ensures a calm, positive start to the day for all.

Good luck!

Good luck to Hunter's (Year 4) Dad as he embarks on a ten day trip from Inverness to Ben Nevis and back next week. They are fundraising for OPAL equipment for our children to enjoy at lunchtimes. We look forward to the updates.



Positivity



Honesty



Respect



Pride

ONLINE FOOD ALLERGEN & INTOLERANCE FORM

At Caterlink the safety of our pupils is our number one priority, and we take catering for customers with food allergies and intolerances very seriously.

The below information details how to complete our online form for pupils who require a special diet menu due to allergens, intolerances or medical conditions.

STEP 1 You can request a special diet menu by completing our online Allergy & Intolerance Form – [CTL – Food Allergy & Intolerance Form V2](#)

This needs to be submitted with supporting medical evidence from an NHS professional (a GP/consultant or registered dietitian). This can be a letter, copy of medical notes, an Allergy Action Plan signed by a medical professional or a screenshot from the NHS app. Medical evidence is an industry-wide requirement, recommended by the Lead Association for Catering in Education (LACA).

Please ensure that when you enter the school name that the unit number and postcode listed are correct for your school.

STEP 2 Whilst waiting to see if a special diet menu has been approved any children with food allergies or intolerances can be provided with a 'safe meal' – jacket potato with baked beans, vegetables and fresh fruit salad (if suitable for the pupil's allergies).

If you would like your child to have a 'safe meal' please let your school know.

STEP 3 The Caterlink team will review the request and check that it is safe to cater for using the LACA Special Diet Risk Analysis Process for Caterers where required. The risk analysis looks at the pupil's requirements, the medical evidence, the capability of the kitchen facilities and the school environment to determine if the request is low, medium or high risk.

STEP 4 If deemed safe to cater for by our Caterlink nutrition team will then develop the special diet menu, with at least one suitable meal option daily. This can take up to four weeks from receiving all of the information required.

Should your child's allergies or intolerances change, you should request the link from the school and choose 'Updated Request'.

If your child has become allergic or intolerant to additional foods, please ring the school immediately and request a safe meal.

