



25<sup>th</sup> September 2009

No. 3

Dear Parents, Carers and Friends

It was great to see so many parents and friends first thing today for our coffee morning in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support. I hope you have also enjoyed the chance to visit your child's classroom and perhaps see what has been going on during the first weeks of term. Do check the office window for the winning raffle numbers, and many thanks for your donations of prizes.

As you know over the last year plans have been being drawn up to completely rebuild Wood Farm School and create a fantastic new school, fit for the new century. This will be a massive and very exciting project - and so far the architects have been working hard with the school, local authority and other users to develop their design ideas. Now there is a chance for you to look at their ideas and share your thoughts: there will be a drop in session in the school hall on October 15<sup>th</sup> after school where you can look at the plans and pass on your feedback.

A reminder that you can give your views on the expansion of the school to a two class per year group size by returning the consultation form, or by visiting the school website.

A reminder too that **next Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> October the school is closed for staff training**. We re-open as usual the following Monday. **This half term finishes on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> at 3:30**. I am sorry that an incorrect date for the start of the half term break may have been given out on an earlier letter.

Many thanks to all of those parents and carers who gave us their views on the strengths of the school, and those things they would like to see improved in the future, when we collected opinions before the summer. Your thoughts will be shared with the staff and governors, and will help us as we draw up our improvement plans for the year. It was fantastic to read so many appreciative comments about the school - and in particular the number of parents and carers who said how much they valued the staff and the care they show for the children.

One area of concern from several people - that should be very easy to put right - is people riding bicycles and scooters on the school site at the start and end of the day. I have written about this problem before: it is just not safe or considerate for children to be riding on the playground or paths when people are coming in or out of the building. School staff will of course remind children but I must also ask parents to help and make sure that their children don't break this safety rule.

I have had lots of requests for **term time holidays** for children over the last few weeks. As a general rule we would like to discourage parents from taking children on holiday during term time - but if your child's attendance has been good over the previous year and their learning is on track then I can authorize some term time leave. However if your child's attendance is below **94%**, or they are falling behind in their learning I can't authorize extra time off school. In these circumstances we will ask parents to come in and discuss the situation and the need for time off. We do have special homework packs for children who are out of school during term time, which we ask parents and carers to use and return to school to help children to keep up with their learning.

With best wishes from Mr. Lewin, and everyone at the school.



'Children leave the school as confident, well rounded individuals' Ofsted 2009

[www.wood-farm.oxon.sch.uk](http://www.wood-farm.oxon.sch.uk)



## HEADINGTON PARTNERSHIP : EXTENDED SERVICES

As we hope you know, Cheney, Headington Quarry & Slade Nurseries, Bayards Hill, St Andrew's, Windmill & Wood Farm Primaries and Oxfordshire Hospital Service work together to deliver Extended Services for the children, young people and families of Headington. We conducted a parental survey across the partnership during the summer term; while the response rate wasn't high, it provided us with useful feedback on families' needs, to which we are responding. If you missed it and have views on any aspect of Extended Services (after school activities; parenting, family and adult learning; access to support services; community access to school facilities) please phone 01865 428 059 or e-mail [lesley.williams@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:lesley.williams@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

The prize draw for a £20 gift voucher amongst all the named entries was won by Judy Sullivan from Bayards Hill. Congratulations!

The survey told us you want more opportunities for Family Learning. As part of October's Family Learning Festival, there will be a **free two Saturday morning 'Practical Pottery' course at Cheney**, tutored by Michelle Johnson: 17 & 24 October, 10.00-1.00. Families of children in Y7 at Cheney have the chance to sign up first; their older and younger siblings can join too. We hope this is the first of many more chances for you to learn together as a family : it's been proved to be the most effective way!

Examples of other offers during the Festival : **'Dad's go wild' in Hinksey Park**, Abingdon Road on Saturday 3 October 11.00-3.00 : adventurous activities, music, arts, sports especially designed for dads, carers, grandfathers, uncles and their young people (but mums, grandmothers & aunts are permitted too!)

**'Saturday Science Club'** at Science Oxford, St Clements - every Saturday from 2.00-4.00 starting 3 October : families work together to overcome science challenges. The target audience for the clubs is roughly 7-12 years old (and their parents) but to accommodate a wider range of ages, the activities will be flexible; enthusiasm and an interest in the creative side of science is the only must! Free with entry to the Discover Zone (£3) 01865 810 000

**'October Outdoors'** at Hill End, Eynsham Road, Farmoor on Sunday 11 October 10.00-3.00 : 3 activities during the day, which everyone tries - fires & cooking, weaving corn dollies, an Autumn Watch exploration of the site £15 per family 01865 863 510

See [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/familylearningfestival](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/familylearningfestival)

And later : **Oxfordshire Touring Theatre will present 'Peach Boy'** at Bayards Hill School, Waynflete Road on Sunday 22 November 4.00, with a special ticket rate for partnership families. Watch out for booking information later

