Overstone Primary School Newsletter 27/03/26

Welcome to Overstone's Monthly Newsletter

March 2026

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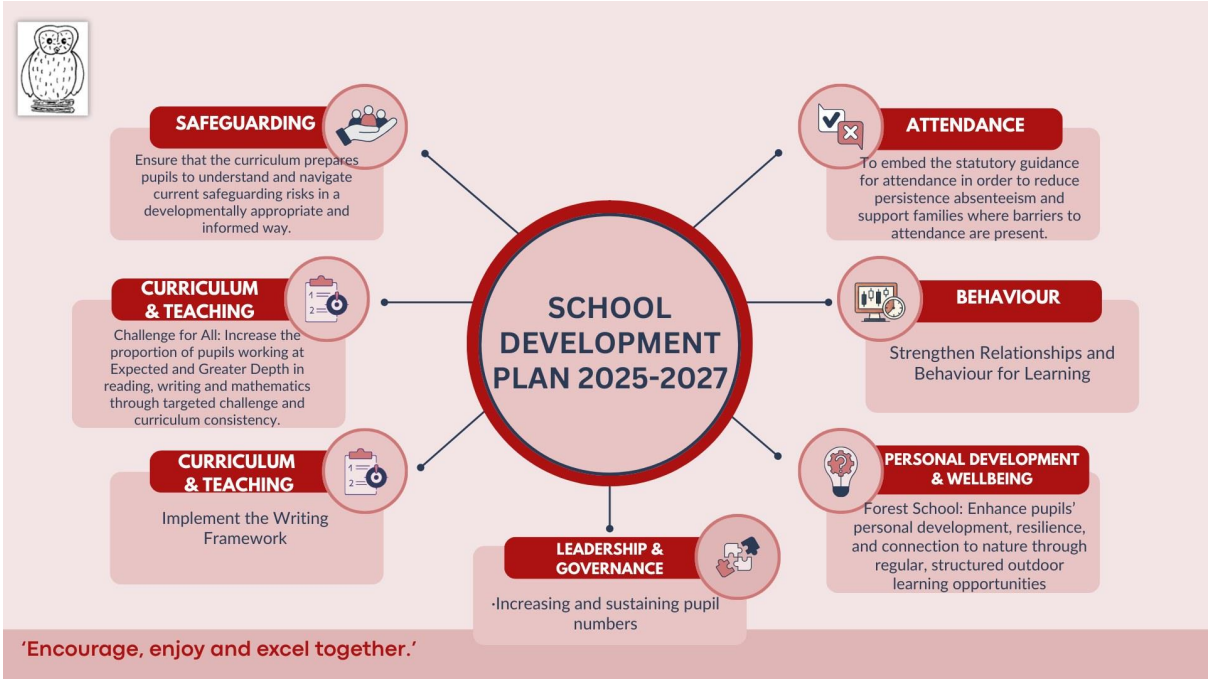
Headteacher's Welcome



Dear Parents and Carers,

As we come to the end of another busy and successful term, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support and commitment to our school community.

It has been wonderful to see so many of you attending recent events, including our Parent Consultation Evenings, the Year 3 Ukulele and iRock concerts, and the FOOPs Easter and Mother's Day Tea. Your engagement and encouragement make a real difference to the children's experiences and achievements.

This term has been a particularly busy one, and we are excited that planning is already underway for the development of our Forest School, which will be led by Miss Cox. Further details will be shared with you next term.

We wish all of our families a restful and enjoyable Easter break and look forward to welcoming you back to school on Monday 13th April.

Mrs Mushtaq

Friends of Overstone Primary School

Curriculum Focus - English

Curriculum Focus: Writing

At our school, we are committed to providing a rich and balanced curriculum where every subject is valued and celebrated. Throughout the year, we will be sharing updates to highlight some of the exciting learning taking place across different areas of the curriculum. In this newsletter, we would like to focus on English. As part of our School Development Plan, we are continuing to strengthen our focus on the key fundamentals of writing across the school. This includes spelling, letter formation and handwriting, punctuation, and sentence structure. A particular emphasis has been placed on developing fluent and confident handwriting through the use of Kinetic Letters, which supports children in forming letters correctly and building strong writing habits from an early age.These core skills support children in becoming clear, confident writers across all areas of learning.

We are already beginning to see the positive impact of this whole-school focus. Pupils are increasingly taking greater responsibility for their own writing by editing and correcting their work, using their knowledge of these fundamental skills to improve the quality and accuracy of what they produce.

It has been especially wonderful to see the standard of writing from our youngest learners in Reception. Their work shows an incredibly high standard, with beautiful presentation and an impressive use of vocabulary. It is clear that the strong foundations being developed early on are helping our children grow in confidence and pride in their writing.

To make writing purposeful and engaging, classes have been applying their English skills through practical experiences. Recently, Year 3 and Year 5 have been busy making cookies, pizza and sandwiches as part of their English units. These hands-on activities helped pupils think carefully about how to write clear and accurate instructions, considering sequencing, precise language and key punctuation so that others could successfully follow their recipes.

We love seeing learning come to life in such creative ways and look forward to sharing more curriculum highlights with you in future newsletters.

We recently celebrated World Book Day, which provided a wonderful opportunity to highlight our love of reading across the school. It was fantastic to see so many pupils and staff taking part, with great enthusiasm shown through dressing up as their favourite book characters. The creativity and excitement throughout the day really demonstrated how much our school community values books and storytelling.

Our wonderful team of pupil librarians, supported by Mrs Stevens, led a whole-school assembly focused on promoting reading. They shared thoughtful recommendations of books they personally enjoy, inspiring other pupils to explore new stories and authors.

A particular highlight was the contribution from our talented Year 6 pupils, with the help of Mrs Adams, gave up a considerable amount of their own time to plan activities, create resources and help lead sessions for the rest of the school. Their efforts showcased excellent leadership skills and a genuine passion for encouraging younger pupils to develop a love of reading.

The day was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone and created a real buzz around the school, reminding us all of the joy that reading can bring.

PHILIP

THING 2
THING 1

PHILIP
PULLMAN

PHILIP
BEANO

What we are doing today
AVENGERS
Planning
Drafting
Revising
MRS ADAMS

NARNIA

PHILIP PULLMAN
NARNIA
HORSE CARE
LOS ANGELES
23

NARNIA

MICHAEL MORPURGO
Dinner Lady

Curriculum Focus: Phonics

We are fortunate to have an incredibly skilled and knowledgeable team of phonic teachers across the school, led by Mrs Morton-Bright, who deliver high-quality phonics sessions every

day from Reception through to Year 3. These sessions provide children with the essential building blocks for confident and successful reading.

Since the start of the academic year in September, we are already seeing clear progress in pupils' reading accuracy, fluency and speed. Through consistent, structured teaching, the children are developing strong foundations that support both their reading and writing skills.

During their phonics sessions, pupils work hard to practise recognising sounds, reading words with increasing confidence and fluency, and spelling words accurately. They also continue to develop their letter formation and handwriting, as well as applying their phonics knowledge when writing sentences.

It is wonderful to see the enthusiasm and determination the children bring to these sessions each day, and the progress they are making is a real credit to both their hard work and the dedication of our reading team.

School Term and Key Dates

Please note - we have updated our **Term Dates for 2026-27** to include the INSET Days (scan the QR code or select the hyper link). Please be mindful of this when booking holidays to ensure that these do not fall within term time.

Please click on this link to take you our Term Dates: Overstone Primary School - Term Dates

Our last day of term is Friday 27th March. School will re-open on Monday 13th April.

Attendance Update

In our last newsletter, we were pleased to report that our overall attendance stood at 96%, with our aim being to reach and remain at or above 97%.

Since then, our attendance has declined slightly over the term and currently stands at **95.87% overall**. The breakdown by year group is as follows:

- Year R – 96.71% (previously 96.80%)
- Year 1 – 96.05% (previously 96.78%)
- Year 2 – 96.03% (previously 96.32%)
- Year 3 – 95.22% (previously 95.14%)
- Year 4 – 95.68% (previously 94.62%)
- Year 5 – 95.49% (previously 95.51%)
- Year 6 – 96.09% (previously 95.91%)

It is lovely to report that Years 3, 4 and 6 have improved their attendance since the previous month! However overall we currently sit 15th out of 20 similar schools. Our efforts are to be the top 5 schools, which is a challenge but is the one area which will make most impact on our learning, wellbeing and academic and lifelong progress.

Good attendance not only supports academic progress but also nurtures a strong sense of belonging. Being present each day helps children build friendships, develop confidence, engage fully in collaborative learning and establish positive routines. Regular attendance is also an essential life skill, preparing children for secondary school, further education and ultimately the workplace.

This term remains particularly important for our Year 6 pupils as they approach their SATs, and for Year 5 as they build the foundations for next year. Every lesson, intervention and opportunity for discussion contributes to their readiness and confidence.

We appreciate your support in ensuring children attend school whenever they are well enough to do so. Every day truly does count. Thank you for your continued partnership in helping us to prioritise attendance and ensure the very best outcomes for all of our children.

Overstone's Got Talent!

Gymnastics Tournament

Our Year 3 and Year 4 gymnasts recently took part in a gymnastics tournament and achieved fantastic results.

One of our teams performed exceptionally well, demonstrating excellent gymnastic skills, determination and teamwork, and were thrilled to finish in 1st place.

Our second team faced an additional challenge as they competed with three gymnasts instead of four. Despite this, they showed great resilience and determination, going on to beat two other schools who had full teams of four and finishing in a very respectable 7th place.

Huge congratulations to both teams, who represented our school so wonderfully. We are incredibly proud of their effort, sportsmanship and the way they supported one another throughout the competition.

Design Competition Success

Some of our Key Stage 2 children recently took part in a competition organised by Taylor Wimpey to design a welcome card for homeowners purchasing a new house.

We received so many fantastic and creative designs from the children, making it very difficult to choose the winners. After careful judging, we are delighted to announce the results:

🥇 **1st Place:** Halle (Year 6)

🥈 **2nd Place:** Neve (Year 4)

🥉 **3rd Place:** Jacob (Year 6)

Congratulations to our winners, who each received an Amazon vouchers as their prize. A huge well done to everyone who took part – the creativity and effort shown in the designs were wonderful to see!

Our children took part in Pacesetter games at Benham sports centre. The sports event was an inclusive event for children with SEND needs. We are fortunate to have Pacesetters in school each week who lead lunchtime sports activites and PE sessions.