



New Hinksey CE Primary School

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29th January 2021

Dear Children and Families of Children in School,

Well, here we are at the end of another week. We were so pleased that the snow came on Sunday last weekend meaning children and families could enjoy it together. The children in school had lots of stories to tell about making snowmen and having snowball fights!

Important Update re Lateral Flow Testing of Staff

From now on staff can take part in voluntary lateral flow testing to help identify adults who have Covid 19 but who are asymptomatic. Staff who choose to participate will conduct two lateral flow tests at home each week. We are letting you know this as if there are any positive test results, we may need to contact you at short notice to let you know that a bubble is closing whilst we await confirmation from a standard PCR test conducted at a testing centre. We will make contact by phone and will post a message on the school website as a news item.

News from the Bubbles

Foundation Stage – Robins have been learning all about ‘saving our oceans’ and recycling plastic. In maths the children have done lots of work with groups of 6, 7 and 8 objects. Ducklings have been reading lots of snowy stories.

Finches – In English we have been using our senses to help us write the story of ‘Awongalema’. In maths we have identified 3D shapes and named the days of the week and months of the year. In science we looked at invertebrates and in DT we found out about the history and design styles of kites.

Owls – We have been using the structure of the ‘Coyote’ story to start planning our own stories. In maths we have been practising additions and exploring 2D shapes. In the afternoons we have been creating ‘My Book of Bears’ to round off our North American focus.

Doves – This week we have had a virtual trip to Copenhagen in Denmark. We have found out about the famous landmarks and have then focussed on the story of ‘The Little Mermaid’ by Hans Christian Anderson. We have written alternative endings and developed our understanding of verbs, adjectives and fronted adverbials.

Woodpeckers – We have finished writing our newspaper reports and enjoyed presenting them on a word document for display. Our African masks are looking amazing!

Kingfishers – We have been answering questions in English based on text extracts and we have also been writing playscripts. The four of us will be rehearsing our plays for an in-class performance! In maths we have been practising division (Yr 5) and scaling (Yr 6). In the afternoons we have been learning 4 figure grid references, how to show emotion in our Manga-style drawings as well as learning about the 5Ks in the Sikh faith and thinking about healthy diets. In our science lesson we have been learning about friction.

Half Term – The Department for Education has clarified that **schools will not remain open during the half term holiday week which is Monday 15th – Friday 19th February**. We will welcome critical worker and vulnerable children back to school on Monday 22nd February.

Parents are welcome in our school

Where to get support – These are really difficult and challenging times for everyone in terms of physical and mental health, financial pressures and juggling work and family. This section offers some signposting to places you can get support for different needs.

There is a **Health Team Newsletter** for Primary Schools on our website (www.new-hinksey.oxon.sch.uk) which gives hints and tips for keeping healthy (mentally and physically) for children and their families.

<https://www.oxford.gov.uk/essentialsupport> is the **Oxford City Council website** and is a useful one stop shop for where to find help and support.

There is a link to **Oxford Together** and a form <https://occ.oxfordtogether.org/support-form> which allows for volunteers to signpost help (food etc) and get people into the system and also people can signpost others that need support. They are not statutory so theoretically nobody should fall through the gaps as they have no remit apart from helping. They'll go shopping and get prescriptions etc.

Money Saving Expert is also a good provision/newsletter especially where money is concerned and a sensible place for everyone to start at regarding money, savings, how to access support.

<https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/> is also good for people to know their rights around covid and employment during the pandemic.

When will school reopen to all pupils? – We are asked this question often, but schools tend to find out at the same time as everyone else via TV or radio once a politician makes an announcement. After the Prime Minister's statement on Wednesday our understanding is that there will be a review of the national lockdown on 15th February which will take account of the vaccination programme, infection rates, death rates and NHS capacity. In the week commencing 22nd February the government will publish a plan for taking the country out of lockdown. Schools and families will be given two week's notice of any reopening of schools so the **earliest that schools could begin to reopen is Monday 8th March**. This will just be a potential start date and does not mean all children will be back in their classes, it could be that the return is phased by different age groups or it could be that the scientific data pushes this date back further – we hope not but that is the reality – there is no certainty.

An Important Reminder – Although your children are coming into school daily, the country is still in a strict lockdown. It is disheartening to hear that some children are mixing outside their household out of school hours in parks, gardens etc., not just with other children from their in-school bubble (which isn't allowed out of school anyway) but with other families. Please do all that you can to minimize contacts and help keep our bubbles (staff, pupils and their families) safe from increased risk of infection.

Have a lovely, relaxing weekend everyone.

Charlotte Haynes