



Ormskirk Church of England Primary School

Greetby Hill, Ormskirk. Lancashire L39 2DP

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Headteacher: Mr G.Storch B.Ed. (Hons) P.G. Dip. Psych. N.P.Q.H.

24th September 2023

Headteacher's Letter to Parents – Autumn Term

Welcome to all of our new Reception who have settled in remarkably quickly. Also welcome to the numerous new children who have started in various year groups. This welcome is extended to their families too. We must remember how many unique systems and names for things we have, so please help new families out especially when we have events coming up such as the Harvest festival at church, our family fireworks display, PFA discos and Christmas productions and Christingle.

All of our admin systems and booking systems are up to date, but it is crucial that you let us know of any changes e.g. telephone or email addresses, allergies or medical conditions. After the cost of living crisis more families have become entitled to Pupil Premium. This is not just about school meals as there is also some funding which can be used for children's learning needs too. Our website includes examples of how we have used Pupil Premium funding. If you are not sure whether you would be eligible simply message the office and include your national insurance number and we can check for you and there is a short form to sign which we can email or give you a paper copy.

Overall, pupil attendance is good. Please keep school attendance as high as possible by resisting the temptation to book holidays in term time – if you do then email me, but be aware that you child will miss out on valuable learning and that schools and local authorities have reintroduced fines etc. If you think your child has symptoms of Covid they should be kept off school if they feel too ill to come to school in the similar way to other illnesses. If a child has a high temperature they should not be in school.

Trips to Inspire and Build Resilience

Already we have had some inspiring trips and on Monday Y6 are going to Rock and River to canoe, climb, abseil and paddle board. When we study the curriculum we try and start with a trip linking to the topic which will inspire the children. Y5 study the United Kingdom and Castle as their Geography and History topics this term. Last Monday they visited both Conwy and Canarvan Castles in North Wales before going to the summit of Mount Snowdon via the mountain railway. We did well to dodge most of the rain and the wind was a challenge on Snowdon, but it all added to the atmosphere and sense of adventure.



Inspire

Aim High

Achieve

Shine



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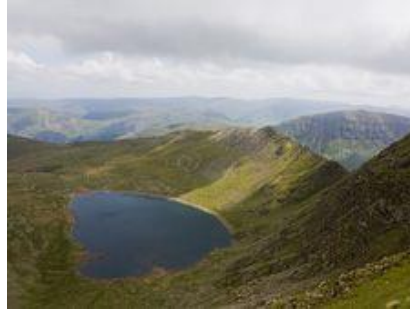
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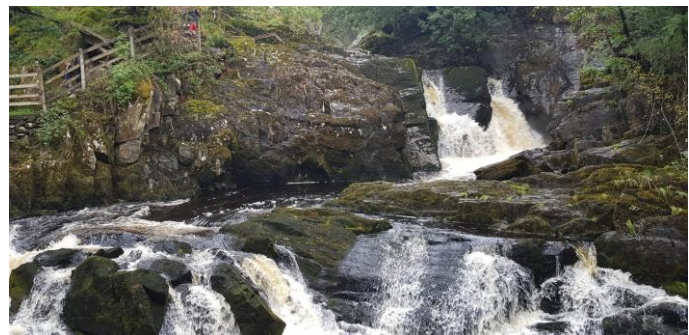
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On Friday, Y4 travelled to Ingleton to explore the White Scar caves and then visit the rural village of Clapham and sketch the waterfall there. The year group are studying water and in particular rivers this term and to witness first hand water travelling through the ground and see an underwater waterfall is quite magical. The scenery in the Yorkshire Dales is spectacular and fortunately the sun was shining and only a few children and the school dog got a bit wet as we crossed stepping-stones and muddy fields.



Keeping Prices Down Even though Inflation Increases

We are continuing to keep prices down as much as possible for the school's before and after school clubs and also for hot lunches. But this is only possible if parents keep on top of their payments. If there is a technical reason why a parent isn't able to pay on the app or if a family is struggling financially please let me know. If you pay for nursery childcare or out of school provision using tax vouchers then remember there is a delay in the school receiving this by between a month to a month and a half.

Ratios of staff to babies and children under 5 years have different and tight legal parameters than older children. Therefore the provision outside the normal school hours cannot be offered on an ad hoc basis in the nursery in the same way as we can in the school. Whilst last minute requests can be asked for these cannot be guaranteed and payments for such requests have to be paid for in cash or by cheque. In the next few weeks we will be setting up a contactless card system to make things easier.

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The nursery is quite full in the Pre-School and Baby Room, but we do have spaces in the 2 year-old room (Little Acorns). Do email school if you would like to enquire about a place.

Vacancies for Teaching Assistant (TA) Positions

We have two vacancies for a TA2A position. One is for Early Years and is for upper infants / lower juniors. If you are interested in one of these vacancies please see the Lancashire Vacancy website tomorrow for more details and an application form.

Swimming

Please remember that children need a swimming hat. Currently Y1,2,4 and Y5 are swimming every week. Next half term it will be the turn of Y3 and then Reception too.

The current swimming pool is having its equipment upgraded and the exterior painted to ensure it can keep going for a few more years. Every half term or full term a year group may not swim – this is partly to ensure that we are providing enough athletics / gym / invasion games and also it releases the pool on Tuesdays for either hire or time to upgrade the pool equipment / facilities. The design and schedule for the new pool will be shared as soon as we have updates.

Face Lift for School

We were assessed whether we had this type of concrete in the summer term and I am pleased to say that we do not have any. Schools who do have RAAC have now understandably leapfrogged schools such as our which were due a huge building investment. This means that we have made the very most of our current building. We are starting by a large scale ‘face lift’ and during the summer holidays and over the last few weeks a small team of us (inc ex pupils, staff & a few parents) have been beavering away scraping old paint, painting, weeding etc. The Pre-School Room has had new flooring put down and in half term will have a new false ceiling and softer lighting.



Later this term the Reception / Y1 playground is planned to be re-surfaced. The pond area is having an upgrade and will hopefully look quite different in a few weeks time. All the time we are considering biodiversity in our outdoor areas and insulation inside. A large telescope has recently arrived for the Science Lab and the fish tanks and plans to grow our own coral will at last start to take shape. Our popular library at the front of school is expanding and we are creating a more up to date signing in and out system.

The learning environment plays an important role in children’s well-being and spirituality. We are so lucky to have such a stunning setting, small quads, huge ancient trees and extensive fields. Our nursery children



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are starting to explore the full grounds in all their autumnal splendour, whilst many school children will be competing with conkers on the big field.

Conker Competition

From Wednesday we will begin our giant conker competition (open to children from Reception to Y6). For the younger children the number of accurate hits is what counts. For the oldest children it is the damage inflicted which decides the winner. Therefore, please ensure your child knows that their special conker will be likely to get a bit bruised and damaged. It is most important for any child wanting to join in that they bring their conker to school all ready (with its hole already made and the string or shoe lace threaded through and knotted).

Foci for the Term:

- 1) Spirituality in our Christian school – including ensuring we have relaxing, calm and inspiring spaces
- 2) Smartness – school grounds, the way we move through school, presentation in work and smart ways to think and learn (metacognition)
- 3) Communication & Language for Early Years; Outdoor learning for EYFS & Y1; sentence structure for Y2 to Y4; maths for Y5 & Y6

I hope you have got back into the swing of the new school year, I can't believe how quickly time is going and that in a week it is October.

Mr Storch