



Goodbyes [Article 28 - every child has the right to an education](#)

As you know, we are saying goodbye to members of our staff team this term. First of all goodbye to Miss Curry who is taking on a new teaching role at Walworth Primary School; we wish her the very best and thank her for all of her hard work at Oakley Cross over the past year. After Christmas, Sycamore Class will have Miss O'Neil and Mrs Stones as their class teachers and the children will continue to be supported daily by Mrs Collier. We will also be saying goodbye to Mr Readman who is retiring at the end of this term. Mr Readman has been our attendance officer for a number of years and has met with many of you on occasions. I hope you will join me in wishing Mr Readman a long and happy retirement! After Christmas we will welcome Mrs Mathwin to Oakley Cross. She will take over the role of school attendance officer and is very much looking forward to meeting our staff, children and parents. We also need to say goodbye to Mrs Wilkinson who will be leaving us to take up her new headship at Lingey House Primary School in Gateshead. Mrs Wilkinson has been here at Oakley Cross for many years and I know she is going to miss everyone in our Oakley Cross Family just as much as we are going to miss her. We wish Mrs Wilkinson the very best of luck in her new school and we hope she keeps in touch in the future. Mrs Askwith will be returning to Nursery after Christmas and I am sure the children will be thrilled to see her.

A Farewell Message from Mrs Wilkinson...

As we approach the end of term, I also approach the end of my time at Oakley Cross. I would just like to thank all pupils, parents, staff and governors (past and current) for making my time at Oakley Cross so special. I began teaching here in 2006 as a newly qualified teacher and didn't expect to be here as long; I hadn't expected Oakley Cross to capture my heart so much! I have absolutely loved working here and have so many amazing memories from the past 15 years. Now that I am teaching ex-pupils' children, I know I've been here a long time! I will be so sad to leave but am ready for a new challenge and can't wait to be headteacher of Lingey House Primary School in Gateshead. Oakley Cross really is an amazing school and I wish everyone the very best. I will keep in touch and look forward to hearing about all of the wonderful things happening at Oakley Cross in the future.

Take care, Mrs Wilkinson (previously Miss Hogg)

A Message from our Chair of Governors

As Chair of Governors I would like to inform you that Mrs Brannan has been successful in securing a promotion to Neville's Cross, a larger Durham primary school. She will be leaving Oakley Cross after Easter. I am sure you will join me in congratulating her on this good news, but we will be very sorry to see her go. Please be assured we are working to maintain high standards in school and will be working with the Local Authority to appoint the next headteacher in the near future.

Christmas Events [Article 14 - Every child has the right to think and believe what they choose](#)

Thank you very much for your support with our Christmas celebrations. Although things have been a little different this year, our children have still enjoyed their parties, a pantomime and a super Christmas dinner. Thank you to Sharon and Stacey in our kitchen for cooking up a feast! We are really grateful for the support with costumes for our performance of 'Bubble Trouble' which will be released on Friday this week. You will be sent an access password in order to watch this at home. Please do not copy or share this password as we need Head Teacher, Mrs R Brannan email: oakleycross@durhamlearning.net Tel: 01388 833186

to ensure the safety of all of our children - the video we have created is not for wider sharing. On Friday it is our Christmas Jumper day. Children can wear their Christmas jumper to school and pay £1 fine. They will receive a treat during the day of cookies and hot chocolate. Although we can't finish our term with our usual Carol Service in school, we are offering parents the opportunity to collect children earlier on Friday afternoon.

Blossom and Pine - COLLECT at 2:00pm
Sycamore and Willow - COLLECT at 2:05pm
Maple - COLLECT at 2:10pm

If you are unable to collect your child early, don't worry, we will not let them go! We will hang on to them until the usual time or until you arrive.

Food Hamper Draw *Article 24 - Children have the right to nutritious food*

We have been awarded funding from Greggs to purchase Food Hampers for families in school. We will draw names randomly on Friday morning and if your child's name is pulled from the hat, you will be contacted to come and collect your hamper on Friday afternoon. Please keep an eye on Parentmail as you may well be a winner!

Winter Vouchers *Article 24 - Children have the right to nutritious food*

The Government has released funds to provide winter vouchers to families who are entitled to benefits related free school meals (not the universal infant meal offer). We have received the voucher emails into school and processed these on Tuesday this week. If you are eligible and have not received your vouchers by the end of Wednesday could you please let us know? Instructions for accessing the vouchers were sent out via Parentmail.

COVID Update *Article 19 - Children have the right to be safe*

As you know we all need to work together to keep safe and stop the spread of COVID-19. At all times we need to be careful; we need to frequently wash our hands, especially if we leave/arrive home from the supermarket, shop, school, garage etc, we need to wear a face covering if we can't maintain a distance of 2m from other adults and we need to distance ourselves from others, giving others space. **After the Christmas holiday, our procedures will remain the same as we have not received any further guidance to suggest controls may be relaxed.** We will continue with a staggered start to the day and staggered collection at the end of the day - please be punctual. We will continue with regular hand washing in school and the children will continue to learn, play and eat in their 'bubbles'. Thank you for continuing to support us through this very difficult time.

COVID Symptoms *Article 24 - children have the right to the best possible health care*

Please remember to look out for the following symptoms which could indicate COVID-19:

- A new continuous cough (usually a dry cough and you will be coughing much more than usual)
- A high temperature
- A loss of taste and/or smell

Should you become aware that you have symptoms or that you or a member of your household has tested positive, it is important to alert school at the earliest opportunity. I have already sent home the procedures for reporting a new case of COVID if symptoms start on 18th, 19th or 20th December as I will need to support the track and trace process. I will be checking emails to the following addresses twice daily up to 24th December: oakleycross@durhamlearning.net and oakleybrannanoneil@gmail.com Thank you.

Attendance *Article 28 - every child has the right to an education*

Despite the absences due to COVID, our attendance this term has been good and overall is sitting at 95.97%. Please inform us as soon as possible if your child is not going to be at school; it is important that we enter the correct reason on our school register to avoid 'unauthorised' absences. It is particularly important at this time that we are made aware of any Coronavirus symptoms our children or family members may have. In line with safeguarding procedures, we do need to know **all** reasons for absence. Any child with low attendance or attendance which causes concern will trigger intervention from Mrs Mathwin our attendance officer or the Local Authority attendance team.

Safeguarding - Are your contact details up to date? *Article 8 - children have the right to a family*

It is important that we have up to date contact details for all children here on file at school. **We must be able to contact you in an emergency.** Please drop us a note if you think we may not have your current contact number: home, work or mobile. For safeguarding purposes we must also be informed of any changes to your child's home address/living arrangements as soon as possible.

Head Teacher, Mrs R Brannan email: oakleycross@durhamlearning.net Tel: 01388 833186

Governor Vacancies *Article 28 - every child has the right to an education*

We currently have one vacancy for a parent governor on our school governing body. If you are interested in this role or would like more information, please contact school. We also have one co-opted governor vacancy who could be a member of the wider community. We would be really interested in speaking to someone who may have expertise in finance and accounts.

Nursery Places *Article 28 - every child has the right to an education*

Our nursery is proving to be very popular this year. If you are interested in a place, or would like more information, please contact school and we will be happy to arrange an appointment to show you round and provide you with an application form. We are currently compiling a waiting list. We are monitoring attendance in nursery closely. Where we are concerned that children are not attending on a regular basis we will be contacting parents as places could be offered to other children who are on our waiting list.

Please don't hesitate to get in touch with school if you want to discuss anything. Have a lovely Christmas Holiday. Remember to stay safe and well and we look forward to seeing everyone back in school on

Tuesday 5th January 2021.

Thank you.

R Brannan

Dates for the diary

Maple Class Party	Thursday 17 th December
Christmas Jumper day and Treat Day	Friday 18 th December
Christmas Nativity Shared	Friday 18 th December
Break up for Christmas	Friday 18 th December - EARLY FINISHING TIMES
School re-opens	Tuesday 5 th January 2021