



Northbourne News

10th September 2021

It has been great to start to settle into the routines and patterns of more 'normal' school life this week. As always, your children have been wonderful, settling into their new classes and visibly enjoying learning and playing together. I know there will be lots of very tired Penguins, Puffins and Swans coming home to you this evening, so I hope you can enjoy a relaxing weekend ahead of more busy and exciting weeks.

Thank you to everyone for adjusting so quickly to the slightly altered dropping off and picking up times. A reminder that the school day starts at 8:55am; please ensure you arrive on site ready for children to be in their classrooms at this time, to avoid them being registered as late.

Across the school, attendance has been 98.6% this week – an excellent start. I hope this means everyone at home is staying well too. A couple of reminders around this:

- Children should isolate pending a PCR test if they show any of the 3 Covid symptoms: new and continuous cough; high temperature; loss of or change to sense of taste or smell.
- If any members of your household show symptoms or have positive tests, but your child has no symptoms, they can still attend school.
- In line with advice from Oxfordshire County Council, children should not attend school for 48 hours after the last bout of any sickness or diarrhoea.
- Please report any absence as soon as it is known with a message on the school answer phone – 01235 817744. Please don't send absence messages to class email addresses as these may not be checked before the start of the school day.

Reminders

- A polite reminder for children to not use **bikes and scooters** on the school site when arriving or leaving – to avoid bumps and keep everyone safe, please push these out of the car park gate and only cycle or scoot when on Cockcroft Road. Thank you in advance.
- We continue to ask that children don't bring sweets or any other items to give out on their birthdays; the ongoing impact of Covid means our Risk Assessment requires us to limit what comes into school as much as possible; again, thank you for your understanding.

Owls, Falcons and Hawks news

On Monday 13th September, Year 3/4 will be going on a short local walk to Mowbray Fields to launch their literacy unit based on The Promise, by Nicola Davies. Please ensure your child has a waterproof coat if inclement weather is expected, and / or has applied suncream prior to arriving at school if sunshine is forecast. We will be in school for lunch as usual. Please get in touch with your child's class teacher if you have any questions.

We love reading

At Northbourne we place huge importance on the role we all play in helping children develop a love of reading. We know that, if children learn to read, they can then read to learn...expanding their horizons by reading about any subject or anything that interests them. You will shortly be sent information about how we ask you to support reading at home so please look out for your child's Homework Leaflets on Parentmail and get in touch if you have any questions. Recommended reading lists are included on our school website (<https://northbourne.oxon.sch.uk/curriculum/english/reading/>), and we have attached a reading newsletter which may be of interest to this Parentmail. Keep your eyes out for more about our approach to reading as we go through the year.

Secondary transition events

Didcot Girls' School: Open Evening Wednesday 29th September, 4:30 – 7:30pm – no booking necessary. Other information about tours available on DGS's website: <https://www.didcotgirls.oxon.sch.uk/327/open-events-and-information-for-prospective-families>

St Birinus School: Open Evening Wednesday 22nd September, 5:30 – 8pm – no booking necessary. Other Open Mornings are available 28th, 29th 30th Sept and 5th, 6th, 7th, 12th, 13th and 14th Oct, starting at 9.15am.

Aureus Secondary School: Year 5 and 6 Open Evening Thursday 7th October, 5 – 7pm. Other Open Mornings are also available, with details on the school website: <http://www.aureusschool.org/548/open-events>

Internet Safety

Ensuring children understand how to keep themselves safe online is a key ongoing theme of many curriculum areas, including Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Computing. We know that these are conversations which you continue at home when agreeing, for example, how much screentime your children can have, and which apps they are able to use. The UK Chief Medical Officers provided some really helpful, easy-to-use guidance a year or so ago, a summary of which is below. This links closely to what we teach children in school and may provide some useful ideas for you to use during your ongoing discussions about being safe online.

UK Chief Medical Officers' advice for parents and carers on Children and Young People's screen and social media use

Technology can be a wonderful thing but too much time sitting down or using mobile devices can get in the way of important, healthy activities. Here are some tips for balancing screen use with healthy living.

Sleep matters

Getting enough, good quality sleep is very important. Leave phones outside the bedroom when it is bedtime.



Sharing sensibly

Talk about sharing photos and information online and how photos and words are sometimes manipulated. Parents and carers should never assume that children are happy for their photos to be shared. For everyone – when in doubt, don't upload!



Education matters

Make sure you and your children are aware of, and abide by, their school's policy on screen time.



Keep moving!

Everyone should take a break after a couple of hours sitting or lying down using a screen. It's good to get up and move about a bit. #sitlessmovemore



Safety when out and about

Advise children to put their screens away while crossing the road or doing an activity that needs their full attention.



Talking helps

Talk with children about using screens and what they are watching. A change in behaviour can be a sign they are distressed – make sure they know they can always speak to you or another responsible adult if they feel uncomfortable with screen or social media use.



Family time together

Screen-free meal times are a good idea – you can enjoy face-to-face conversation, with adults giving their full attention to children.



Use helpful phone features

Some devices and platforms have special features – try using these features to keep track of how much time you (and with their permission, your children) spend looking at screens or on social media.



Can you help us????!!

We have been very fortunate to have a hugely successful PTA at Northbourne in recent years, led by a dedicated and hard-working committee of parents and staff. During the pandemic, the children of a number of our key PTA members left us to move to secondary school and we would love to be able to form a new committee. In the past, the PTA have organised 3 discos a year, Quiz Nights and our Summer Barbecue, and the funds raised have been used to develop our Forest School, buy a trolley of Chromebooks and install a speaker system in the hall – all of which we could not afford from the main school budget. We would love to be able to run the events which we know our pupils enjoy so much, but need your help for this to happen...

Our committee is made up of a Chair and Vice Chair, Treasurer and Secretary, as well as a number of co-opted members. To be involved, you don't have to stand for a position on the committee, but can be a very much valued pair of hands setting up, tidying away and running events.

Please consider if you might be able to help us by lending us any of your time you can spare. A date for an AGM to establish a committee will follow in a future newsletter – in the meantime, please email me (head.3852@northbourne.oxon.sch.uk) or stop for a chat at the gate if you would like to find out more.