

# OVERSTONE NEWSLETTER

**April 2025**



Welcome to our April newsletter. We have had a busy start to the summer term with many parents attending our Numeracy morning on Monday. We hope you found it informative and enjoyed spending time in the classroom experiencing a maths lesson with your children. Our thanks go to Mrs Willett for arranging this. I would also like to thank the PTA for the start of Ice Cream Fridays, which I know will be appreciated in the sunny weather.

I wanted to use this month's newsletter to update you on the progress of our new Autism unit.

## Autism Unit – The Orchard

There has been lots of work going on behind the scenes by the Local Authority and the Architects, Atkins Realis. Final plans and specifications have been drawn up, costings have been done and there were visits to the school over the February half term from builders interested in the project.

Towards the middle of March, the tenders were in and considered by the Commissioning Team at Bucks Council and the building company, Eqibuild, won the contract. During the Easter Holidays, I met with the builders to finalise the detail within the build and to sort a timeline for the project to be completed.

The building work will be carried out in 2 phases. The top block, next to the pedestrian path, will be phase 1 and the main school and entrance space will be phase 2. Phase 1 will be the main priority between now and the end of the term, with phase 2 being over the summer holidays. As the building work progresses, there may be some work from phase 2 that can be done in the main school during the school term, but this will be kept to a minimum so that the children's learning is not disrupted. We will keep you updated on these developments. Just to remind you, this is the work that will be done:

### Phase 1

- Complete refurbishment of the top block to put in 2 classrooms (Apple & Cherry classes), a sensory room, a therapy room, a calm room and a staff room.
- Creation of a lobby area and front door space
- Installation of The Orchard playground equipment

### Phase 2

- Convert the current dining space to become the new calm room
- Refurbish the current S4A room into the new technology room
- Create a new storage space next to the current S4A room
- Decorate the existing library
- Reconfigure the front entrance space and include a new lobby
- Create a new meeting room and resource space

You may have noticed that some work has started today. The builders arrived ahead of time this morning and set to work straight away – let's take this as a good omen! Their first job is to set up their compound which will be in the top car park space. They have redirected the pedestrian footpath which the children, parents and visitors will use. They have also relocated the scooter park so that children can still scooter and bike to school.

As a result of this space becoming the compound, there will be far less space for staff to park on site. We know that parking is already an issue so please can all families walk if you live in the village, park away from the school and walk the last part of the journey or park at The Cock Inn. Staff have been asked to be considerate of our neighbours and we ask parents to do the same.

The builders have been asked that materials delivered to site come in outside of drop off and pick up but, inevitably, there will be times when this does not happen. If that is the case then there could be lorries needing to deliver and turn in the car park. We all need to think about the safety of the children, parents and staff, so please can all parents dropping and collecting children come via the pedestrian gate and not via the exit gate as there may well be vehicles leaving the site at this time. Please keep your children with you and do not let them run around the car park or play on the small piece of grass closest to the Children's Centre. We will have many more vehicles in the car park and we do not want children running between them.

The arrangements for S4A remain the same for the time being, but please be mindful of additional vehicles in the car park when you drop off and collect your children.

Mrs Blake, The Orchard's Lead teacher, started her role last week and has begun to get to know staff and children here already. She is busy starting work on creating a curriculum for the children in The Orchard and already has some wonderful ideas. The children have met her formally in assembly so can put a face to the name. Mrs Roberts and myself have also spoken with all the children to explain to them what the new building will be used for and how the building work will progress but please do redirect them to any member of staff if they have questions.

We will update you wherever possible but please catch a member of staff at any time if you need to ask us anything.

What is coming up in May.....

- **Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> May** – School nurse to see Reception and Year 6
- **Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> May** – Mufti day – bring an item for the PTA fete tombola
- **Monday 5<sup>th</sup> May** – BANK HOLIDAY – School will be closed
- **Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> May -Friday 9<sup>th</sup> May** - Y5 residential to Bushcraft
- **Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> May** – Reception trip to Ascott House
- **Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> May** – VE Day celebrations – More information to follow
- **Monday 12<sup>th</sup> May** – Year 6 SATS week starts
- **Monday 12<sup>th</sup> May** – Deaf Awareness Week
- **Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> May** – Year 2 trip to Hazard Alley
- **Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> May** – 2.00pm – Reception parents to visit Forest School
- **Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> May** – Year 3 – First Aid training
- **Friday 16<sup>th</sup> May** – Year 4 Bikeability
- **Friday 16<sup>th</sup> May** – 4.30pm – 7.00pm - PTA School Fete
- **Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> May** – Year 6 Leavers photos
- **Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> May** – Year 3 – History Off the Page experience
- **Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> May** – 8.45am – Headteacher Half Hour – The focus will be parental engagement
- **Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> May** – Year 5 Dinner and a Show – More information to Year 5 families to follow

- **Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> May** – End of Half term