



## Ox Close Federation Newsletter Friday 13<sup>th</sup> October 2023 – Volume 5

### Federation Colour Run Update

It has been a couple of weeks since the Colour Run so I hope the orange colour has disappeared from all scalps and fingernails. It was a fantastic afternoon – and finally, the weather was kind to us and the sun shone for the whole event. There were three different parts to the event; mindful music with chalk art and friendship bracelet making on the MUGA, an obstacle course and penalty shootout on the yard with the main event on the field. It's fair to say that there weren't too many clean participants! The activities were designed for the children to show our 8 different ENRICHED values and the children certainly demonstrated them in style. A little added note to say thank you to all the parents, carers, family and friends of the children for sponsoring them for the event. Please could we ask that sponsorship money is sent to the Federation office before Friday 27<sup>th</sup> October so that we can total the amount and let you know how much has been raised. Something to look out for ... photos of the event will be posted on SeeSaw in the next week!

### Football Celebrations

Well done to our two school football teams who have been competing in the Go Well League at Whitworth Park Academy for the past 4 weeks. After some impressive goals and performances, our Yellow team managed to get a draw tonight which helped them secure a 6<sup>th</sup> place finish. Meanwhile, our Blue team managed two victories tonight to claim 3<sup>rd</sup> place and take home the bronze medals. Over the last 4 weeks, we have noticed massive improvements in both teams. We can see players beginning to gel and build some chemistry, which bodes well for future tournaments. Well done to everyone, and thank you to the parents and carers for your support!



### Primary Book Fair

Next week, we will be hosting a Scholastic Book Fair in school, and we are excited to welcome this event back after a number of years away. Since our last fair, we have made some changes to how we organise and run the event, mainly that all books can be ordered and paid for online using the link or QR code that will be provided. Further details about how to do this and the times when parents/carers can pop in to visit the book fair, will be coming home via a separate letter tonight.

### Primary School Photographer

The school photographer will be visiting school on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> October. If you would like a family photograph including pre-school children, please come to the school hall for 8.15am. If you would like a family photograph including children from different classes, please let us know before 9.00am on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> October.

## Meal Bookings

There is an exciting new lunch menu starting after half term. The full menu can be found on our website: <https://www.ox-close.durham.sch.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/140/2023/10/Chartwells-North-Eats-AW23-Menu-with-JP-S-Selection-Meat-Ox-Close.pdf> Bookings will open on Arbor from Monday 16th October 2023 - please log in and make bookings for your child. Thank you for your continued support. Please note that this menu starts after the half term break on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> November.

## Children in Need - Pyjamas for Pudsey - Friday 17th November

It's getting closer to the time of year where we think about children across the world who need some help and support for many different reasons. Children in Need is a way for us to help the children in our community if we can. Over the past few years, we have asked for donations of food bank items - this has proved so successful in the past, our local food bank at St Paul's Church is always so very grateful of the donations. Items which work best for food banks include toiletries (e.g. toothbrushes and toothpaste, sanitary products), unperishable food (e.g. tinned, dried packets), baby products (e.g. formula milk, jars of food) and household items (e.g. washing up liquid, toilet rolls). This year, we would like you to bring an item in exchange for being able to wear Pyjamas for Pudsey. You can wear pyjamas, slippers, onesies, oodles or lounge wear - whatever you are most comfortable in. The only thing we would ask you to check is that you can still play outside in your footwear and that you can still go to the toilet! We always enjoy this day across the Federation but it is important for you to know how your donations help your local community. Maybe you would like to visit a local food bank to donate items other than through Children in Need. Maybe you already do. It would be lovely if you were to share this on SeeSaw. You can follow this link if you would like to find out more : <https://durham.foodbank.org.uk/>



## Parking and Traffic

The vast majority of parents park responsibly if they use the car to transport their children to school. Unfortunately, we have had some reports recently of some parents and carers who have parked dangerously, very close to the Reception and KS1 gate. Parking is not permitted in this area for obvious reasons and everyone has a responsibility to keep the children safe. It is important that everyone adheres to this in the best interests of all of the children and other adults. Thank you for your support and consideration.

## Parent/Carer Consultation Evenings

It has been great to welcome parents and carers in to Nursery and School this week to discuss how the children have settled in to their new classes and also the progress they are making in lessons. Working with you all is very important to us and we look forward to seeing you at other events throughout the year. If anyone was unable to attend, please contact the Federation Office to arrange a time to speak to speak to your child's teacher.

## Weekly Class Charts Top Scorers

Year 1	Fern S	Year 4	Seb A
Year 2	Sophie S	Year 5	Luca S
Year 3	Isabella W	Year 6	Scarlett W

## Attendance

Overall attendance for the week is 96% and the Year Group with the highest attendance is Year 4 with 98.3%. The overall school attendance for the academic year is 96%.

## Punctuality

The Primary starts at 8:45am. Please ensure that your child is at school on time so that they do not miss out on any learning. This week, we have had 430 late minutes - this is a huge amount of lost learning time.

## Dates for the Diary

Monday 23 <sup>rd</sup> October	OCF Halloween Party
Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup> October	Nursery - Butterflies Stay and Play
Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup> October	Primary - Photograph Day
Friday 27 <sup>th</sup> October	Halloween Fancy Dress Day
Friday 27 <sup>th</sup> October 11am - AM Children 2pm - All Day and PM Children	Spooky Storytelling
Friday 27 <sup>th</sup> October	3:15pm - School closes for Half Term
Monday 27 <sup>th</sup> November	PD Day - Nursery and School Closed
Friday 1 <sup>st</sup> December	Nursery - Santa Stay and Play Workshop
Wednesday 6 <sup>th</sup> December	10am and 2:30pm Reception Nativity
Monday 11 <sup>th</sup> December	10am and 5pm Year 3/4 Carol Concert
Tuesday 12 <sup>th</sup> December	10am and 5pm Year 1/2 Christmas Show
Wednesday 13 <sup>th</sup> December	10am and 2pm Nursery Christmas Songs
Thursday 14 <sup>th</sup> December	10am and 5pm Year 5/6 Christmas Show
Tuesday 19 <sup>th</sup> December	3:15pm - Nursery and School close for Christmas
Thursday 4 <sup>th</sup> January 2024	Children back to Nursery and School

## Safeguarding Update

This week, we have celebrated World Mental Health Day and raised awareness of the importance of sharing worries and looking after our wellbeing. Below are 12 top tips to support mental wellbeing – both children and adults can take part in these activities.

At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one issue of many which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit [www.nationalonlinesafety.com](http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com) for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

# 12 Top Tips TO SUPPORT MENTAL WELLBEING THROUGH NATURE Online and Offline

'Nature' is a superb choice as the theme of this year's Mental Health Awareness Week, as there's clear evidence that getting access to nature is excellent for our mental health. With Covid-19 restrictions beginning to ease, it's the perfect time of year to rediscover the natural world and give ourselves a calming, uplifting treat. You don't have to drag the family on a four-hour hike, either – just 10 minutes each day in the garden, in the local park or your nearest green space could really help. Here are 12 suggestions for ways you can benefit from nature – both online and off.

## ONLINE

## OFFLINE

- 1 Give something back to nature**

A swift internet search should bring up details of any local conservation projects you could volunteer for, or litter-picking events that you could enrol the family in. It doesn't have to be a long-term commitment: most schemes are grateful for every bit of help!
- 2 Tranquil streams**

Search your preferred music player for some soothing natural sounds. A few minutes' gentle audio of rainfall, ocean waves or birdsong are all great ways of unwinding at the end of the day to get you ready for an excellent night's sleep.
- 3 Give geocaching a go**

If you've not heard of it, geocaching is a modern twist on the traditional treasure hunt. Participants look for items hidden in outdoor locations, using a GPS-enabled device like a mobile phone or tablet. We'd recommend that an adult accompanies young adventurers!
- 4 Share what you see**

While you're out exploring nature, take a photo or video of anything you find that inspires you. Not only will it be a nice memory for you to look back on, but you could also share it safely on social media and maybe motivate others to engage with the natural world!
- 5 Watch the stars**

Looking at the night sky can be incredibly calming. There are some comprehensive stargazing websites and apps to help you locate and recognise different stars. It can take 20 minutes or so before you can see stars fully in the dark, even on clear nights, so allow your eyes time to adjust.
- 6 Wildlife on the web**

A Google search will bring up lots of sites that stream webcam footage of nature. From seals to barn owls, rabbits to badgers, you can get an intimate, heart-warming view of all kinds of animal communities from inside the comfort of your own home.
- 1 Ditch the phone**

Now the weather's improving, go for a walk in a green space nearby. If you're already familiar with your chosen route, you could always leave your phone at home to be completely free of the usual distractions and notifications.
- 2 Put down some roots**

Planting flowers, shrubs, herbs or vegetables can be extremely rewarding. Not only does it help us to connect with nature – it also provides an ongoing project to draw pleasure from. If your home doesn't have a garden, no problem: a window box will do the job just as well!
- 3 A different kind of tweet**

Most gardens in the UK attract a wonderful variety of birds, and just watching them for a few minutes can be immensely therapeutic. There are some excellent apps and sites to help you name any species you don't already know or even play a game: identifying bird song, like bird song bingo!
- 4 Feed your feathered friends**

Hang a bird feeder where you can easily see it from a window. Then enjoy the feelgood factor of satisfied avian visitors perching where you can see them. For something more advanced, you could try building a nesting box to fix onto a fence or under a windowsill.
- 5 Park your worries**

If you're lucky enough to live within easy travelling distance of a park, you'd benefit from using it. Whether it's to play ball games, get on your bike, walk the dog or just get some fresh air into your lungs, the potential bonuses for mental health are enormous.
- 6 Art and soul**

Younger children will enjoy drawing or painting animals or nature scenes, or writing a poem or song lyrics about nature. For extra art or crafting fun, you could collect natural materials – leaves, feathers, tree bark or seeds, for example – to use in your creations.

### Meet Our Expert

Anna Bateman is passionate about placing prevention at the heart of every school, integrating mental wellbeing within the curriculum, school culture and systems. She is also a member of the advisory group for the Department for Education, advising them on their mental health green paper.



**NOS National Online Safety**  
#WakeUpWednesday

Sources: <https://nhforest.org/caranandrus-lackdown-we-need-nature-now-more-ever> | <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/magazine/article/call-to-wild/> | 'Mental Health and Nature', Mind, 2018

[www.nationalonlinesafety.com](http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com) @natonlinesafety /NationalOnlineSafety @nationalonlinesafety

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# This week in Reception



We read the story of Oi Dog this week and have been thinking about rhyming words. The children drew their own rhyming pictures just like those in the story. Parrots sit on carrots; whales sit on nails.



We have enjoyed playing with conkers and talking about changes happening in autumn. We have been using crayons in different ways including using the side of the crayon to create some wonderful leaf rubbings.

We read the book Let's Make Faces by Hanoch Piven and tried to use natural materials to make faces of our own.

