

# Offwell C of E Primary School

Our Core Values: Honesty, Loyalty, Caring, Sharing and Forgiveness.



Dear Friends and Families of Offwell,

## Highlights of the Week:

**Ash:** Creating our 'Wild Crowns' for King Charles during our sunny welly walk to the woods.

**Willow:** Looking through the old log books of the school and looking at the old photos.

**Beech & Oak:** Beginning our swimming lessons.



Although we are only two weeks into the Summer Term and the weather has not been wholly cooperative, our classes have already started exploring Offwell woods, finding creative ways to give children positive learning experiences. For some of our Year 3 and 4 children, this meant experiencing what it might have been like to be a Roman, cooking a meal over an open fire; for Nursery

and Reception, it involved a new way to celebrate the King's coronation, making environmentally precious crowns. Each time, whatever the weather (almost), we are able to give our children something priceless: an enduring love of the natural world, of which we are only a part. Unlike the business of school and work, or the online world some of us increasingly inhabit, there is a real world out there, full of wonder and opportunity. An understanding of it and how we depend upon it, is an essential part of educating our children for the future.

## Strike Action: Tuesday

As you will see in our email, **we will be closed on Tuesday to all pupils except Year 6.**

As you know, each school must make its own decision based on their circumstances, and while many local schools have closed, we have remained open for the majority of the strike days. However, all staff within the NEU are entitled to take industrial action as a result of the current pay dispute, and I support their right to do so. Where this has been, or could be exercised, it impacts on our capacity to provide full cover.

In line with the DfE guidance, and in consultation with our Chair of Governors, we aim to reduce any potential impact on certain groups of pupils. To this end:

1) We will ensure that a packed lunch will be available for all of our children entitled to a free school meal due to economic reasons (pupil premium). These can be collected on Tuesday from Offwell School after 11.30am. Please let us know if you require one. If your child is in Year 6 and usually has a hot school dinner, we can provide a packed lunch for them to eat in school or you may choose to provide one from home.

2) We will provide academic and pastoral support for our Year 6 pupils (who can come in on Tuesday in their own clothes), in light of the proximity of their SATs and the two Bank Holidays, so that they can feel fully prepared, relaxed and ready for their assessments next week.

I hope you understand that this has been a complex decision, but one taken to give as much support to those pupils who might be most affected and give time for you to be able to make adjustments for the day.



**Friday, 28<sup>th</sup> April 2023**

## Stars of the week:

Reception – Riley

Willow – Iola

Beech – Jessica L

Oak – Sephira and Albert

## Next week:

**Monday;** Bank Holiday

**Tuesday;** WASP, Residential Parents' Meeting

**Wednesday;** WASP, PTFA Coronation craft event

**Thursday;** WASP, Oak & Beech swimming, Yr 6 Booster, Ash & Willow street party!

**Friday;** Celebration Collective

## House Points

**Attenborough: 47 Anning: 57**

Well done Anning!

## Mental Health Support

As mentioned last week, we are fortunate to have been able to be part of an initiative which will give support to pupils, staff and parents, so we can all benefit from good mental health. Learning how to talk about mental health, and how we can help each other, right from the start, is important for every family. Here is a link for a Parent-Led CBT book which gives any parent or carer information on: [Helping Your Child with Fears and Worries 2nd Edition: A self-help guide for parents:](#) [Amazon.co.uk: Cathy Creswell, Lucy Willetts, Prof Peter Cooper, Polly Waite: 9781472138613: Books](#) (it can also be found on eBay etc. and in audiobook form)

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## Helping Hedgehogs

Being Hog friendly is something we can all do to encourage and protect these wonderful little creatures and fulfil part of our wider environmental responsibilities. Hedgehogs are increasingly endangered by human activity, such as weed-killer, slug pellets, moving or burning wood-piles and removing hedges. Aside from being very cute, it is vital we

protect hedgehogs and preserve and increase biodiversity in every way possible. If you have seen 'Our Changing Planet' it is clear that we are just discovering how biodiversity protects our planet's precious climate and so, ultimately, protects us from the damage of climate change. This means that being kind to hedgehog-kind also helps human-kind!

<https://www.hedgehogfriendlycampus.co.uk/>

## Medical Advice on Strep. A

Please read the email sent out on Thursday, providing information from Public Health regarding Group A Streptococcus (Strep. A) illnesses, which have risen nationally, in recent years and can cause a nasty invasive infection under certain circumstances. One of our pupils experienced this, but is happily on the mend. However, we want to make sure we can all avoid potential complications.

Strep A infections are usually mild, often causing a sore throat. They are bacteria that exist naturally in our environment and can be found in the throat and on the skin. However, Strep. A may become invasive if it is able to enter the body e.g. through cuts, grazes or lesions.

The letter sent gives information about the disease, including the signs and symptoms to look out for and what to do if your child becomes unwell with mild, or more severe symptoms. Public Health have said there is no reason for any child to stay at home or well. They also said we do not need to make any changes in the school routine, but we will continue to ensure our hygiene practices reduce risk through: regular surface disinfection, soap and water hand-washing, avoiding messy play if infection is evident, using plasters for any open wounds (also good advice for home).

If you notice: ● High fever ● Severe muscle aches ● Localised muscle pain (located in a specific area/areas) then you are advised to take your child, with the letter, to A&E.

## Diarrhoea & Vomiting Bug

We currently have a number of children off school in Willow Class who have either been sick or have a tummy ache. A reminder that children should be kept home for 48 hours after the last bout of either sickness or diarrhoea. As mentioned for Strep A procedures, we are being extra vigilant with cleanliness within school at the moment. We are also still seeing new cases of chicken pox amongst our children so please be aware.

Lorna Legg, Be healthy in body and strong in spirit and may all go well with you...'

## Leaflets on Homework and Reading

This link will take you to some really helpful leaflets, produced by the Dyslexia Support Team. We will shortly be undertaking their training so we can support children even more effectively. The leaflets contain excellent advice for all parents and carers, which will benefit all children (scroll down to end of page):

<https://www.qe.devon.sch.uk/school-information/partnerships/devon-dyslexia-service/>

## Special Needs?

This video, by and about people with Down's Syndrome, made me think and gives a really important message about how we think of people's needs. First and foremost, it proposes, we are all human, so we all have very similar needs. We all need more help or care in some areas and less in others. If we are thoughtful of each other, learn to accept help and use our strengths to support others, we all benefit.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kNMJaXuFuWQ>