



Old Palace Newsletter

May 2021

After more than a year, we are happy to finally be able to relaunch our school newsletter. As many parents will remember, the newsletter not only shares information, but also allows us to celebrate the life of the school and to share the experiences provided to enrich the children's learning

In this edition, we look back at events that have taken place this half term.



CELEBRATING EID AT OLD PALACE

On Monday 17th May, we held class Eid parties. The children celebrated with party games, healthy food (including fruit platters) and some children also chose to wear their special Eid outfits.

On the same day, we also held an Eid party for the Reception parents. For some of these parents, this was the first time they had been able to visit the school site, so it was great to be able to welcome them properly to Old Palace. Due to COVID restrictions, we had to limit the numbers and to maintain distancing, but this did not prevent us from celebrating. Parents had the opportunity to meet each other and to look at the work that has been completed to improve the Reception outdoor area, while Mr Palmer, Mr Manalo and Mrs Rahman served the party food for them to enjoy. A good time was had, despite the heavy rain and it was lovely to finally meet the new parents.



On Tuesday 18th May, the celebrations continued, this time with two parties for parents with children in KS1 & 2. Again numbers had to be restricted and COVID guidance followed, but not even the rain could prevent the parties from going ahead. Again parents were served food provided by the school, along with some delicious extra kindly donated by some of our families. Everyone left feeling full!



IMPORTANT DATES



SUMMER HALF TERM

School finishes Friday 28th May 2021
Return to School Monday 7th June 2021

ANNUAL SCHOOL PHOTOS

Friday 11th June 2021

EID UL ADHA

School closed

Monday 19th July 2021 (TBC)

END OF SUMMER TERM

School finishes Wednesday 21st July 2021

For all other important dates please visit our school website www.oldpalaceprimary.co.uk

AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS

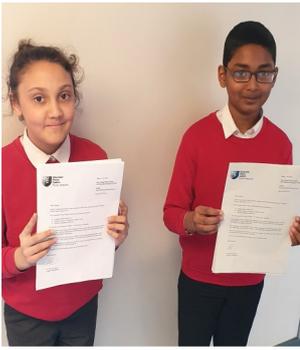
We were very happy to be able to restart clubs this half term, as we believe they are such an important way to extend the children's learning and to develop their social skills.



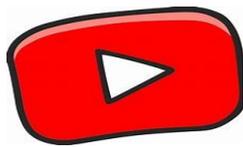
We will be writing to you after the holiday to share details of next half term's clubs. Again we aim to offer four clubs for each year group. If we have enough interest we will also launch a general after-school club which will last until 5pm and cost £10 per week per child. We still have a few spaces available at Breakfast Club—for more information please speak to Michele.



MET POLICE CADET PROGRAM



On Tuesday 11th May 2021, Sgt. Reece Buckley from the Isle of Dogs Police station visited the school as the head of the Cadets program. He talked the children through the cadet training for young recruits, showing the children some of the equipment used and outlined the aims of the cadet program. The children also had an opportunity to ask questions and see how some of the equipment is used.



ONLINE SAFETY

Apps such as Youtube Kids are often very popular. Such apps are often programmed to deliver continuous content which may result in the children having an unhealthy amount of screen time. One way is to help ensure a healthy balance this, is to make sure the 'autoplay' feature (which is automatically enabled) is turned off. This will enable you to control the amount of time your child is online. Please remember to supervise your child's online activity. Particular care should be taken with online gaming chat features and the use of social media apps. As we have mentioned previously, only those aged 13 or over should have their own social media account.



Children in years 5 & 6 took part in a workshop last half term designed to strengthen their awareness of stereotyping and cultural criticism. The workshop highlighted the importance of equality across a range of settings, and the children were able to role play a range of scenarios. For example, one of the activities was to choose 6 people to invite to a party. The children were given lots of different guests with varying backgrounds, for example, a famous British singer with 2 awards for their music, or a Bosnian refugee who fled their country to start a new life in the UK. The children had to use their understanding of equality to be fair in which guests they invited. The facilitators from Equaliteach, who led the session, made sure it was very engaging session. The children were able to take home activity packs to further their learning at home.

YEAR 5 CYCLING & ROAD SAFETY

Confident cyclists in Year 5 were given the opportunity to learn how to cycle safely on the roads. They were taught how to use the cycle lanes safely as well as learning how to indicate left and right. They thoroughly enjoyed the experience and managed to cycle all the way to the West Ham Stadium! We would like to thank Jay and Nathalia from Cycling Instructor for their support in developing the children's cycling skills.



BUILDING ON LEARNING



We continue to work hard to address any gaps in learning that the children may have acquired as the result of school closures and the switch to remote learning.

Our assessments show that it is the children in the younger year groups who need the most support, especially in Reading, as they were less able to access remote learning. For this reason, we targeted the children in years 1-3 for **Easter School** which ran for 3 mornings each week over the Easter holiday. The children completed a Reading, English and Maths lesson each. In Year 1 the children lessons were based on the book Mrs Wishy Washy which also allowed them to consolidate their knowledge of animals. In Year 2, the writing was based on Jack and the Beanstalk and in Year 3, the children read the Magic Tree series of short novels. Not only did these sessions allow the children to make progress with their basic English and Maths skills, it also kept up the routine of coming to school, which the children had missed out on. We would like to say thank you to the parents who sent in their children and to the staff who sacrificed their holiday, so that the sessions could take place.



The children in Reception have also been working hard on developing their reading skills this half term. As they have missed out on much of their early reading development, we have put in place intensive reading catch up sessions, led by Ms Dawson, which helps the children to build on their decoding and comprehension skills. We have also timetabled additional 1:1 reading sessions to boost the children's reading for enjoyment. To support this work, it is important that Reception parents read daily with their child, using both their child's phonics book and the books on Bug Club, which have been chosen to match the children's current reading ability.

END OF YEAR TRIPS

If the government guidance allows, we very much hope to be able to take each class on an end of year trip. Classes in years 3-6 will all get to enjoy a day at Thriftwood Outdoor Activity Centre. Here they will have a chance to take part in some of the activities, such as archery, high wires and an assault course, which they would normally get to enjoy on our residential trips. Reception will visit Hainault Forest, Year 1 will go to Hampton Court and Year 2 will visit the seaside at Chalkwell. The Governing Body has kindly agreed to allocate funds to cover the costs of these trips this year.

BROAD CURRICULUM

Since the start of this half term, we have been working to catch up on some of the subjects that the children have found more difficult to learn remotely.

French—normally French is taught across KS2, but this half term we have focussed on providing daily intensive French lesson to children in Years 3 and 5.

Year 3 can now greet a friend, ask questions and talk about how they are feeling. They are already speaking with fluency, accurate pronunciation and enthusiasm.

Year 5 have been exploring different types of French cheeses and sweets. Building on prior knowledge in Year 4, they have been sharing their opinions, and using new vocabulary to describe the taste and texture. Most children didn't enjoy the infamous soft cheese, Brie but Madeleines were a firm favourite.

Year 4 will receive intensive French lessons when they move up to Year 5 in the Autumn.

Music: We have been very fortunate to continue with our Music lessons at Old Palace. With the help from our specialist teachers and Mr Heighington overseeing the Music subject the children have benefited greatly.

Year 1 are taking part in a singing project delivered by Voces8 Foundation, who are a vocal music education charity. During the sessions, the facilitators will teach the children a selection of songs and musical activities which they then practise in class.

Year 3 have been learning the African drums (Djembe) this half term. They are working on dynamics (volume) and how to produce different sounds from the drum.

Year 5: Mr Heighington has been teaching Ukulele to 5C pupils this half term, and will be teaching 5A from Summer 2. The children have been exploring musicians that write for Ukulele, listening to a wide range of ukulele pieces, and even performing their own compositions to each-other.

Year 6: Year 6 have been working in small groups for advanced guitars, looking at composing their own pieces and performing as an ensemble. They have also begun to take part in advanced group tuition for keyboards.



DT DAY

This half term saw the return of our much loved DT days. This half term's focus was on 'Structures'. As part of their product analysis, the children learned about different structures such as shell, frame and mass. In KS1, the children focused on creating shell structures, whilst KS2 looked at frame and mass structures. The children worked with various materials - ranging from wood, card to even newspapers to create their structures. Not only were the children able to practise their design and making skills, they also had to work collaboratively in order to create a class structure.

With the theme being 'Structures' the children were taught key vocabulary, such as mass, shell, frame, triangulation and stiff, stable and reinforce. When making their structures, they were also asked to use the vocabulary they have learnt to explain how they could make their structure stronger, stiffer or more stable. As part of the DT day process they conducted a 'product analysis' which enabled the children to research about existing structures and think about the user, materials, cost, aesthetics and purpose – all of which are the fundamental principles of design. Once they completed this part of the day, then they moved on to design – this provided the opportunity for the children to showcase their design skills, using colour and labels to inform their audience of their design choices. Once they were happy with their designs, they then moved onto making their structure.



For further details of the children's learning this half term, please visit the class pages, [HERE](#).