



Dear Parents and Carers

I hope you all had a good half term break and were able to spend some time relaxing and enjoying autumn. It has been great to have the children back in school this week excited to be learning – even if some of them were a bit bleary eyed after sweets and late nights last week. As the nights draw in and the clocks have gone back it is **darker early in the evenings**. If your Y5 or Y6 child makes their own way home from school, please encourage them to go straight home after school. I know some of them enjoy staying to play outdoors after school, but it can make it very dark by the time they eventually get home. Similarly, if they stay for an after school club I would strongly advise sending an adult to pick them up afterwards as there are fewer people walking home at that time, as well as it being darker.

One of the great things about the darker evenings is that it must soon be time for our **Winter Festival of Fire**. We celebrate outdoor learning, the turning of the seasons and our school community being together straight after school on Wednesday 17th November. We have a fire, naturally, with some toasted treats and campfire singing of winter and Christmas songs (their first public appearance of the year). We have stalls offering arts and crafts and other outdoor activities as well as food and drink for sale in the hall. FOSOPS will be helping with this as well as running a cake stall – please consider whether you could offer any **cakes** or buns for us to sell. (There will also be a stall selling new to you uniform so that you can stock up on additional jumpers to keep children warm through our well-ventilated winter!) If you know of any suitable **firewood** going spare it would help us tremendously if you could get it to school and stack it by the fence near to the fire pit. Please ask around!

FOSOPS (Friends of Shire Oak Primary School) met online this week to plan their contribution to the Winter Festival of Fire as well as organising the Christmas discos and a hot chocolate sale. They are starting to collect donations of prizes for their Christmas **raffle**. If you, your firm or a local business you know can donate any prizes, we would be extremely grateful. Please bring them to school (or a description if it is a voucher/IOU) by the 17th November. That way we can display them at the Winter Festival of Fire and start selling lots of tickets before the draw on Monday 13th December! FOSOPS always welcome more members and occasional offers of help – please let a member of staff know if you would be happy to get involved and don't know who to speak to.

This week children throughout school have been busy learning about the festival of **Divali**. This morning we were treated to a whole school assembly where we shared our learning and celebrated the triumph of light over darkness. It was good to see the children rediscovering their skills or presenting to the whole school and singing and reflecting together.



Well done to **Year 2** who shared a lovely celebration **assembly** with us this week. I hope all their parents and carers have watched it too.

Susan Koyuncu in the office has asked me to let you know that if you pay for **school dinners** for the whole half term the charges are £84.00 for the full half term or £76.80 if in Year 6 (due to residential).

PAFRAS sent us this lovely message after receiving their share of our **Harvest Festival** donations: *I just wanted to pass on a massive thank you for the Harvest Festival donations we received this morning.*

Harvest Festival is a really important time of year for us because the food that we get now will see us through to the start of next year. The food parcels that we provide are vital because our service users do not have access to public funds and do not have permission from the Home Office to work. This means that they only have their asylum support to live off (approximately £6 per day) and are not allowed to access mainstream food banks. Many of our clients do not even have access to basic asylum support so support from charities like PAFRAS is the only support they have.

The food and toiletries that were donated will be distributed on a weekly basis at our Wednesday drop-in service and through home visits.

Thanks again for your support- we really appreciate it.

We had one case of **COVID** reported just before we broke up for the half term, in Year 6. The half term holiday has hopefully helped with reducing the opportunity for transmission both of COVID and the other bugs that were going round at the end of October. Please continue to be vigilant and check out any symptoms with a PCR test. In addition, if your child has been identified as a close or household contact they can now undertake daily LFD testing while waiting for a PCR result to come back. These can be picked up at a local pharmacy or accessed via the gov.uk website.

Thank you for letting the children **dress up** today to celebrate the season of Autumn in their chosen way – it made for a very colourful assembly this morning!

I hope you have a lovely weekend.

Jane Astrid Devane

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DIARY DATES

Monday 8 th November	(virtual) Roman visitor to Year 4
Thurs 11 th November	Drama Workshop as part of Anti Bullying Fortnight
Wed 17 th November	Winter Festival of Fire straight after school
Friday 19 th November	Nasal Flu vaccinations
Tues 23 rd November	Open Morning for prospective parents
Mon 20 th November	Y6 Viking Visitor
Tues 30 th November	Headingley Christmas lights switch on and carol singing at/outside St Michael's Church
1 st - 3 rd December	Year 6 Residential trip to Robinwood
Thursday 2 nd December*	FOSOPS meeting 9:30am over Zoom (all welcome!)
Friday 3 rd December *	After school hot chocolate sale in the hall
Wed 8 th December	School nurses (YR & Y6) for Nat Ch Measurement Programme & distance vision screening
Thursday 9 th December	Y4 trip to the Media Museum in Bradford
Thursday 9 th December	Reception and KS1 Nativity productions TBC
Tuesday 14 th December	Carol Service at St Michaels' Church
Tuesday 14 th December*	Book Club visit to watch Peter Pan at Leeds Playhouse in the afternoon d
Wed 15 th December	Christmas discos after school, Y1 Y2 Y3 3:15 – 4:45pm and Y4 Y5 Y6 5-6:30pm
Thurs 16 th December *	Christmas party food lunch (children with packed lunches can also bring treats today)
Friday 17 th December	Alive & Kicking Christmas drama
Thursday 20 th January	Y1 trip to Abbey House Museum
Sunday 13 th February	Shire Oak Sunday St Michael's Church (we are invited to take part in the All Age Service)
27 th – 29 th April 2022	Lineham Farm residential for Year 4
9 th to 12 th May 2022	KS2 SATs (Year 6)
16 th to 20 th May 2022	Bikeability for Year 6
23 rd /24 th May	D:side sessions on medicines, alcohol and drugs TBC
https://www.leeds.gov.uk/residents/children-families-and-carers/schools-and-learning/school-calendar term dates	