



WALTON OAK WIRE

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Quick
Links

Term
Dates

School
Calendar

FOWO

Uniform

School
Meals

Pastoral
Support
Team

Trust
Jobs

Online
Forms



Headteacher's Message

It has been wonderful to welcome back many of our Walton Oak families this week, with children in Nursery and years 1-6 returning to school in the sunshine. I have particularly enjoyed hearing about all the adventures the children had with their families during the holidays. A lot can happen during the six week break and we are acutely aware of the fact that not everyone will have had the same experiences. However, we hope that the children's first week back with their new teachers and friends has been a positive one. The school has certainly felt incredibly calm and settled and we are very proud of how quickly the children have adapted to their new class routines.

Our staff returned to school last Friday 1st September for our in-service training (inset) days. With several new members of staff joining our team, we spent time our first day getting to know each other and considering how important it is to feel a sense of belonging. Knowing that you are accepted and valued for who you are creates a feeling of safety which is an essential ingredient for wellbeing and achievement. We reflected on how well we prepare the learning opportunities and environment at Walton oak to ensure children feel as though they belong. Consistent routines and positive relationships are an important aspect of this, supported by the values that form our Walton Oak Way.

Other areas that remain a focus are: reading, as we saw such a positive impact from our provision last year and wish for that to continue; and ensuring that learning across the curriculum really 'sticks' so children can refer back to previous learning when making new connections. We have lots of plans already in place regarding both of these areas and are really excited about the year ahead.

I hope you like our new look newsletter. We have been considering how to ensure that it contains a good balance of celebration and information as well as being easy to navigate. The buttons at the side are 'live' links to our webpage – see below for more information.

Finally I'd like to welcome our new Reception parents who are receiving the Walton Oak Wire for the first time, in advance of their children joining us next week. It is the start of an exciting new journey for you and your children, as they embark on their seven year journey into primary school. I look forward to getting to know you all over the coming weeks.

General Information and Reminders

New Look Wire

The new layout of the Walton Oak Wire is designed to help you navigate to the information you need most, a lot more easily. There will be regular sections each week that give information about events that have taken place in school, provide helpful information and celebrate the children's achievements. You will notice that there is no longer a date's page at the bottom of this letter. This is because the buttons to the side of the front page are live links to our school website. The online calendar is regularly updated and contains all the latest dates for your diaries. This page can be viewed as a chart or a list by selecting either the 'calendar' or 'month' view. It can also be printed for fridges and noticeboards. You can view the online calendar with a simple click, along with the other information about FOWO, school meals, term dates, the pastoral team, uniform, online forms and jobs in the Trust. Please explore and let us know if you experience any problems with finding the information you require so that we can support you in navigating your way around.

Zebra Crossing

It has been a long time in the planning and finally we have a zebra crossing outside our school, as well as additional road markings that open up the visibility for pedestrians and traffic, making it a safer place for children to cross. Thank you to the parents who have campaigned tirelessly for this development to take



place. There may be some refinement works happening in the coming weeks that could cause further closure. We will endeavour to manage this with our crossing patrol officer. Thank you to Mr Godinho for his willingness to carry out this role (despite it not being in his original job description) so cheerfully over the past two years. He has been a popular feature for the children each morning and will be missed on the crossing. Don't worry though, he will still be on the gate each day to keep an eye on the road and provide a welcoming smile.

EYFS Outdoor Area

I expect many of you have noticed our newly extended and renovated Early Years area where our Nursery and Reception children will enjoy playing, learning and developing a wide range of skills. We are so very grateful to our wonderful parents who, through your contributions to FOWO events and activities, helped us to purchase the interactive water wall in Nursery and the interactive stream in the Reception area. Both spaces open up a wealth of opportunities for the children as they can control the pumping of the water, enjoy the sensation that the flowing water brings and create water journeys through floating objects and making damsns.

Each play area also has a climbing stack, mud kitchen, bug hotel, creative play area, mark making area and many other resources that bring creativity and interest to the children's day. We are already planning ways to further enhance the environments once we have had the opportunity to watch the children at play and identify their interests within the new spaces. Here are some photos of our Nursery children enjoying their outdoor environment. We will capture our Reception children at play next week.





New Awards

In addition to our very special gold leaves and house competition prizes, we are introducing two other awards that children will be able to strive to achieve on a half termly and termly basis:

WOW Values Award: Each half term, teachers will be looking out for the children who are consistently demonstrating our Walton Oak Way and striving to live our school motto of Being Our Best. The award will be linked to the theme of our assemblies each half term and the associated values. Our WOW values are: We are ambitious; We are Collaborative; We are Courageous; We are Curious; We are Inclusive; We are Kind; We are Resilient; We are Respectful. Children learn about these values and what it means to live by them and demonstrate them in work and play. Two children each half term will receive the award from each class.

Headteacher Award: This is a very special award and one that only some children will receive during their time at Walton Oak. It is for the children who show tremendous effort to be their best, whether it be because they consistently demonstrate WOW values and effort in everything they do, or because they have overcome barriers and made progress in their academic, social or emotional development. One child in each class will be awarded this certificate each term.

Reading

Reading Ambassadors

The introduction of Reading Ambassadors last year was a great success. The scheme will continue this year with opportunities for others to become ambassadors as well as further challenges and activities for existing ambassadors. Look out for more information to follow soon.



Pastoral News

Introducing Miss Williams, our new Emotional, Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA)

Many of our families will know me from when I joined the Early Years team as a Teaching assistant in September 2015. In 2020 I trained as a licenced Thrive practitioner which is a developmental and trauma-sensitive approach to meeting the social and emotional needs of children. After completing my training, I worked closely with the HSLW, Pastoral Co-ordinator and Nurture lead offering 1:1 and small group sessions to children across the school from Early years to Year 6. In July 2023 I was appointed to the ELSA (Emotional Literacy support assistant) position at Walton Oak. This year I am looking forward to working closely with Natasha, our HSLW supporting children and Families by offering 1:1, small group sessions with the children, embedding the Young Carers initiative across the school and running parent coffee mornings as well as being a friendly face at the School gate.

Introducing Natasha Herron-Duke, our new Home School Link Worker (HSLW)

My name is Natasha Herron-Duke and I am new to role at Walton Oak as the Home School Link Worker (HSLW). I have worked within the Lumen Trust for a number of years and am very excited to be working alongside the families and children of Walton Oak School. I look forward to developing those relationships and as such, understand how important communication is in bridging the gap between home and school. As a HSLW I am readily available for parents/carers and the children to reach out for support for a variety of needs, should this be necessary. I am available via mobile on 07938 645 949 or via email at:

natasha.herronduke@lumenlearningtrust.co.uk. All children have a right to feel safe, secure and happy. These values remain core reason for my work at Walton Oak.





FOWO News

Nursery and Reception Welcome Events – Thursday, 14th and Friday, 15th September

FOWO would like to invite all nursery and reception parents/carers to two welcome events next week. We hope to see you there!

- **Thursday, 14th September:** Drinks at The Swan pub. We have an area booked from 7.30pm
- **Friday, 15th September:** Coffee morning in Little Oaks from 9am. Younger siblings/children are welcome!

FOWO Committee and General Meeting – Tuesday, 26th September, 7pm

FOWO is on the lookout for some new committee members! Being on the committee is open to all parents/carers; no special experience is necessary, just a willingness to get involved. If you want to become a committee member, you are not expected to get involved in everything that FOWO does. We are all volunteers; we all do this in our spare time around other family/work/volunteer commitments, and we try to spread the load between us. You can find out what to expect in this [explainer](#) here or talk to one of the current FOWO committee members.

On **Tuesday, 26th September at 7pm** we will be holding our Annual General Meeting. This is open to all parents/carers and staff associated with the school. The current chair and treasurer will provide a brief overview of the activities and finances over the last year. As is usual, the current committee will then stand down, and the new committee will be voted in. If you want to join the new committee, come along on the day or ask for Zoom details to join remotely. If you cannot attend on the 26th and want to join, please email us (fowo@lumenlearningtrust.co.uk), and we can arrange for you to be added to the nomination list. You can also join the committee at any point during the school year; email us to learn more.

FOWO Class Reps

We are searching for more class reps, particularly for Year 2 (no rep) and Years 4 and 6, where there is just one person. Being a FOWO Class Rep, means joining the Class Rep WhatsApp group and forwarding FOWO information to class/year group WhatsApp chats. It's a really important way for us to advertise events. You are not expected to take on other tasks, such as class collections. Thanks to all those who have offered to be Class Reps for the coming year. If you can help with any of the gaps, please email: fowo@lumenlearningtrust.co.uk as soon as possible:

Nursery: Daisy Jewell, Vania Oliveira

Reception: Lucy Bishop, Sarah Shotton, Alison Wong

Year One: Rebecca Lunn, Caroline Smart

Year Two:

Year Three: Kirsty Hubbard, Vicki Bateman, Emily Jarman

Year Four: Lucy Bishop

Year Five: Caroline Smart, Anika Mann-Patel

Year Six: Caroline Feltham

Uniform Donations

Have you had a clear out of old uniform? If so, FOWO would gladly take it off your hands for future uniform sales. Leave any clean, good-quality reusable uniform in the purple FOWO bucket in the foyer. It will be there all of next week. No old logo items, please, as we can't sell these or give them away.

FOWO Funding – EYFS Outdoor Area

We were really excited to see the new Early Years outdoor area on returning to school! FOWO was delighted to contribute £8,000 in funding, which paid for the stream in the reception play area and the water wall in Nursery. Thank you for all of your contributions over the last year that made this possible; whether you bought raffle tickets, had a clear out for Bag2school collections, contributed a cake for the cake sales or helped on a stall at a fair, it really does make a difference, with funds raised going straight back into the school environment!

Class list – Nursery, Reception and Year 1 parents

If you are on Classlist, please can you check that your child(ren) are in the correct year group? So, Nursery 23-24, Reception 23 – 24, Year One 23- 24. Their classes will not have automatically updated from last year, as we don't know if your child moved up from nursery or which year one classes they were allocated to. The old 2022-23 classes will no longer be used, and you won't receive any notifications if in these year groups. To update the class:

- Log into the app
- Click on your profile picture (bottom right)
- Click children and classes
- Click edit next to the child's name
- Click child's class
- Select the class they are in this year.

All other year groups and classes were renamed, so your child(ren) should have moved automatically.



Oracy

Thunk Time

Thank you for spending time considering the Question of the Week last year. This year there will be a 'Thunk' in the Wire which the children will have had time to look at and discuss in class assembly time. A Thunk is a simple looking question or statement about everyday things, that stops you in your tracks and helps you to start to look at the world in a whole new light. They are designed to make you think and can sometimes make your brain ache! This is because they either have no answers... or lots of answers. Look out for the first one next week.



Enrichment Clubs

Have you signed up yet?

Earlier this week, the list of enrichment clubs for the autumn term was shared with you. I hope your children have found an activity that they like the sound of and that you have shared this preference via the link: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdY6oQbfqs6kmi8YUOCGD3t73DX326ParjIe7sr7oRktZ3bVg/viewform?usp=sf_link. Spaces have been reserved for the new Reception children and this information will be shared with parents and carers once your children have joined us next week.



Celebrations



Gold Leaves

Well done to **Joey boy Chambers, 5B** who is our first Gold Leaf achiever this academic year! There have been many green points earned this week and several children moved up the Stay on Green chart so we know there will be more gold leaves to celebrate over the coming weeks!

