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Leading Lifelong Learning; Creating Caring Communities.

DRY SANDFORD SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

September 2025

WELCOME BACK

A warm welcome back to a fresh new year at Dry Sandford Primary School. The children have settled in so well and there has been a lovely calm, positive buzz around the school. It has been a pleasure to welcome our new reception children and their families to Owlets class this week.

The first few days were a chance to re-establish routines and expectations and help children get to know the staff and pupils in their classes. September is always a great time to encourage children to set goals for themselves and rise to the challenge of an older year group, such as taking on greater independence and responsibility at school and at home.

Through lessons and assemblies, we have also been reminding the children of the school values that are at the heart of everything we do: **Kindness, Respect, Determination and Creativity.**

Class Curriculum Letters will be sent out later this week with further details of what learning and topics will be covered in each class this term as well as routine and timetable reminders from the teachers.

OFFICE TEAM

Our school office is open from 8.45am-3.15pm, every day that school is open to pupils.

With Mrs Napper now teaching in Snowy Owls class on a Friday, there will be a slight change in the working pattern of our office admin team:

Mrs Helen Lyons (School Administrator and Finance Officer):
Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays

Mrs Natalie Napper (Assistant Administrator):
Tuesdays and Thursdays

Our door is always open – please do not hesitate to pop in or contact us by email or phone if you need any assistance or information.

COMMUNICATION

- **Class teachers** are available at the classroom/cloakroom door at drop-off and pick-up times each day and are happy to be given informal messages at this time.
- All other communication should be directed, in the first instance, to the **school office, by email or phone.** For example, if you need to discuss a more sensitive matter or require more time. The office team will direct your message to the relevant member(s) of staff.
- The **Class Dojo** app is used to share dates, reminders and photos with parents and guardians. Please note that, while teachers may occasionally use the direct messaging function to make individual contact, this is not routinely checked – please email the school office, rather than directly messaging teachers through dojo.
- **School Newsletters** are emailed once a month, with important dates, information and reminders for all parents and guardians. **Class Curriculum Letters** are sent to each class once a term with details of class learning, topics, homework and events. Most other letters, such as trip letters, will be sent by **email.**
- You may also receive **text messages** from school with messages and to communicate first aid incidents.

ARBOR

Many thanks to everyone who has downloaded the new Arbor app and taken the time to update their details and get to grips with the functions that have been rolled out so far.

If you need any support with using the Arbor parent portal, please speak to Natalie or Helen in the school office who will be happy to help. Or pop along to our drop-in Arbor support session on **Tuesday 9th September from 2.30pm.**



Here is a handy checklist to help you keep track of everything we have asked you to do so far:

- Download the Arbor app (or open the web-based version on a desktop or laptop computer)
- Set up your Parent Portal account and log-in
- Check that all of the details recorded in your child(ren)'s 'profile' section are correct and up to date; and added in any missing details (particularly emergency contact details and medical information)
- Grant parental permissions in the 'consent' section of your child(ren)'s profile
- Top up the payments in your child's 'meals' and 'clubs' accounts to enable you to make bookings (if necessary)
- Book school lunches for your child (before 7am of the day of the meal)
- Book breakfast and after-school club sessions for your child (at least 24 hours before the session)
- Check, update, sign and return the printed Data Collection sheet that was sent home on Friday

With Parents Evening coming up in October, appointments will be made available to book on Arbor a few weeks before. Look out for an email with further details of how to book nearer the time.

Did you know...?

Breakfast and After-School Club places can be paid for using your government Tax-Free Childcare account, saving you 20% off fees. To find out more and see if you are eligible, visit this website:

<https://www.gov.uk/tax-free-childcare>

If you would like to start paying this way, or using childcare vouchers from your workplace, please contact Helen Lyons, our School Administrator and Finance Officer, who will be able to explain how you can make payments and book places through Arbor.

CLUBS

If your child is interested in joining our new Wednesday lunchtime chess club, follow this link to sign up and pay for the 13-week term:

<https://www.chesscoachingservices.net/online-payments/school-club>

This term, Footy Kids will be running an after-school multi-sports club on Fridays, from 3.15pm-4.15pm. To sign your child up and pay for the first 7-week term, follow this link: <https://enrolmy.com/footy-kids/activity/467-Dry-Sandford-Primary-School-Term-1-Multi-Sport-After-School-Club>

FREE SCHOOL MEALS

Free School Meals (FSM) are available to children whose parents or carers are in receipt of certain benefits, such as income support, universal credit and child tax credits.

Even if your child is already entitled to Universal Free School Meals (UFSM), because they are in Reception, Year 1 or Year 2, it is still beneficial to apply for FSM because your child will get additional funding to support them in school and you receive additional support, such as food vouchers and childcare discounts during the school holidays.

If you think you might be eligible, please let the school office know. We will just need a few details from you (your name, date of birth and national insurance number) to check your eligibility and register your child with the local authority.

BACK TO SCHOOL REMINDERS

- If your child is unable to attend school due to illness, please inform the school office either in person, by email or by phone ***before 9.30am*** on ***each*** day of absence.
- At the start of the school day, the playground is not supervised by school staff. You are welcome on the school playground from **8.30am** - children remain the responsibility of their parents and school play equipment should not be used at this time. When the cloakroom doors open at **8.40am**, a member of staff will greet each class and children will have time to hang up their belongings, get set up in their classroom and begin their early-morning-work task before the register is taken at **8.50am**. Cloakroom doors will be closed and locked at this time – children who arrive after this time will need to come directly to the school office and their attendance will be recorded as 'late'.
- The school gates are locked between **9am and 3pm**. In between these hours, visitors to school should come to the small gate through the staff car park and ring the doorbell or phone the school office to inform us of your arrival. Please avoid using the staff car park apart from this.
- When **driving and parking** near the school, please be considerate of our neighbours and other drivers by not blocking drives, avoiding parking on the bend on Lashford Lane and not using The Field, which is a private road.
- Snacks and packed lunches should follow our **healthy** food approach and include a balance of different food groups. We encourage fruit and vegetables for break time snack. Please refrain from sending in items with high sugar, fat or salt content, such as chocolate bars and sharing bags of crisps. Children should also bring a **named water bottle**.
- A reminder of our **school uniform** expectations is attached along with this newsletter. Make up should not be worn to school. Shoes should be all-black shoes or trainers. Each child should have a pair of **wellies** kept in school at all times – we regularly ask children to change into them for playtimes when the weather is wet and during outdoor learning lessons, such as Forest School, geography or science.

FODSS

We are very pleased to share that the recent Summer Fair in July raised a fantastic £1800! If attending the summer fair has inspired you to get more involved in our school PTA - Friends of Dry Sandford - they are always keen to welcome new core members and regular volunteers.

Email premierjan@gmail.com, follow the FODSS Facebook page, or speak to a member to find out more.

GOVERNORS

The role of the school governing body is to provide strategic guidance, help to set the school's vision and ethos, oversee financial performance, and support the headteacher and staff in upholding school standards and performance. We currently have spaces available for co-opted school governors. If you are interested in finding out more about what is involved or putting yourself forward, speak to Mrs Friday.

SWIMMING LESSONS

Unfortunately, due to the unexpected closure of Our Lady's School, our planned swimming lessons have been cancelled. We have contacted several local swimming pools and schools and will give you further information when an alternative plan has been confirmed. If you had not already paid and signed up for swimming lessons via Arbor, you now do not need to do this. If you have already consented and paid, don't worry – this payment will either be returned to you or paid forwards when a new plan is confirmed. Many thanks for your patience with this.

CALENDAR DATES:

Tuesday 9 th September 2025 – 2.30-3.30pm	New Year Drop-Ins – further details below & on Class Dojo
Thursday 18 th September 2025 - PM	Flu immunisations (nasal spray) – whole school
Monday 22 nd – Friday 26 th September 2025	Music Flood Week activities in school throughout the week
Friday 10 th October 2025 – 9.15pm	Harvest Festival Assembly in School Hall - Families Welcome
Monday 13 th October 2025 - AM	Individual Pupil Photographs taken in school
Tuesday 14 th October 2025 – 3.30-5.30pm	Parents Evening 1
Thursday 16 th October 2025 – 4.00-6.30pm	Parents Evening 2
Tuesday 4 th , Wednesday 5 th and Thursday 6 th November – 3.15-3.30pm	Visiting Book Fair – sale after school
Monday 27th – Friday 31st October 2025	OCTOBER HALF TERM HOLIDAY – school closed
Monday 3rd November 2025	INSET DAY – school closed to pupils
Friday 14 th November 2025	Children in Need
Thursday 4 th December 2025	Whole School Pantomime Trip – further details to follow
Monday 8 th December 2025	Christmas Jumper Day
Tuesday 9 th December 2025 – 2pm	Carol Concert (Snowy Owls & Eagle Owls)
Thursday 11 th December 2025 – 2pm & 5.30pm	Nativity Performances (Owlets & Barn Owls)
Monday 15 th to Wednesday 17 th December 2025	Bikeability cycling training & road safety (Eagle Owls)
Thursday 18 th December 2025	School Christmas Lunch
Thursday 18 th December 2025 - PM	Snowy Owls & Eagle Owls Class Christmas Parties
Wb. 15 th December - tbc	Owlets & Barn Owls Class Christmas Parties
Monday 22nd December 2025 – Friday 2nd January 2026	CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY – school closed
Monday 5th January 2026	INSET DAY – school closed to pupils
Monday 16th – Friday 20th February 2026	FEBRUARY HALF TERM HOLIDAY – school closed
Monday 30th March – Friday 10th April 2026	EASTER HOLIDAY – school closed
Monday 4th May 2026	INSET DAY – school closed
Monday 25th May – Friday 29th May 2026	MAY HALF TERM HOLIDAY – school closed
Monday 1st June 2026	INSET DAY – school closed
Monday 20th July 2026	INSET DAY – school closed
Tuesday 21st July 2026 – Friday 31st August 2026	SUMMER HOLIDAY – school closed

New Year Drop-Ins

Headteacher Coffee & Chat



Pop in for an informal coffee and chat with Mrs Friday

A chance to meet other members of the school community and find out more about the latest school news!

Tuesday 9th September
2.30-3pm
School Hall
(Lashford Lane Pedestrian Gate entrance open from 2.30pm)

Arbor Support Drop-In



Pop in to see our office team, Mrs Lyons and Mrs Napper, for support using Arbor

A chance to ask any questions you may have about the new Arbor administrative system and be supported in setting up and using the app

Tuesday 9th September
2.30-3pm
School Hall
(Lashford Lane Pedestrian Gate entrance open from 2.30pm)

Classroom Drop-In



Pop in to have a look around your child's new classroom and meet their teacher

A chance for your child to show you around their classroom. Class teachers will be available for an informal chat and to answer questions.

Tuesday 9th September
3.10-3.30pm

Collect your children as usual from their normal cloakroom doors. Then, when all of the children have been collected, you'll be welcomed into your child's classroom through these entrances:

- **Owlets: Owlets playground door**
 - **Barn Owls: Field-side door**
 - **Snowy Owls: Field-side door**
 - **Eagle Owls: Field-side door**