

Principals' Post

KEEPING YOU INFORMED FROM MR SPRINGETT-MCHUGH & MRS DRAPER

HAPPY NEW YEAR AND WELCOME BACK!

Dear Families

Happy New Year! We hope you all had a joyful and restful Christmas break, filled with special moments alongside your loved ones. It has truly been a pleasure to welcome the children back to school, and we are so proud of how wonderfully they have settled back into their routines. The buzz of excitement and positive energy across both schools has been heartwarming, and it wouldn't have happened without your support from home. A big thank you to every one of you for making sure the children returned in the right uniform and ready to learn. As we've shared before, high standards are something we deeply value, and it was fantastic to see this shining through in every part of our schools.

We did spot a few new smartwatches joining the children at school - what lovely Christmas gifts! However, as we mentioned in our previous Principals' Post, these aren't quite right for school. They can be very distracting in class and sometimes allow internet access that we're unable to supervise. Please do make sure your child does not come to school with their smartwatch — thank you.

We have included our previous post on standards, expectations and the language we use below. This way, you have it at hand, and you'll know the language we use with the children if they bring it up at home.

Honestly, witnessing the positive start to the term has been a joy. The warm, welcoming atmosphere in both schools is something special, and we feel so lucky to be part of this wonderful community. With your continued support, we're excited about all the great things 2026 holds for Oxley Park Academy and Nursery.

Thank you, from all of us, for everything you do to fully support us as a school.

Kind regards



Mr N Springett-McHugh
Executive Principal



Mrs K Draper
Associate Principal

DREAM BELIEVE ACHIEVE - TOGETHER

TWO SITES—ONE HEART, ONE MISSION, ONE SCHOOL



FAB stands for Fussy And Bothered

We are proud to be *Fussy and Bothered* about the things that matter: our uniform, our behaviour, our manners and the way we treat one another. These expectations help us create a school where everyone feels safe, everyone belongs and everyone is valued.

Uniform Expectations

Uniform plays a vital role in helping children feel a sense of belonging. It reinforces that we are one team, sharing the same values and expectations. While our uniform is flexible—for example, we do not require branded items—any alternatives must match our uniform colours and style.

Acceptable uniform includes:

General Uniform:

- Pale blue polo shirt — **school branded or plain**
- Claret sweatshirt or cardigan — **school branded or plain**
- Grey shorts, skirts or trousers — **plain, tailored**, and not fashion styles
- Plain socks — **black, grey or white only**
- Footwear — **plain black shoes or trainers**, no coloured labels, patterns or multicoloured versions

Year 6 Uniform:

- Black blazer
- Plain pale blue shirt
- School tie
- Grey V Neck Jumper if they wish

Please can we ask that you always choose a **small-sized school bag**. These need to fit into lockers at Oxley and into a very tight cloakroom cupboard at Shenley.

PE Kit:

- House-coloured T-shirt — **school branded or plain**
- Plain black shorts
- Black hoodie and joggers — **school branded or plain**
- **No football tops or branded sportswear (Nike, Adidas, etc.)**
- PE trainers must also be **plain in colour**

We believe this consistency is an important part of our culture. It is not about being picky—it is about maintaining an *equal, inclusive and safe* environment. In a commercialised world, we work hard to ensure that children are not influenced or pressured by fashion trends or branded items in school. School is not a fashion show; it is a place where all children should feel equal and belong.

Thank you for your ongoing support with this. If any family needs help with uniform, we have a large stock of good-quality nearly-new items available—please pop into either school office.

Jewellery, Hair and Appearance

To maintain safety and consistency:

- **No jewellery** except **stud earrings**
- **No dangling earrings** of any kind or hoop style earrings.
- **No nail varnish**
- **Headwear** should be small and in school colours: *white, beige, pale blue, claret or black*
- Hairstyles should be **neat**, with **no extreme fashion styles** and **no dyed hair**

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- Watches can be worn, but **NO Smart watches**. These form a distraction in class and are not appropriate in a primary school setting.

Behaviour & Language

We also need your support in reminding children about appropriate language. **Swearing and racist language is not acceptable** in school. We have noticed an increase in unacceptable language, so please reinforce this message at home and encourage your child to report concerns to an adult.

FAB Manners

Our FAB manners are something we are especially proud of—they help make Oxley Park feel friendly, warm and respectful. However, we spend a great deal of time reminding children, and your support really strengthens this.

Please take a moment each morning to reinforce:

- A polite greeting such as “*Good morning*” or “*Hello*”
- Responding when someone greets them
- Using *please* and *thank you* consistently

These small habits make a big difference to our school culture.

Language We Use – “Ready to Learn”

Alongside our FAB approach, we would like to share one of the key phrases we use every day: “**Ready to learn.**” This is a simple but powerful term that helps children understand what is expected of them as they enter class, move between activities or come in from the playground.

When we say “**Ready to learn,**” children know this means:

- We calm our bodies and minds
- We tuck our shirts in
- We adjust our noise level
- We show we are listening
- We prepare ourselves for learning

We often see children arriving with shirts untucked or not fully prepared. Using “**Ready to learn**” at home, as you leave the house or say goodbye at the gate, can make a huge difference. This shared language strengthens our community and helps children clearly understand expectations.

Home Learning Standards

We have received a huge amount of positive feedback about our new-style home learning this term. Many parents have told us they find it clearer, more useful and far easier to support their child with. Where children are completing their home learning, along with daily reading, we are already seeing a significant impact on progress in school.

However, we still have a high percentage of children not completing their home learning.

From January, we will be setting home learning as a clear expectation, and we hope this will support you at home so it doesn't become a point of disagreement with your child. Every bit of support from home makes a real difference and helps ensure that learning gaps are closed or kept to a minimum.

We encourage families to collaborate with us in nurturing a strong home–school learning culture, a positive approach that will greatly support your child as they progress to secondary education.

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Please support your child with:

- **Daily reading**
- **Spelling practice**
- **Multiplication tables**
- **Completion of the allocated pages** from the home learning books

And please use our FAB philosophy at home, particularly around presentation and handwriting, to reinforce the high expectations we have in school. Encourage children to be truly Fussy and Bothered about the neatness of their handwriting and to take real pride in the work they produce.

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