

OLDHAM COUNCIL



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Head teacher
Mr M Roberts

AUTUMN TERM NEWSLETTER THREE, 2024

Dear Parent/carers,

As the winter fast approaches, I take this opportunity to detail some of our key messages and also to confirm the end-of-term activities in the run up to Christmas.

Pupil Attendance: update

If your child is absent from school, please inform the school office at the earliest possible opportunity. This will ensure our records are up-to-date and accurate. All evidence shows that pupils achieve better in school when they have good attendance.

From September, the DFE's 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' has become statutory guidance for all schools in England. The document can be accessed on the GOV.UK website, via the link below:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance .

With effect from August 19th, 2024, the Government have introduced new rules and have increased fines for pupils missing school. These include:

There will be a single National Threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England of 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period. These sessions do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of any type of unauthorised absence - this means that once a child has 10 unauthorised sessions (5 days or more), within a 10-week period, they will be issued with a penalty notice.

With the above in mind, kindly be aware that if your child reaches stage 2 of our attendance monitoring process, they will be added to our attendance monitoring list and their attendance will be regularly monitored by the Local Authority Attendance Team. All pupils who reach stage 2 require medical evidence to authorise ANY absences. If you do not provide medical evidence for their absence, their non-attendance will be marked as unauthorised, even if you contact school to advise us of their reason for absence. Once your child has reached 10 missed sessions (5 days), a penalty notice will be issued by the Local Authority. Prior to your child reaching stage 2 absence monitoring, you will receive a notification letter from our school.

The fine for unauthorised school absences for 5 days or more across the country will be increasing to £80 if paid within 21 days, or £160 if paid within 28 days. This is a fine per parent, per child.

In the case of repeated fines, if a parent receives a second fine for the same child within any three-year period, this will be charged at the higher rate of £160. This is a fine per parent, per child.

For a third offence of 5 unauthorised days of absence within a 3-year period, parents will be taken to Magistrates' Court. Prosecution can lead to a criminal record and fines of up to £2,500 per parent, per child. If found guilty, this would appear on a DBS certificate for 'failure to safeguard a child's education.

The Government drive to improve pupil attendance means your child's attendance is more important than ever and we urge you to support our school and your child's education; by ensuring they attend school during term time.

Our goal is to support you and your child in developing good habits and ensuring they have the best opportunity to succeed in school. If you require any advice or support with your child's attendance please contact the school office, who can arrange an appointment with a member of our attendance team.

Please note that our school attendance policy can be found on our website.

Medical Update/ Information update

We remind parents and carers that school is only permitted to administer prescribed medicines.

'Only named medicines clearly marked with your child's name will be accepted into school and only if it is necessary for a child to take four doses daily. It will be kept in the school office. All medicine must be in the original package and have the strength and dosage required.'

Please speak with Miss Dowden or Mrs Wychrij at the school office to facilitate this. We urge parents/carers to attend school BEFORE the school office becomes busy (ideally before 8.35am). Specific details (pupil name, medication type, dose, and frequency) of any prescribed medication administered will need to be recorded. Parental consent (via signature) is also required BEFORE administration in school.

Both Miss Dowden and Mrs Wychrij have completed the necessary training to record and administer medication in school (Safe Handling and Administration of Medication, Level 2).

The full policy for Medicines in School is laid out in the School Medical Policy and available upon request.

Asthma

Children who have been diagnosed as asthmatic MUST have a reliever/ inhaler in school. Immediate access to reliever medicines is essential. Please update school if your child's medical condition/ health changes over the course of the school year.

Local Authority Health and Safety Directive

PE: Kits and Earrings

In line with our PE dress code, we expect children to have their PE kits in school on their designated PE day (this information will be shared by your child's class teacher). As a guide we recommend the following:

A pair of shorts

A T-shirt (NO crop tops. They are unsuitable for some contact sports)

A tracksuit/long sleeve top/jogging bottoms (For use in winter/outdoor PE if applicable)

Sports specific trainers (Trainers that offer both protection and traction)

Earrings worn by pupils must be removed before a PE lesson or covered with plasters (if the latter is the case, we recommend that a spare box of plasters is sent to school which will be retained for future lessons).

The most sensible (and cheapest!) way to adhere to this directive is for a pupil NOT to wear earrings on days when they have PE timetabled. This will save time, prevent potential pupil distress (removing or covering earrings), and advert potential loss of property (earrings being 'lost' upon removal).

In addition, we remind parents/carers that our School Uniform Policy (as circulated, July and September 2024) stipulates:

General Appearance: Earrings and Other Jewellery

Earrings: please ensure if your child arrives at school wearing an earring/pair of earrings, that they are small, discreet, and importantly, lie 'flat' to the ear. This message follows instruction from Oldham Council's Health and Safety Team to avoid an earring being 'caught' during playtime/lunchtime and potentially causing significant injury.

'Hoop' type earrings, 'large' earrings, and earrings that 'dangle' from the ear is not permitted in school. In general, no jewellery is allowed in school other than a wristwatch. This includes no rings (or any other finger jewellery) and no jewellery worn around the neck please.

Also, no false nails (all types). Nail extensions or decorated fingernails are not allowed for safety reasons, and which may potentially inhibit learning within some curriculum areas. Nails should be natural and kept short. Clear nail varnish is permitted.

Car park and turning circle

Please drive sensibly in and around the school car park. At present, a small number of parents are still blocking the car park entrance which decreases the visibility of other parents and pupils who cross there on their journey home.

In addition, we ask all parents who travel to school by car to ensure that the speed they adopt is appropriate to a school environment. At 'drop off' and collection, all drivers need to 'expect the unexpected' and as such curtail their speed to reflect this. Please be extra vigilant at this time of the year on your journey to and from school.

Limehurst smokefree policy: providing a smokefree environment

Smoking is not permitted in any part of the school's premises and grounds including the school car park. In addition, we actively request that parents/carers do not smoke outside the school gates to support our smokefree environment. This applies to all events and activities held in the school including before and after school sessions.

This ban has been in place since July 2007 following the introduction of National legislation. It is designed to protect children from exposure to second hand smoke. E-cigarettes (vaping) is included within this voluntary ban. The reason for this that the purpose of the smokefree areas is to make smoking invisible to children. Research has shown that some young children cannot tell the difference between smoking and vaping.

General reminders:

School opening/ start times

The gate to the rear school yard will be open at **8.10am** each day. The **school office** is open at **8.15am** each day.

Breakfast club: Breakfast club is open at 8.20am and last entry at 8.40am.

Start-of-school day

School will start at the times illustrated below. School entry points remain unchanged from September. In addition, parents with multiple children (excluding nursery) will be asked to 'drop off' the youngest child FIRST, followed by next youngest and so on. Pupils in the school nursery are the last cohort admitted into school at 8.55am.

Year Group	Start time	Finish time
Nursery	8.55am (last entry, 9.00am)	3.10pm
Reception	8.45am (last entry, 8.55am)	3.15pm

Year Group	Start time	Finish time
Year 1	8.45am (last entry, 9.05am)	3.15pm
Year 2	8.45am (last entry, 9.05am)	3.15pm

Year Group	Start time	Finish time
Year 3	8.50am (last entry, 9.05am)	3.20pm
Year 4	8.50am (last entry, 9.05am)	3.20pm
Year 5	8.50am (last entry, 9.05am)	3.20pm
Year 6	8.50am (last entry, 9.05am)	3.20pm

PLEASE BE ON TIME. Good punctuality is essential to your child's early Reading/ Phonics progress at school. This is how we start our school day.

End-of-school day collection:

If you have children in Reception AND Key Stage 1 (Year 1 or Year 2), please collect your KS1 child from the school hall FIRST and then go to the Reception exit point afterwards.

Key Stage 1 children who are not collected on time (from the hall) will be escorted to the main school entry door (next to the school office) by 3.20pm.

Afterschool club: from the end-of-the school day until 5.15pm, Monday to Thursday.

School Gateway

If you have not yet downloaded the 'School Gateway' communication app, we would advise you to download as soon as possible. You can download the app by searching 'School Gateway' in your smartphones App Store.

School holiday pattern, 2025/26

The school holiday pattern, 2025/26, has been attached with this letter. Please remember that Limehurst's holiday pattern will **differ from the Oldham Council school year plan** (as advertised on their website) due to each maintained school being allowed to 'set' their own in-service training dates (INSET).

Nursery provision at Limehurst: our offer of provision is changing after Christmas

We are extending our current nursery offer by opening on Fridays, commencing January 2025. Please note eligibility below:

- **Eligibility for Free Friday Sessions:** Parents entitled to 30 hours of childcare would have access to Friday sessions free of charge, running from 8.55am to 3.10pm.
- **Option for 15-Hour Entitlement:** Parents with 15-hour entitlements will have the opportunity to pay for Friday sessions (£15 per half day session: 8.55am - 11.55am or 12.10pm - 3.10pm / £30 per full day session 8.55am - 3.10pm).

Places will be limited, and our admissions criteria will apply if oversubscribed. Fridays will be optional, and parents who prefer their child to attend only from Monday to Thursday may continue to do so.

At Limehurst we offer quality nursery education for children aged between 3 and 4 years old. We provide a 'good' Early Years education with a highly qualified, early years trained teacher and a team of experienced support staff. We plan activities to help your child's learning journey through the Early Years Foundation Stage, towards all their early learning goals. With a bright and stimulating learning environment, your child can learn through their play, both indoors and outdoors.

We focus on the 3 prime areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage, which support your child's Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Communication and Language and Physical Development to give your child the best start in their education journey.

Our aim is to ensure that your child is *Reception ready* by the end of their nursery year.

Ofsted 2024 said:

- This is a school where pupils are happy and well cared for by staff . Pupils start each day with broad smiles. The school is a welcoming place where pupils are content. Pupils feel safe and nurtured in school. They trust staff implicitly
- The school has high expectations for all pupils from the early years to Year 6 . In recent years, the school has considerably strengthened the quality of education that pupils receive. The atmosphere in school is very calm. Pupils are respectful to each other and towards staff
- The school has designed a curriculum that is well thought out. The curriculum is rich and ensure s that pupils develop broad knowledge across all subjects. Careful consideration has also been given to the context of the school and the important knowledge that is relevant to prepare pupils sufficiently well for the next stage in their education
- The learning journey starts from the minute that children enter the early years. The school has carefully crafted the curriculum to ensure that children in the Nursery and Reception classes acquire the fundamental building blocks for future learning. This helps to ensure that children build the essential communication and language skills that they require in readiness for key stage 1

If your child was born between 1st September 2020 and 31st August 2021, they are eligible for a Nursery place at our school, during the school year 2024/25. Please note, at present we only offer a 24/25 nursery place to children born between the dates above.

For further information, please contact school on 0161 7707220 or email info@limehurst.oldham.sch.uk

END OF AUTUMN TERM EVENTS, 2024

Tuesday 10th December: Infant (class 4,5 and 6) Christmas Nativity for parents: 9.30am in the school hall.

Tuesday 10th December: Infant (class 4, 5 and 6) Christmas Nativity for parents: 2.30pm in the school hall.

Wednesday 11th December: Reception Christmas Nativity for parents supported by Year 3 & 4 choir: 9.30am in the school hall.

Wednesday 11th December: Reception Christmas Nativity for parents supported by Year 3 & 4 choir: 2.30pm in the school hall.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE INFANT AND RECEPTION/YEAR 3 & 4 NATIVITIES ARE TICKET ONLY EVENTS. A ticket letter will be circulated prior to these events

Thursday 12th December: Nursery Christmas Craft Session with parents/carers in the school hall at 9.15am.

Tuesday 17th December: Year 5 and 6 Carol Concert. 2.30pm in the school hall.

Wednesday 18th December: School Christmas Dinner Day. Packed lunch children are invited to bring a Christmas themed packed lunch on this day.

Wednesday 18th December: 'Dress Christmassy Day' for all pupils (a bespoke letter will be circulated before the event including details of the local charity school is supporting this year)

Thursday 19th December: Christmas Party Day for all pupils (a bespoke letter will be circulated before the event including details of what to wear on this day)

Thursday 19th is the last *pupil day* of the autumn term. School will close on this day at our *usual* times, stated in this letter.

INSET day REMINDER: As detailed in our holiday pattern circulated at the end of the summer term and again at the beginning of this term, **school will be closed to PUPILS on Friday 20th December 2024 to facilitate in service staff training (INSET).**

The new spring term begins on: Tuesday 7th January 2025

School will open for the spring term on this day. Again, at the start times illustrated in this letter. Thank you for your ongoing co-operation.

Yours sincerely,

M Roberts

Mark Roberts
Head teacher