

This week...

It was wonderful to see the school hall filled with smiles and festive cheer as pupils enjoyed their **Christmas lunches** together this week. The atmosphere was buzzing as children and staff came together to share this special seasonal occasion.

A huge thank you goes to our fantastic kitchen team for preparing such a delicious festive treat, which was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone. We are also very grateful to all the staff who helped with setting up, serving, and tidying away, ensuring it all ran smoothly. It was also lovely to welcome members of our governing body who joined us for the celebrations.



Thank you to everyone who came to see the **Reception** Christmas Singing Performance on Tuesday. The children worked really hard to learn the melodies, lyrics and signs to each of the songs and expertly memorised a poem. We really enjoyed performing to our audience, especially when they joined us for a chorus of Jingle Bells! All in Reception wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Year 1 were proud to wear the hats they made for their Christmas dinner. The hats were made as part of the enquiry "What is my hat made of?" The children were scientists, engineers and artists; exploring different materials and their properties, understanding opaque and transparent, exploring different ways of joining to make their hats and making it ready for a Christmas party. It was lovely to see the range of hats the children had made including cone hats, baseball style caps and boat folding hats.



To round off our festive week, we were delighted to welcome a very special visitor to school — **Santa** himself! He delivered a wonderful selection of gifts for each class, including new play equipment for breaktimes such as beanbags, hula hoops, skipping ropes, stilts, footballs, and tennis balls. The children will enjoy these new additions in the new year. A huge thank you to PALS for kindly arranging these fantastic gifts.

PALS have shared an exciting update on this year's Christmas Raffle. A total of £612 worth of tickets were sold, and after deducting expenses, they have raised a fantastic **£537.04!** A huge thank you to everyone who bought tickets, and congratulations to all our prize winners!

Governors Corner

As we come to the end of a busy and festive term, I wanted to take a moment to reflect on just this week alone, which has been a real pleasure for me as a governor. It is truly an honour and a privilege to be able to spend time in school, particularly joining our children during their Christmas lunches.

This week I had the opportunity to visit Years 1 and 2, as well as Years 5 and 6, and it was wonderful to see the children so full of festive spirit and enjoying the experience together. I loved hearing them talk about what they have enjoyed most this term and

listening to their plans and hopes for the Christmas break. Some were excited about finding out what Father Christmas might bring, others were looking forward to spending time with grandparents, family, and friends, and a few were quite happy about the idea of a well-earned rest from school. There was a lovely mix of excitement and tiredness that always seems to arrive just before Christmas!

This week has also been an eventful one for the school more broadly. We are very pleased to be moving forward with improvements to the school's internet provision. After a fair bit of hustle and bustle, the fibre optic cable was successfully brought into the building this week. We are hopeful that the full installation will be completed in early January, which will significantly improve the quality of streaming and digital provision across the school for teaching and learning.

As the year draws to a close, I want to say a huge thank you to everyone who helps make Ladygrove Park Primary School such a special place. Thank you to our leadership team, dedicated staff, and support staff, to the governors, and to all those who work so hard behind the scenes every day. A special thank you also goes to our parents and carers for your continued support throughout your child's journey at the school — whether they have just joined us in Reception or are preparing to move on from Year 6.

On behalf of the governing body, I would like to wish you all a wonderful festive break, a very Merry Christmas, and I look forward to seeing you all again in January.

Warm wishes,
Imran Lokhon

We are always keen to strengthen our governing body and are currently looking for new governors to join our board. We would particularly welcome interest from members of our wider community with experience or skills in areas such as legal, or HR in particular, though all backgrounds are valued. Having a broad range of experiences helps us support and challenge the school effectively. If you know anyone who would like to find out more about becoming a governor, please do get in touch with the school office.

Celebrating Success

We wanted to celebrate Evelyn (Class 14), Ellegra (Class 11), Seb (Class 11) and Lachlan (Class 10) for their efforts over the last 6 weeks. Every Sunday at 9am they have been attending the local Kingsgrove Woodland Junior Parkrun - running 2km. All four of them have achieved personal best times and really support and encourage one another. If they can encourage any other children to join them from the school in all the fun would be great! Hopefully there will be a Didcot Junior Parkrun being set up next year so they can give this course a go. Well done to you all!



Dates for Spring Term 1...

Please keep checking these dates for any additions or amendments!

Monday 5th January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start of Term 3 - all children return to school
Friday 9th January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Class 10 Swimming, remember towels and costumes!
Friday 16th January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Class 10 Swimming, remember towels and costumes!
Wednesday 21st January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reception and Year 1 PERFORM Drama Workshop, in school
Friday 23rd January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PALS Break the Rules Day, details to follow Class 10 Swimming, remember towels and costumes!
Tuesday 27th January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year 4 Hill End Parent Meeting, 3.15pm, details to follow
Thursday 29th January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year 1 Poet visit, in school

Friday 30th January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class 10 Swimming, remember towels and costumes! • PALS Quiz Night - details to follow
Friday 6th February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class 10 Swimming, remember towels and costumes!
Friday 13th February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PALS Dress Up Day, details to follow • Class 10 Swimming, remember towels and costumes! • Last Day of Term 3 - normal finish time

Notices

Attendance Please email the school office. Do not email the year group.	<p>If your child is not in school, you must notify us by leaving a message on our answer phone or by emailing office.2609@ladygrove-park.oxon.sch.uk before 9am on each day of their absence. Email is preferable as we are finding it increasingly hard to understand due to unclear messages and poor telephone signal.</p> <p>Please state clearly and concisely your child's full name, class and their reason for absence - <u>being specific about the illness or medical needs</u>. You must inform the school in advance by email above, if you need to take your child for an educational setting visit, religious observance or similar. These absences will need to be pre agreed by us. No birthdays, cheaper holidays, altered holiday arrangements or similar will be agreed. In line with strict government legislation, they will be recorded as unauthorised on your child's attendance record.</p>
Outstanding ParentPay Balances	Please ensure to log into ParentPay to make any outstanding payments for trips, extended schools and lunches before the start of the new term. Many thanks.
Year 5 Kilvrough Residential 2027	Just a reminder to keep up your monthly payments for Kilvrough Residential in June 2027.
Class 10 Swimming	A reminder for Class 10 that your first swimming lessons start on the first Friday back after the holidays - <u>Friday 9th January</u> . It's important that children have had breakfast and remember that they remember costumes, towels, swimming hats and goggles.
Year 6 - The Oxfordshire Book Award Club	<p>We are excited to be running a club for <u>Year 6</u> next term – The Oxfordshire Book Award Club, and are looking for enthusiastic readers that will be able to read 1 book a week from a shortlist of new literature. The club will meet each week to review the books and the club will culminate with the children voting for their favourite book. Their votes will then be submitted to the Oxfordshire Book Award in April with the winner being announced in November.</p> <p>The club will take place on a Wednesday lunchtime in the library, 1.10– 1.35pm with Mrs Clarkson and will run for 7 school weeks, starting on Wednesday 14th January.</p> <p>We are limited to 6 places at this club (each child will review one of the shortlisted books each week), so if your child would be interested in joining, please complete this Google Form by <u>Wednesday 7th January</u> and if oversubscribed, we will use a random selection process to allocate the places.</p> <p>Here is a link to the form: https://forms.gle/8tnucqWNgiWBNMcR9</p>
External Clubs and Activities	<p>If you are looking for external clubs and activities taking place in the local area, or for any upcoming holiday camps, please visit this page on our website -</p> <p>https://www.ladygrove-park.oxon.sch.uk/parents/external-clubs-activities</p>

**Admissions to Primary School - Apply Now!**

Admissions to Primary School (Academic Year 26/27): If your child was born between 1 September 2021 and 31 August 2022 (inclusive), you need to apply for a primary school place for September 2026. You can now apply online. Please visit www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/primaryadmissions for further information. NB The deadline line date for online applications is 15th January 2026.

Please remember the following:-

- It is the responsibility of parents/carers to apply for a school place by the deadline of 15 January 2026
- If your child is attending nursery classes within a primary school, you must still apply for a place in the main school
- You can list three different schools in order of preference. We strongly advise you to use all three preferences
- We advise you to enter your catchment (or designated) school as one of your preferences
- Attending your catchment school does not entitle you to free home to school transport if it is not your closest school and / under 2 miles away
- If your application is late, you are far less likely to get a place at one of your preferred schools.

contact

Keeping the magic in Christmas for disabled children

- **Keep routines steady** - stick to usual meal times, familiar spaces, and predictable rhythms to help reduce anxiety.
- **Introduce Christmas gradually** - put decorations up early (what better excuse!). Keep décor minimal if flashing lights or clutter can overwhelm.
- **Do Christmas their way** - buffet instead of big dinner, nuggets instead of turkey, no Christmas jumpers if they hate them, follow their lead.
- **Make gift-giving low-pressure** - skip wrapping if it's overwhelming. Use a Christmas sack or box instead. Set up toys in advance with batteries ready to reduce waiting and overwhelm.
- **Pace the presents** - don't open everything at once, spread gifts over a few days if needed.
- **Be flexible and take the pressure off** - spread activities across the month, skip traditions that stress them out, and focus on what brings your family joy.

contact.org.uk

Strategies for Surviving Winter Break For parent carers written by parent carers

The winter holidays can be a welcome pause for some families, but for many parent carers it brings a change of routine, increased demands, and the pressure to create a "happy holiday" while also meeting everyone's needs including our own. Here are some gentle, realistic strategies to help you navigate the weeks ahead in whatever way works for your family.

1. **Lower the Bar — and Then Lower It Again:** Winter break often comes with big expectations. It's absolutely okay if your plans look different from other families'. Choose what matters most to your child and focus your energy there. Small, predictable moments often go much further than perfect plans.

2. **Keep (Some) Routine if It Helps:** Many children and young people rely on structure. Keeping a few familiar anchors — regular mealtimes, quiet time, a daily walk, or a predictable bedtime routine — can help the break feel calmer and more manageable.

3. **Plan for Transitions:** Even small changes can be overwhelming. Visual schedules, countdowns, calendars, or simple reminders can help ease the shift between activities, outings, or visitors. Preparing siblings can also reduce stress for everyone.

4. **Create a 'Pause Space':** If possible, set aside a calm area in the home where your child can retreat when things feel too much. It might be a favourite chair, a dim corner with cushions, or even headphones and a blanket. And remember: you deserve a pause space too.

5. **Don't Feel Obligated to Attend Everything:** Seasonal events can be loud, crowded, and unpredictable. It's absolutely fine to say no — or to leave early. Choose what feels manageable. Your child's wellbeing, and yours, is more important than any expectation.

6. **Keep Activities Simple:** Board games, sensory play, a walk to see winter lights, a film afternoon, or baking together can provide structure without overwhelm. Simple activities often create the most connection.

7. **Prepare for School Return Early:** The transition back can be tricky. Gentle reminders, visual timetables, checking transport arrangements, or reconnecting with key staff before term starts may help reduce anxiety for both you and your child.

8. **Remember Your Needs Matter Too:** Parent carers often put themselves last. But even tiny moments of rest — a hot drink, five minutes of quiet, a message to a friend, stepping outside for fresh air — genuinely make a difference. You deserve care as much as anyone.

9. **Reach Out if Things Feel Difficult:** Winter can feel isolating, especially when services slow down. You are not expected to cope alone.

The Oxfordshire SEND Room on Facebook is a welcoming peer-support space where parent carers can connect, share experiences, and feel less alone: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/762407444464167>

Oxfordshire Mind offers support with mental health and wellbeing: <https://www.oxfordshiremind.org.uk>

Samaritans are available 24/7 if things feel overwhelming: 116 123

SHOUT offers free 24/7 text support for anyone in crisis: text SHOUT to 85258

Reaching out is a strength, not a failure.

10. **Celebrate the Wins — Big and Small:** Getting through the day, managing a meltdown, finding a moment of peace, or simply showing up again tomorrow are all successes. Acknowledge them. You're doing an incredible job.

Autumn Winter
2025 2026

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

WEEK ONE

03/11/25
24/11/25
15/12/25
19/01/26
09/02/26
09/03/26

Option One

Creamy Coconut &
Chickpea Curry
Served with Rice

Beef Lasagne with
Garlic Bread

Roast Chicken, Roast
Potatoes and Gravy

BBQ Chicken
Pasta

Fishfingers
with Chips

Option Two

Vegetable Curry served
with Rice

Vegetable Lasagne with
Garlic Bread

Quorn Roast with Roast
Potatoes and Gravy

BBQ Quorn
Pasta

Cheese and Bean Pasty
with Chips

Vegetables

Vegetables of the Day

Vegetables of the Day

Vegetables of the Day

Vegetables of the Day

Baked Beans

Dessert

Cheese and Crackers

NEW Apple Crumb Cake

Fruit Medley

Jelly with Mandarins

Cookie

WEEK TWO

10/11/25
01/12/25
05/01/26
26/01/26
23/02/26
16/03/26

Option One

Classic Cheese and
Tomato Pizza
with Wedges

Spaghetti
Bolognaise



Roast Chicken or
Quorn Roast Potatoes
and Gravy

Meatballs in Tomato
Sauce with Rice

Fishfingers
with Chips

Option Two

Vegetable Pizza with
wedges

Vegan Spaghetti
Bolognaise

Vegetables of the Day

Plant Balls in a Tomato
Sauce with Rice

Cheese Whirl
with Chips

Vegetables

Vegetables of the Day

Vegetables of the Day

Vegetables of the Day

Vegetables of the Day

Peas

Dessert

NEW Gingerbread
Cookie

Chocolate and Beetroot
Brownie with Chocolate
Sauce

Fruit Salad

Sticky Toffee Apple
Crumble

Vanilla Shortbread

WEEK THREE

17/11/25
08/12/25
12/01/26
02/02/26
02/03/26
23/03/26

Option One

Jacket Potato served
with Cheese

Beef Pasta
Bolognaise

Roast Chicken with
Roast Potatoes and
Gravy

Mild Caribbean Chicken
with Rice

Fishfingers
with Chips

Option Two

Jacket Potato served
with Baked Beans

Tomato Pasta

Quorn Roast and Roast
Potatoes and Gravy

Caribbean Stew with
Rice

Cheese Omelette
with Chips

Vegetables

Vegetables of the Day

Vegetables of the Day

Vegetables of the Day

Vegetables of the Day

Baked Beans

Dessert

Oaty Cookie

Pear Crumble

Fruit Salad

NEW Jamaican Ginger
Cake

Cookie

MENU KEY



Added Plant Protein



Wholemeal



Vegan



Chef's Special

ALLERGY INFORMATION:

If you would like to know about particular allergens in foods please ask a member of the catering team for information. If your child has a school lunch and has a food allergy or intolerance you will be asked to complete a form to ensure we have the necessary information to cater for your child. We use a large variety of ingredients in the preparation of our meals and due to the nature of our kitchens it is not possible to completely remove the risk of allergen cross contact.

Does your child still need a Flu Vaccination?

We are still vaccinating!



**Follow the QR code / link
to consent for your child and make a
community clinic appointment**

*If you've already filled in the consent form,
please book your appointment using the
reference number that was emailed to you from
school.immunisations@nhs.net when you consented*

**For more information visit
www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/imms**