

Otford Primary School- 9th October 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

As this term progresses, we are pleased to see how quickly the children have settled back into school life. We are incredibly proud of all our pupils, who continue to show great resilience, even when faced with challenges. We deeply value open communication — with the children, and of course, with you. If there is ever a barrier to your child's learning or wellbeing that you think we should be aware of, please don't hesitate to get in touch so we can support them as best we possibly can.

I would also like to take this opportunity to invite you into school for Open Classrooms on the 3rd and 5th November from 3:30-4:00pm. Please do make your way to your child's class to look at the learning taking place! There is no need to book for this, we very much value your support and know that this is a special moment for the children too as they can show you all their hard work and progress.

Additionally, Parent Consultations will take place on the evenings of the 10th and 12th November. These will be held in the main school hall for all year groups. The 10th November will be an earlier finish and the 12th November will run slightly later. Booking details of this will be emailed by lunchtime on Monday next week by the office staff. We are sending the code on Monday to support parents who may have commitments today and would be unable to access the online information immediately. We aim to repsond to

feedback from parents and to make the system as fair as possible for all. As in previous years, Clare and he kitchen team will be provising food for all our parents to sample, which parents have enjoyed sampling in previous years! We look forward to seeing as many parents as possible at these events and thank you in advance for your time and support.

Very best wishes,

Mrs H Roberts

Save the Dates- listed below dates for your reference :)



OCTOBER

- October **13th** School Photos- can we please ask that children come in full winter uniform including ties please
- October **16th** KS2 Harvest Festival
- October **21st** Y2 Trip
- October **21st** NHS Flu Vaccinations(Only for those who have consent)
- October **22nd** KS1 Harvest Festival
- October **22nd** Last Day of Term
- October **23rd** Inset Day
- October **26th-30th** Half Term

NOVEMBER

- November **2nd** First Day Term 2
- November **3rd** Open Classroom
- November **5th** Open Classroom
- November **10th** Parents Evening
- November **12th** Parents Evening

School Site Access-A Reminder About Dropping Off Belongings



A gentle reminder that, if your child needs a forgotten item or belonging brought into school, we kindly ask that this is done by 9:30am wherever possible.

This is an important safety measure for all the children. Keeping the school gate closed and limiting movement in and out of the site helps us to maintain a secure environment. **Ultimately this is key to our safeguarding requirements, limiting visitors and ensuring the school site is safe at all times.**

We therefore ask that parents avoid coming onto the school site after 9:30am to deliver forgotten belongings, unless the item is genuinely essential. An example of an essential item would be medication. Water bottles are not essential as we can provide children with cups, and there are taps in most classrooms. Reducing access to the site helps us to maintain a safe, calm and settled environment for everyone.

We also hope that limiting late drop-offs will encourage children, where appropriate, to take greater responsibility for remembering and bringing the things they need for their school day. Developing this independence is an important part of their learning and growing confidence.

We really appreciate your support and cooperation in helping us keep our school site safe, secure and settled for everyone.

Thank you for your understanding.

One simple way to help with this at home is to make a school-week calendar or checklist together. Each evening, look at what is happening the following day and make a game of checking what needs to go into the school bag:

“PE kit?” — “CHECK!”

“Guitar?” — “CHECK!”

“Football boots?” — “CHECK!”

You can then repeat the game in the morning as you are heading out the door:

“Lunch box?” — “CHECK!”

“School bag?” — “CHECK!”

“Coat?” — “CHECK!”

“Everything we need?” — “CHECK!”

It is a small routine, but one that can make a big difference in helping children to develop good organisational habits and take increasing responsibility for being ready for their school day.

Evidence of Medical Appointments

We would always appreciate routine medical or dental appointments being scheduled outside of school hours, if possible, to avoid disruption to the school day, and children missing important learning time. However, if you are unable to schedule outside of school hours, then it is standard school procedure to request evidence of medical appointments when a child is late due to an appointment or leaving early for one.

To help us accurately record this on your child's register as an authorised medical absence, please provide a piece of confirmation from the provider. This could be a:

- Text message reminder from the clinic
- Appointment card or letter
- Prescription slip or relevant medication packaging

You can easily show this to the front office staff, or email a screenshot to secretary@otford.kent.sch.uk

We greatly value your support.

Please see below our Sports and House Captains! Congratulations to you all and thank you for your help!



House Captains

Water: Hannah and Evie

Fire: Emma and Zara

Earth: Seb R and Louie D

Air: Finley T and Lucia



Sports Captains

Water: Niamh and Jake

Fire: Morgan and Lily

Earth: Joe and Louis W

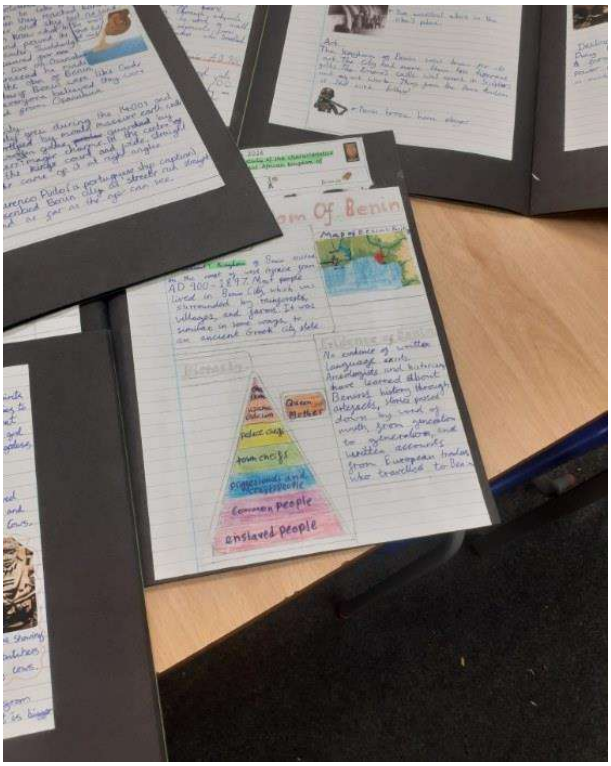
Air: Felix B and Amelia

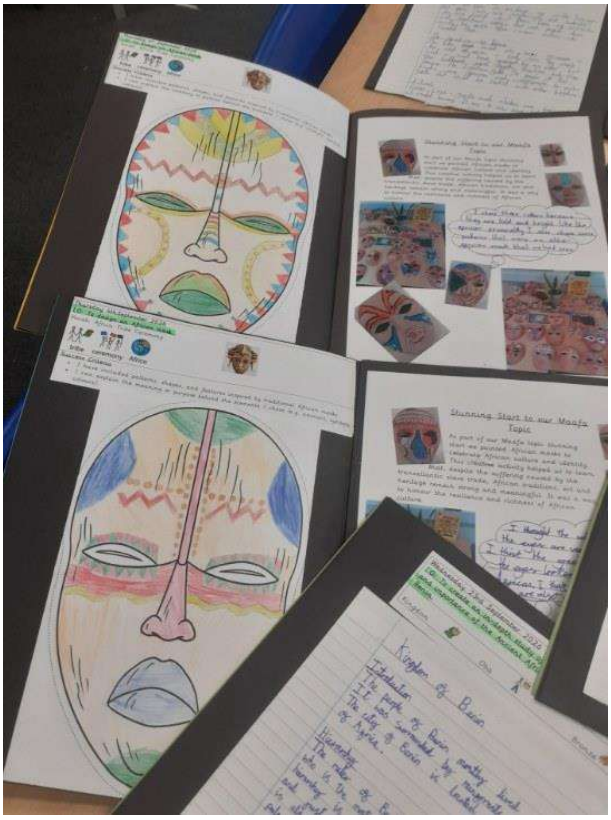
Year 6- update

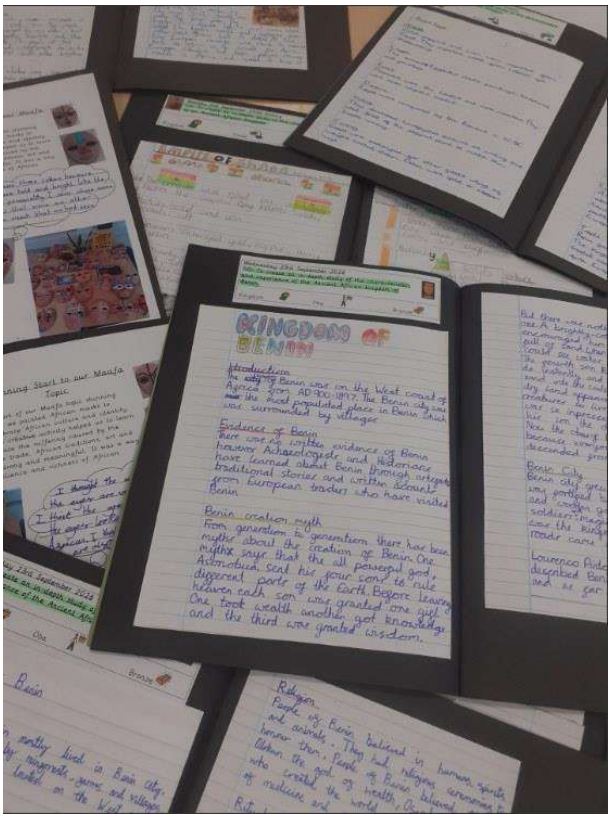
Year 6 have made a super start to their new history topic on the Maafa, exploring the experiences and impact of the transatlantic slave trade and its lasting legacy. As part of their

stunning start, the children enjoyed creating traditional African-inspired masks and have been busy researching ancient African kingdoms and producing informative fact files. Next, they will explore the **Triangular Slave Trade**, learning about the experiences of enslaved African people and how the trade operated. This links closely to the **National Curriculum for History at Key Stage 2**, which asks pupils to develop their understanding of a significant turning point in British history, including the **transatlantic slave trade and its impact**. We are looking forward to seeing their knowledge and understanding develop throughout this important and thought-provoking topic!




Kingdom Of Benin
Queen Mother
Palace chiefs
Town chiefs
Priests and Priestesses
Common People
Enslaved People


Stunning Start to our Moofa Topic
Kingdom Of Benin


KINGDOM OF BENIN



Year 5 Goes Back in Time to Ancient Greece!







On Monday our Year 5 children travelled back in time for an amazing Ancient Greek Day! They explored life in the city-states of Athens and Sparta, learnt about democracy, and even handled some replica Ancient Greek weapons. Using their maths skills, they became Ancient Greek architects, solving puzzles about angles and design to understand how the Greeks built their incredible temples and structures. The children also enjoyed playing traditional Greek board games before finishing the day with their own Olympic Games – Athens vs. Sparta! It was a brilliant day full of learning, teamwork, and fun — everyone came away with new knowledge and big smiles!

Rugby Festival

On Monday, 21st September, a squad of ten Year 5 and 6 boys and girls took part in the Sevenoaks District Tag Rugby Tournament at Sevenoaks Rugby Club. They played well with lots of enthusiasm and perseverance, improving their skills and knowledge across their 6 games. They displayed great team support and respect and represented the school well. It was a joy to accompany them. Many thanks to the parents who stayed to support them and for organising transport. Also my thanks to Mr Hanford for helping out.

Mrs Balcombe

P.E. Lead.







Year 4 Rugby

10 Year 4 Children represented the school at the Sevenoaks Tag Rugby Festival on Monday 5th October which was held at The Sevenoaks Rugby Club. They listened well and followed the instructions of the Rugby Coaches, showing great determination, resilience and perseverance. They all enjoyed it and showed noticeable improvement over the afternoon. We were very proud of you all.

Thank you also to the parents who transported the children and for those who stayed and supported them.

Mrs Balcombe and Miss Nye.











WhatsApp groups and Volunteering Update.



PTFA

The Role of Class Rep



Being a Class Rep

At the beginning of the school year, each class will need at least two volunteers to be Class Rep for the upcoming academic year.

What does this involve?

First and foremost, a Class Rep's role is to communicate messages and reminders between the PTFA Committee and their class and to make sure everyone is aware of any events coming up that need donations, volunteers or tickets to be sold etc. It's also the Class Rep's role to keep the class updated on what's happening at school each week. Below is a breakdown of the general things a Class Rep does throughout the year.

Weekly:

1

REMINDERS

REMIND THE CLASS OF WHAT'S COMING UP THIS WEEK (E.G. PE KIT, CLASS TRIPS, SCHOOL PHOTOS, FOREST SCHOOL, SWIMMING, CAKES SALES ETC.)

2

LUNCH MENU

SOME CLASS REPS LIKE TO SHARE THE WEEKLY SCHOOL LUNCH MENU ON SUNDAY EVENINGS. THIS IS PARTICULARLY USEFUL FOR RECEPTION CLASSES SO PARENTS CAN DISCUSS THE MENU WITH THEIR CHILDREN EACH MORNING TO HELP THEM MAKE A DECISION ON WHAT THEY WILL EAT THAT DAY. THE MENUS CAN BE FOUND ON THE SCHOOL WEBSITE UNDER 'PARENTS' AND 'SCHOOL LUNCHES'

3

Q&A'S

IF MULTIPLE PARENTS/CARERS HAVE SIMILAR QUESTIONS THAT REQUIRE AN ANSWER FROM THE TEACHER/PTFA/ SCHOOL OFFICE, THE CLASS REPS CAN ASK THE QUESTION ON BEHALF OF THE CLASS AS A WHOLE, THUS FREEING UP PRECIOUS TEACHER/STAFF TIME

General:



WhatsApp Groups: If you are a new Reception Class, you may want to set up a Class WhatsApp Group and make sure as many as possible of the parents/carers are added to this. This tends to be the best way to communicate with your class quickly. *Please be mindful that the purpose of the WhatsApp groups is not to publicly air anger/frustration about issues relating to individual children/parents/teachers. This could result in unnecessary widespread upset which is unfounded and could lead to unnecessary concern. If this situation arises, Class reps can use their judgement to offer a gentle reminder about why we have the group and of course they can always suggest the individual takes their concern to the school privately.*

Class Lists: If you are a new Reception Class, you may want to set up a shared Google excel sheet to collect the names of the children in your class, their parents names, the date of the children's birthdays, the parents mobile numbers and email addresses. The link to this document can be shared on the WhatsApp Group so parents can update this list themselves. Please check that parents are happy for theirs and their child's details to be shared. For all other year groups, you may want to update the class list at the beginning of the year, especially if you've had any children leave or join the class.





Save The Dates: Share posters or save the date emails for the upcoming term - from the school and the PTFA. You may also want to read through the school and PTFA newsletters and pull out relevant information for your class.

PTFA Events: Pass on any event messages from the PTFA about upcoming events (Cake Sales, Book Hunt, Christmas Bazaar, Easter Egg Hunt, Summer Fete etc.).

Volunteers: Gather volunteers for events that your class are running, or are involved in, and create volunteer rotas, if necessary. All big events will need volunteers to help set up the night before the event and/or the morning of the event (if relevant) and to stay around at the end to help clear away. Set Up and Clear Up time slots will need to be added to your volunteer rotas.





Year Group Run Events: Help run one event per year (for example, school disco, book hunt, Easter egg hunt etc.). At the beginning of the year there will be a Class Rep Meeting to allocate year groups to different events. Each event will have a document (a Run Sheet) that will detail everything you need to know about running the event. The PTFA will be on hand to answer any questions you may have.

Class Rep Meetings: Attend, if possible, (or send a substitute) around 3 class rep meetings during the year. These meetings are a good opportunity to offer the PTFA feedback, raise concerns and share ideas. We also use these meetings to discuss upcoming events, and to choose stalls for the Christmas Bazaar and the Summer Fete. These usually take place on a Friday morning, straight after school drop off time, in the Jubilee Room, in the Otford Parish Council Office (next door to the school).





Socials: Some class reps like to arrange social events for the parents (generally a night in the pub or a bite to eat, aka Mum's/Dad's Night Out). This is a useful way for parents to get to know each other, especially in the beginning when parents are new to the school. Please take people's differing budgets into account when planning any socials. Sometimes simple is best, especially at the beginning!

Christmas & End Of Year Gifts - Twice a year, for Christmas and at the end of the year, it's nice to organise a class collection for your class's teacher(s) and TA(s) and go and buy and wrap those gifts. You will need to agree with your class on what is being bought (e.g. hamper, voucher etc.) and when it will be presented to the teachers/TAs. *There is no pressure for parents to put money forward for this. Some parents like to go and buy their own gifts for the teachers or give a letter or drawing from their child. It's best to put your bank details or PayPal details on the WhatsApp Group Chat and then send gentle reminders to anyone that would like to contribute.* We recommend starting to collect money in around 4 weeks before you need it. This gives people time to contribute and for you to go shopping.





WE LOOK FORWARD TO WELCOMING YOU TO THE TEAM!

A month prior to the end of the academic year (June/July) the current Class Reps should ask their class for volunteers to take over the role for the next academic year. Once new volunteers are decided, please email their names, mobile numbers and email addresses to the PTFA Secretary on ptfa@otford.kent.sch.uk.

Music Update

Music clubs have started.

Thursdays in the music room

12.00 Ukulele club - years 5 and 6 (please come to the music room straight after morning lessons, lunch afterwards)

12.30 Rhythmix - all KS2. Singing and music making (please have lunch first).

Harvest Festivals

We have our Harvest Festivals coming up before half term. We are collecting food donations for ‘Loaves and Fishes’ a local foodbank. Please bring in any non-perishable, in date food or toiletry items on Friday 16th October. There will be a table set up in the playground. Many thanks in advance for your donations.

KS2 Harvest Festival at St Barts church Friday 16th October at 1.40 pm. Year 6 parents are invited to attend.

KS1 Harvest Festival in the school hall Thursday 22nd October at 10 am. Year 2 parents are invited to attend.

Save the date

KS2 Christmas Carol Service Thursday 10th December at St Barts church, Otford at 6.30 pm. Parents and carers are invited to attend along with KS2 children.

Secondary School Applications

Admission to

Secondary school in Kent 2027

KCC residents apply online at kent.gov.uk/secondaryadmissions

Opened Tuesday 1 September 2026 and closes at midnight on Monday 2 November 2026

For children born between **1 September 2015** and **31 August 2016**, Transferring to Secondary school in **September 2027**

What to do

Choose a school

It's important to find out more about the schools you are interested in before you decide to name them on the application form.

Read the Guide to Secondary admissions at **www.kent.gov.uk/secondaryadmissions.**

You can name up to four Secondary schools, inside or outside of Kent, but you must name them all on the same application.

Apply for a school place

A simple, fast, convenient process which opens **Tuesday 1 September 2026 and closes at midnight on Monday 2 November 2026.** Other LA deadlines may differ.

If you already have an account set up from the Kent Test process, please use these login details.

You will receive an email confirmation that your application has been submitted correctly and that the LA has received it.

You can log back in at any time to view the information submitted.

Receiving your offer

On offer day **(Monday 1 March 2027)** an email will be sent to you informing you of your offer.

You must accept or decline the school place you have been offered by **Monday 15 March 2027.** A link to a guide with information you will need to provide the school with will be in your offer email.

If we have not offered your child a place in your preferred school, you have the right to appeal. You can also add their name to the school's waiting list if your child is eligible for admission.

Moving house during the application window will likely complicate your application and we therefore advise you to pay special attention to key dates in the admissions process. KCC has no discretionary authority to vary the process for parents who cannot complete address moves in time to make use of them for admissions purposes. If you are moving, please email the team on one of the email addresses below for advice.

Key dates

Tuesday 1st September 2026	Online application process opens. Go to **www.kent.gov.uk/secondaryadmissions** to register and apply.
Monday 2nd November 2026	Online application process closes for the main round. Any amendments after this date must be emailed to **kentonlineadmissions@kent.gov.uk**
Monday 1st March 2027	Offers of school places sent to parents via email after **4pm.**
Monday 15th March 2027	Parents should contact the school to accept/refuse the place that has been offered and can use the link in the offer email to ask for their child to be added to the waiting list of eligible schools named on the original application.
Tuesday 13th April 2027	Appeals need to be lodged by this date to be heard before September - appeals information can be found at **www.kent.gov.uk/schoolappeals.** You can only appeal for schools that were named on the application form.

Need help?

Email **kent.admissions@kent.gov.uk**

Full information booklet can also be viewed online at **kent.gov.uk/secondaryadmissions**

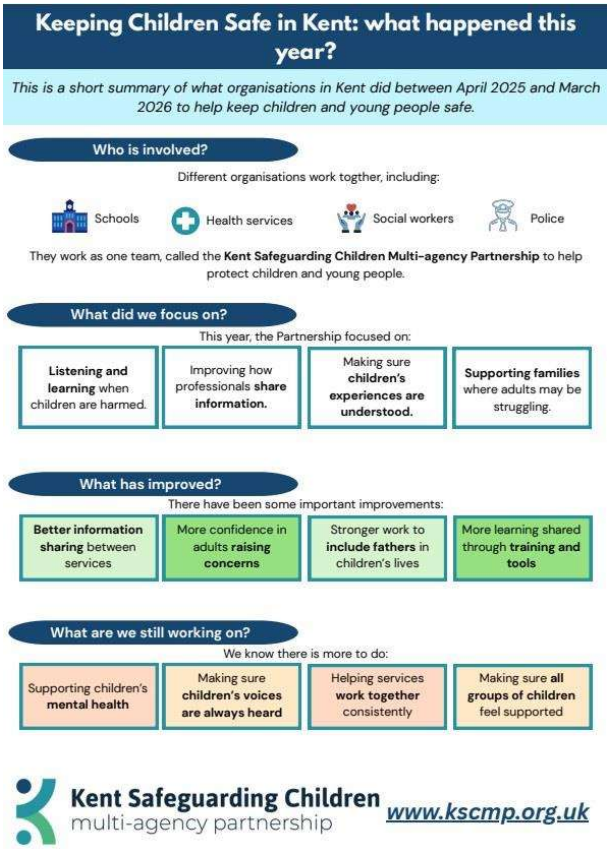
Only one application per pupil will be accepted. If you apply online, do not complete any other form of application. Keep your login details safe and use your registered email address for all communication with the team.

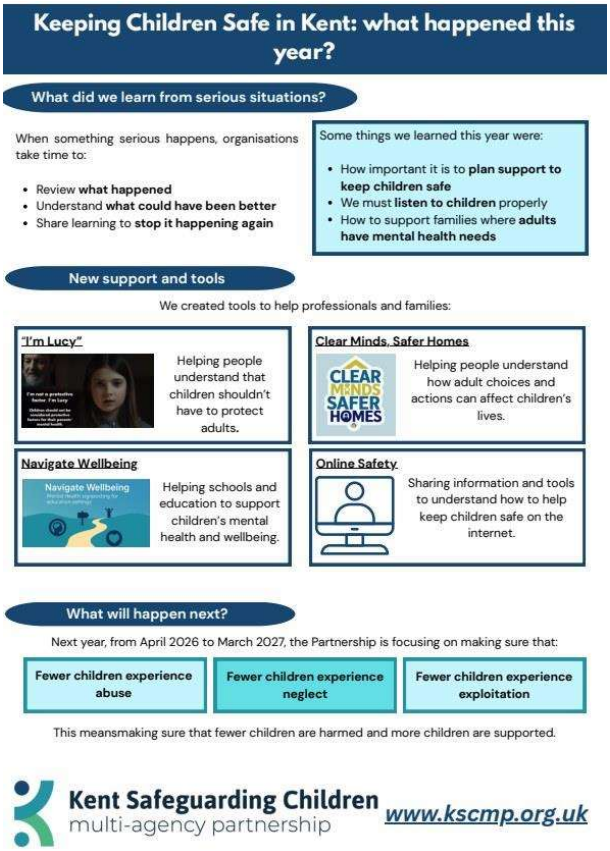
The confirmation email may go to your junk/spam folder of your email – please check here before contacting our team for confirmation.

Please note applications can only be made via Kent County Council (KCC) if the child resides at a KCC address. If your child does **not** reside at a KCC address, you must make an application via your Local Authority.

Kent County Council
kent.gov.uk

Keeping Children Safe in Kent





Community News



St Bart's, Otford

epic!

EPIC stands for Every Person in Christ but also Eating Pizza in Church and the group is very intentionally about both.

This is a youth group for young people in **school years 5,6,7 and 8** to come together, build relationships and explore faith.

EPIC is on the **first Saturday of the month 5.00-7.00pm** in the Church Centre.
Each session will include games, crafts and eating pizza together.

For more information or to let us know that you are coming please contact Rev Kelly
vicar@stbartholomewschurch.co.uk

St Bart's
OTFORD



Sunday 15th November 2026

10:30–12

NCT Members 10AM

Adults £1
kids go free

Cafe on site
Free parking

nct
Nearly New
SALE



Walthamstow Hall School, Sevenoaks



Scan for more info

1000's of preloved baby and children's items

Sevenoaks and Tonbridge NCT Branch

RUTH CABLE FAMILY CONCERT

with SEVENOAKS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Sunday 11th October 2026 at 4pm ~ Stag Theatre, Sevenoaks

Around the World on The Amazing Magic Carpet!



Join us for our annual sell-out family concert which features tales of magic and adventure from around the world!

Narrated by David Leonard | Conducted by Darrell Davison

Other pieces include favourites like the *Toreador's March* by Bizet, *Arabian Dance* by Tchaikovsky and *Rodeo* by Copland.

Tickets direct from the Stag Box Office
£11 each or £10 for four or more

01732 450175 | *www.stagsevenoaks.co.uk*

www.sevenoakssymphonyorchestra.org.uk

Registered Charity No. 10570

STAG SEVENOAKS

OTFORD PARISH COUNCIL

PLAYGROUND SURVEY

Help design YOUR new playground!

We're planning big improvements and we want to hear from YOU.
What do you love? What's missing? What would make it more fun?

SURVEY CLOSES 30th SEPTEMBER 2026

Only takes 5 minutes | **Every idea counts** | **Grown-ups can help**



Scan to have your say!

Ask a grown-up to help you scan with a phone camera.

Or search: https://forms.cloud.microsoft/e/PjaeGcmQNn

Offord Parish Council • offordparishcouncil.gov.uk •
clerk@offordparishcouncil.gov.uk

Half Term



Free School Meals

The Department for Education has expanded FSM eligibility so that all children in households receiving Universal Credit may now qualify, subject to the updated eligibility criteria.

How to apply in Kent

Applying is confidential, completely free, and takes just a few minutes online. Kent County Council provides an instant eligibility check. To apply, please visit the official Kent County Council Free School Meals Portal[1] to start your application.

If you would like to read more about the criteria or alternative support options first, you can visit the Kent County Council Free School Meals Information Page[2].

If your application is approved, the system will notify us automatically, and we will update our records straight away.

For full details, please refer to the official government guidance. Pupil Premium Government Guidance & Overview[3]

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[1] https://www.google.com/goto?url=CAESYgHrOzAVUILAQZ82ETyY6SmJlbsKlyylS_l2vWOb033A-KvYkGbfAgLA6pW3tmSm2h1mfYXusbxaHT9NiHwISwIEAUPqJWviwrzDHGRl0dQmJf6mYLhYyH5xxwGhKGlnFat0

[2] https://www.google.com/goto?url=CAESgAEB6zswFReET-Rh3aIlgO76cCKVtHQjjIU6uT_f9CkqcT1wtXhadqchPJN9pRamXQbADSPgKBoS4obOdoNMjxLFxViAS2YgnzQO7A2oI4Rty6Q6m7jqvPmt_sORsTqkN36uBTAaSQTjCuppwmF9I0oVRW1idjw3T8sAz9Z4Hq3j1w

Apply for Free School Meals[4]

Sevenoaks Counselling & Kent Family



Attendance Insight



We know that consistent school attendance is so important for your child; the benefits for them are immeasurable! However, sometimes, the numbers can seem vague. Therefore, to put attendance percentage into perspective, we have converted percentages into their weekly equivalent and, even one step further, to express percentage in terms of lessons missed:

- Attendance of **95**% for the year equals **10 days** that your child has been absent- that is **two school weeks** of your child's learning missed for that year. If we consider that

[3]https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium/pupil-premium
[4]https://apply.cloudforedu.org.uk/ofsm/kent

children are taught 4-6 lessons a day, then 10 days absence over the course of the school year equates to **40-60 lessons missed**.

- Attendance of **90**% for the year equals **19 days** that your child has been absent, that is almost **4 weeks** of school missed, or **76-114** lessons missed.
- Attendance of **85**% for the year equals **29 days** that your child has been absent, that is almost **6 school weeks** missed (nearly the equivalent of the summer holidays) or **116-174** lessons missed.

· Attendance of **80**% for the year equals **38 days** absent per year, that is over **7 school weeks** or **152-228** lessons missed!

Punctuality Matters Being frequently late for school adds up to lost learning

· Arriving 5 minutes late every day adds up to over 3 days lost each year

· Arriving 15 minutes late every day adds up to 2 weeks absence a year

· Arriving 30 minutes late every adds up to 19 days absence a year

If, for any reason, you require support getting your child into school, please let us know. Contact the school and we can arrange a meeting with a member of the Senior Leadership Team to discuss how best we can support you and next steps.

Please see the government website for more details

The Education Hub[5]

[5]https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2024/08/fines-for-parents-for-taking-children-out-of-school-what-you-need-to-know/

Otford Instagram Account



We would love to remind everyone to visit our Instagram page at Otford_primary_school where you will find lots of information and pictures regarding all the exciting things we have been doing at school. We regularly post news in the "stories" rather than posts as they can easily become lost in the posts. We have 479 followers now- thank you for taking the time to look. You can find us here: otford_primary_school[6]

Should we receive any inappropriate content on this page the account involved will be blocked and reported to Instagram.

Early Birds Bookings

Dear Parents\Carers,

ParentPay should be used to make Early Bird Bookings. Bookings can be made until the end of the academic year and will need to be paid for at the time of booking. There is a limit of 45 children per day in place and spaces are allocated on a first come first served basis. Please find below link to guide to booking:

https://cdn.embedly.com/widgets/media.html?src=https%3A%2F%2Ffast.wistia.net%2Fembed%2Fiframe%2Ff7e9aflmga&display_name=Wistia%2C%2BInc.&url=https%3A%2F%2Fparentpay.wistia.com%2Fmedias%2Ff7e9aflmga&image=https%3A%2F%2Fembed-ssl.wistia.com%2Fdeliveries%2Fe388bc7ea8e1880c18a91c5f5ec1e32f6ca5d2bc.jpg%3Fimage_crop_resized%3D960x540&key=40cb30655a7f4a46adaaf18efb05db21&type=text%2Fhtml&schema=wistia&wvideo=f7e9aflmga

[6] https://www.instagram.com/otford_primary_school

Parents who pay for sessions using childcare vouchers should email their requirements at least a term in advance to earlybirds@otford.kent.sch.uk. Early Birds will then manually add the required sessions onto ParentPay on your behalf. Sessions paid for by childcare vouchers are not guaranteed unless booked termly in advance.

