

Newsletter

January 2026



Dear Parents, Carers, Staff and Governors,

A very warm welcome back to the start of our Spring term! I hope you all enjoyed a restful and joyful holiday with your loved ones. It has been wonderful to see the children return with such high levels of energy and positivity as we begin 2026. As we step into this new year, we see it as a fresh opportunity to reset and refocus on our vision of 'thinking for ourselves and caring for each other.'

There are several ways in which I would like the school community to make a positive start to 2026:

One thing I would like to see across our school community is all of our children attending school in the correct uniform. Reminders about uniform can be found here <https://www.oultonprimary.co.uk/uniform/>

Secondly, as many of us look towards goals of being as healthy as we can in the new year, we must ask that water bottles in the classrooms only have water in them – children are not allowed juice during learning time. Please feel free to send your child with a non-fizzy juice to enjoy at lunchtime. This will remain in children's lunch boxes, bags or lockers until then.

The final resolution I would like the school community to make for 2026, is to support us in achieving the highest possible levels of attendance. The best place for all of our children is to be in school, ready and on time, every day. However, if there is an exceptional circumstance for which you have to take your child out of school, then you must complete an exceptional circumstances form on our website: <https://www.oultonprimary.co.uk/holidays-in-term-time/> This form must also be submitted for medical procedures, weddings and funerals as well as holiday requests. It is important to note however that family holidays in term time are not exceptional circumstances. Under Section 7 of the **Education Act 1996**, parents have a strict legal duty to ensure their child receives a suitable full-time education, which includes the requirement to attend school regularly and on time. "Regularly" means attending in accordance with the school's specific rules, including arrival times. If a child arrives after the school's register has officially closed—typically 30 minutes after the start of the session—it is recorded as an **unauthorised absence** for that entire session. Please ensure you drop your children off for a prompt start to the day by 8:45am and no later than 8:50am.

Thank you for your continued partnership. We are excited about the journey ahead and the opportunities we will share this year.

Warm regards,

Mr McAlinden



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School Priorities

In order to continually improve, all schools have a 'School Improvement Plan' or 'School Development Plan' where they identify key priorities for development over the coming year.

As we complete our first term, I would like to share an update on our key school priorities and how you can support your child's learning at home.

This year we have five whole-school priorities, with a continued strong focus on phonics. Following the significant improvements made last year, we have begun the 2025–26 academic year with drive and ambition to ensure that all children leave Year 1 having passed the Phonics Screening Check. Phonics opens the door to reading and provides access to the entire school curriculum. It teaches children how to decode words, supports reading fluency, improves spelling, and boosts comprehension.

Writing is another key priority. It is vital that children in Reception, and Years 1 and 2 master the foundations of writing, including pencil control, grip, posture, and correct letter formation. This work links closely with phonics, as children practise forming letters within familiar, taught words. In Years 3-6 children need to continue with the foundations if they have not yet mastered these before moving on to write a variety of genres for a range of audiences.

Our third priority is speech, language, and communication. This area brings together elements of phonics and writing. At Oulton, we want children to use language to think, solve problems, and understand more complex ideas. This includes explaining, predicting, and evaluating. We will be creating more opportunities in school for children to be taught and practise these skills, and your support at home is invaluable.

You might encourage this by asking questions such as:

- Can you explain how ice is formed?
- What do plants need to grow?
- Why do you think it might snow tomorrow, or why not?

How you can support your child's learning at home:

- Limit screen time and encourage screen-free conversations. Talk about your child's day and share your own. Can they debate with you and give reasons for their ideas? (I think I know the answer to this!)
- Read to your child for enjoyment.
- Listen to your child read (this is different from reading to them and both are important)
- Practise writing at home. Could your child help write the shopping list? Can they show you the letters and words they have been learning in phonics?

Sporting updates

Our Sports Hall Athletics team got the new year off to the perfect start. On Tuesday 13th January 2026, our Sports Hall Athletics team delivered a fantastic performance at the Plate City semi-finals held at Morley Leisure Centre. Drawn in an exceptionally tough group consisting of Robin Hood, Thorpe, Saint Barts, Castleton and Morley Victoria, our athletes rose to the challenge with determination and teamwork, securing a top spot and claiming one of four places in the Plate City Finals. We couldn't be prouder of their achievement, and we'll be cheering them on as they battle for the trophy in the City Finals on Tuesday 24th February 2026!



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On Tuesday 27th January 2026, our Year 5/6 football team head down the road for a local derby against a very good Woodlesford side. Hopefully the weather warms up in the coming weeks which will allow us to fulfil important league fixtures.

Staffing updates

At the end of last term, Miss Wood was due to leave Oulton Primary School. However, we are lucky enough to keep her for a bit longer! She will now be teaching Seahorses for a day each week and Stingrays for a day each week, replacing Miss Cooper who previously taught Stingrays on Thursdays. This term we have also welcomed Mrs Hardisty back to school who is teaching Orcas for two days each week and also spending some time in Swordfish.

As you know, Mrs Hoskin left our school at the end of last term. We are currently in the process of recruiting a new SENDCo and, as communicated previously, Miss Cooper will be doing this role until a new SENDCo is able to start. As Miss Cooper already has a number of roles in school, her capacity will be limited, and she will be prioritising



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our statutory SEND duties such as carrying out EHCP reviews. If you have any questions about SEND in school, please speak to class teachers first as this is the best way to get a prompt reply. Class teachers will then liaise with Miss Cooper if needed. Please do not worry about this temporary change impacting upon provision in school as all staff are committed to providing the best possible support for our pupils with SEND. It may just mean that if you do need to speak to Miss Cooper, she will take slightly longer to come back to you or might pass your query back to your child's class teacher or phase leader to follow up. Miss O'Halloran is also a key member of our SEND team, so in some cases it will be Miss O'Halloran liaising with parents/ carers.

Thank you for your continued support.

REMINDER: Free community CPR sessions

When and where: Wednesday 21st January 2026 from 6-7pm in the school hall.

Description: Join us for a practical, hands-on session on where you'll learn the essential skills of Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR). This informal workshop is designed for all members of the community—no prior experience required.

What to Expect:

-  **Guided Instruction:** Trained facilitators will demonstrate CPR techniques step by step for both adult and paediatric resuscitation
-  **Hands-On Practice:** Try chest compressions on training manikins to build confidence.
-  **Key Skills Covered:**
 - Recognizing cardiac arrest
 - Calling for emergency help
 - Performing effective chest compressions
 - Using an Automated External Defibrillator (AED)
-  **Community Focus:** A welcoming environment where families, friends, and neighbours can learn together.

Purpose: This session empowers community members with life-saving knowledge. By attending, you'll gain the confidence to act quickly and effectively in an emergency, potentially saving someone's life.



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Dates for your diary

Event	Date	Time
Future Spring and Summer learn with us events will be detailed in newsletters before the term where it falls.		
POPS CPR training	Wednesday 21 st January 2026	6-7pm
POPS meeting (new parents and carers welcome)	Wednesday 21 st January 2026	7pm
Year 1 and 2 Learn with Us	Wednesday 4 th February 2026	TBC
NSPCC Number Day	Friday 6 th February 2026	All day
Year 1 and 2 Yorkshire Wildlife Park Trip	Tuesday 10 th February and Friday 13 th February 2026	All day
Year 5 and 6 Learn with Us	Wednesday 11 th February 2026	TBC
Reception Learn with Us	Thursday 12 th February 2026	TBC
Year 3 and 4 Learn with Us	Thursday 12 th February 2026	TBC
Year 4 Whitby Residential	Wednesday 25 th February – Friday 27 th February 2026	
World Book Day	Thursday 5 th March 2026	All day
British science week	Monday 16 th March 2026	All week
Parents Evening	Tuesday 17 th March 2026 Wednesday 18 th March 2026	3:40-6:00pm 3:40-7:00pm
Comic Relief Day	Friday 20 th March 2026	All day
Easter Egg competition	Wednesday 1 st April 2026	All day
KS2 Spring Sing	Thursday 2 nd April 2026	PM
Good Friday (school closed)	Friday 3 rd April 2026	All day
School opens after the Easter holidays	Monday 20th April 2026	



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