



Our Phoenix Value of the Month – Respect

As we settle into our **first full week back at Phoenix**, it has been lovely to see the children becoming familiar with routines and getting back into school life.

This week we also held our **first Phoenix Values Assembly** of the academic year, where we introduced our value for September – **RESPECT**. We explored what respect means and how we can show respect to others through our words, actions and choices. We talked about **being kind, listening to others, looking after our school and playground, and valuing the people around us**. As part of our assembly, we also explored **what Makaton is** and how using signs alongside spoken language can help us to communicate and include everyone. The children learned the Makaton signs for **“please”** and **“thank you”** and enjoyed practising them together. [Makaton Sign - Please - Really useful Makaton signs - CBeebies](#) [Makaton Sign - Thank You - Really useful Makaton signs - CBeebies](#)



We also thought about our Phoenix expectations and how **we all have a part to play in making Phoenix the very best it can be**. Our assembly linked closely to our school values: **“At Phoenix we all belong. Everyone is treated with kindness and respect”**

Why not continue our conversation about **respect at home**? Talk to your child about what respect looks and sounds like in your family. You could ask:

- What does being respectful mean?
- How can we show respect to our family?
- How can we show respect when we disagree?
- How can we make sure everyone feels listened to and valued?

You can watch this **BBC video together as a family** and talk about the messages it shares: [BBC - Something Special](#)

We will continue to explore **respect throughout September**, helping the children to understand that it is not just something we talk about in assembly – it is something we **show through our words, actions and choices every day**.

We are so proud of how the children have started the year – what a wonderful Phoenix family we have! ❤️ 🦋



This term we have a real focus on children feeling happy and secure in school as the children transition into school or new classes. Building healthy relationships and nourishing mental health and wellbeing is a key driver in our healthy and happy school community. Through our well-being approach to education, we talk about feelings and emotions from the moment children enter foundation stage and help pupils build strategies to manage their own mental health. We encourage the children to talk about their own feelings and emotions and develop the language to share their emotions. At Phoenix we use a range of strategies to ensure our children feel happy and safe and in turn become confident learners. We always greet the children warmly on entry to school each day and then ensure the day is calm, purposeful and enjoyable. The information below gives you further information about some of the strategies we use.

Take Five

All our children benefit from Take Five at school. Our staff have been trained to deliver this resilience building skill set based on breathing, grounding, and awareness to all our children. The children are taught short practices which help them to relax, feel refreshed and energised, release tension and ground themselves. The children in KS1 are familiar with these practices from last year and have started the sessions again this year. The children in Nursery and F2 will start their Take Five journey over the next couple of weeks.

First Aid for Feelings

To encourage all our children to understand and manage their emotions we also deliver a 'First Aid for Feelings' programme here at school. The children have a special first aid box in class that helps them to name and understand their feelings, and they have tools they can access to help them manage feelings they may have throughout the day. Just like a child may need a plaster for a cut, they may need one of the tools in the box for when they have hurt emotions. The children find out how to use the tools over the course of half a term and are then encouraged to be able to manage their emotions using the tools.

Time to Talk Jars

Every class has a Time to Talk jar. If a child would like to speak to an adult in school, they can place their photograph in the jar. This lets staff know that the child would welcome some time to talk—whether they would like to share a concern or worry or simply have a chat. This provides children with a simple, reassuring way to ask for support when they need it.

Zones of Regulation

Later in the term, we will deliver specific Zones of Regulation sessions to help children recognise, understand and manage their emotions. A further letter containing more information about these sessions will be sent to families later in the term.

Building self-esteem

At our school, we are committed to fostering a nurturing environment that enhances the self-esteem of our children. To aid in this, we have implemented an initiative where each child in Key Stage is encouraged to write something positive about a classmate on a weekly basis. Throughout the academic year, every child will have the opportunity to receive affirmations from their peers.

The process involves the teacher selecting a child each week, after which classmates will write notes acknowledging the chosen child's strengths and qualities. These notes are then compiled into a personalised card, and cards are proudly displayed within the school until the half term, after which they are sent home with the child.

Children's wellbeing is at the heart of everything we do at Phoenix, because feeling safe, happy and understood enables every child to thrive.

OPAL Play - come and play the Phoenix way!

We are delighted to introduce our new F2 families to **OPAL - Outdoor Play and Learning**, which is now a very special and well-established part of life at Phoenix Infant and Nursery School.

Our playtimes are **truly special!** Over the past year, OPAL has transformed the way our children play, giving them greater opportunities to explore, create, imagine, take risks, solve problems and, most importantly, have fun together.

Our approach is based on the belief that play is an essential part of childhood. Through play, children develop their independence, social skills, cooperation, coordination, resilience, creativity and imagination. They learn to negotiate, make decisions, overcome challenges and build positive relationships with others. OPAL has been recognised nationally and internationally for its approach to improving children's play. In 2018, OPAL won the **Best Active Schools' Programme in Europe** award and has been cited in two parliamentary reports as delivering outstanding practice. OPAL has also worked closely with Sport England to promote more active childhoods. We strongly believe that: **"Play is freely chosen, personally directed, intrinsically motivated behaviour that actively engages the child."** Through our OPAL approach, we want our children to have the freedom and confidence to explore their environment, use their imagination and enjoy playing together. There are lots of ways you can help and we will share a letter with you next week about the donations you can make to support.

Wellies - an essential part of OPAL!

As you will soon discover, **wellies are an essential part of OPAL play at Phoenix!** Our children are encouraged to enjoy our outdoor spaces in all kinds of weather, so we ask that every child has a named pair of wellies available.

For KS1 children:

Please clearly **label your child's wellies** and place them on the **welly stand in the KS1 playground.**

For our F2 children:

Please still clearly label your child's wellies, but bring them into school **in a named bag.** The F2 staff will show your child where their wellies are kept and help them to become familiar with the routine.

Welly Donation & Swap Station

We are also delighted to have our **Welly Donation and Swap Station** at the front of school.

If your child has outgrown their wellies but they are still in good condition, please consider donating them to the station. Equally, if your child needs a pair, **please take a look and see if there is a suitable pair available.**

This is a lovely way for our Phoenix community to support one another and helps us to ensure that **every child has the equipment they need to fully enjoy OPAL play.**

If you have spare pairs of children's wellies at home, we would be very grateful if you could add them to the station. Please make sure they are clean and in a condition that another child can use.

We are committed to doing everything we can to ensure that **every child has access to a pair of wellies** and can enjoy the wonderful opportunities our outdoor environment provides.

OPAL has become a much-loved part of Phoenix, and we are incredibly proud of the difference it has made to our children's playtimes. **Our playgrounds are places where children can be active, creative, imaginative, adventurous and, above all, happy.** This week we will share some OPAL photographs with you on Tapestry and Seesaw. For more information about OPAL, please visit



[Outdoor Play and Learning \(OPAL\)](#)

Communication with our families is key to supporting the children's growth. To keep everyone in the loop, we use online learning platforms. In the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Foundation Two), we use Tapestry, while Key Stage One we use Seesaw. All the necessary information and login details have been sent out, but if you need any assistance with this, please do not hesitate to reach out. We also have a Facebook page [Facebook](#) so you can view key news stories and events.

You will notice plenty of familiar faces in the playground each morning, warmly welcoming your children. This friendly interaction is an essential part of our happy community, and we want you to feel comfortable asking any questions. We're here to help!

There's an exciting term ahead, packed with events designed to keep you updated on the curriculum and to encourage connection with our families. Here are some key dates to remember:

Coffee morning - Tuesday, 29th September at 9.15am

F2 Curriculum evening - Wednesday, 30th September at 5.30PM

KS1 Curriculum Evening - Wednesday, 7th October 2026 at 5:30 PM

F2 Parents' Evenings - Monday, 12th October and Wednesday, 14th October 2026

KS1 Parents' Evenings - Tuesday, 13th October and Thursday, 15th October 2026

Details on booking appointments for parents' evenings will be shared closer to the dates. We're genuinely looking forward to these sessions as they will give you the chance to meet your child's teacher, discuss how your little one is settling in, address attendance matters, and explore their learning environment. At the end of this newsletter, you will find key diary dates for the entire academic year, including school holidays, alongside an overview of our lovely staff. We hope you find this information useful!



During the colder months, it can be more of a challenge to find ways to keep the children entertained without feeling the need to spend money and I will therefore be opening the school for some more Saturday afternoon 'Stay and Play' sessions. The sessions are completely free of charge with refreshments provided. The hall will be available and if the weather allows outside too. There is lots of donated free uniform too. Come along, have a chat with other parents and let the children have fun together - during the sessions you will be responsible for supervising your children. The first one will be on Saturday 10th October -1pm until 3pm.



Reminder: We are a nut-free school, as a child with a severe nut allergy requires an EpiPen; please do not send any food containing nuts into school.

Thank you for another remarkable week at Phoenix! Let's keep the momentum going as we embrace learning together!

Autumn Term

Coffee morning - Tuesday, 29th September at 9.15am

F2 Curriculum evening - Wednesday, 30th September at 5.30PM

KS1 Curriculum Evening - Wednesday, 7th October 2026 at 5:30 PM

F2 Parents' Evenings - Monday, 12th October and Wednesday, 14th October 2026

KS1 Parents' Evenings - Tuesday, 13th October and Thursday, 15th October 2026

Half Term - Monday, 19th October 2026 to Friday, 30th October 2026

INSET Day - Monday, 2nd November 2026 - School closed for children

F2 Christmas Performance (Puffins and Finches) - Tuesday, 8th December 2026 at 2:00 PM

Nursery Christmas Performance - Thursday, 10th December 2026 (10:00 AM and 2:00 PM)

Santa's Grotto - Saturday, 12th December 2026

KS1 Christmas Performance (Woodpeckers, Hummingbirds and Kingfishers) -

Wednesday, 16th December 2026 at 2:00 PM and Thursday, 17th December 2026 at 9:30 AM

Pantomime/Party Day (including Christmas Dinner) - Friday, 18th December 2026 (Panto pm)

Last Day of Autumn Term - Friday, 18th December 2026

Spring Term

Back to School - Monday, 4th January 2027

Safer Internet Day - Tuesday, 9th February 2027

INSET Day - Friday, 12th February 2027 - School closed for children

Half Term - Monday, 15th February 2027 to Friday, 19th February 2027

First Day of Term - Monday, 22nd February 2027

World Book Day - Thursday, 4th March 2027

Easter Disco - Friday, 19th March 2027

F2 Parents' Evenings (Puffins and Finches) - Monday, 22nd March and Wednesday, 24th March 2027

KS1 Parents' Evenings (Hummingbirds, Kingfishers, and Woodpeckers) - Tuesday, 23rd March and Thursday, 25th March 2027

Last Day of Spring Term - Thursday, 25th March 2027

Summer Term

INSET Day - Monday, 12th April 2027 - School closed for children

First Day of Summer Term - Monday, 12th April 2027

Half Term - Monday, 31st May 2027 to Friday, 4th June 2027

Year 1 Phonics Screening - Week commencing 14th June 2027

Year 2 Residential Trip to Gulliver's Valley - details to follow - Thursday, 17th June 2027

KS1 Sports Day (Hummingbirds, Kingfishers/Woodpeckers) - Thursday, 24th June 2027 at 9:30 AM

F1/F2 Sports Day (Nursery, Finches, and Puffins) - Wednesday, 23rd June 2027 (times: 10 AM)

Carnival (after school fundraiser for children)- Friday 9th July 2027

Year 2 Leavers Assembly - Tuesday, 27th July 2027 at 2:00 PM

Last Day of Term - Wednesday, 28th July 2027 - End of Academic Year



2026/2027

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School Holidays
 Public Holidays
 Administration Day

Autumn Term

1 September - 16 October 6 weeks 4 days

2 November - 18 December 7 weeks

Spring Term

4 January - 12 February 6 weeks

22 February - 25 March 4 weeks 4 days

Summer Term

12 April - 28 May 6 weeks 4 days

7 June - 28 July 7 weeks 3 days

INSET days - school closed for children

Tuesday 1st September 2026

Wednesday 2nd September 2026

Monday 2nd November 2026

Friday 12th February 2027

Monday 12th April 2027

