



Newsletter

Blackwell First School,
St. Catherine's Rd.,
Blackwell,
Near Bromsgrove,
Worcestershire.
B60 1BN

Dear Families,



Year 3s at the Blackwell, Charford, Millfields joint drama day at South Bromsgrove High School. Thank you to Mr Sugars.

June 2017

I am sure that you have been admiring the beautiful new doors and stained glass at the front of the school. The children are certainly very proud and have made so many lovely comments. It is important that they feel pride in their school and that they are part of a community. They have, however, commented that I have got the date wrong as it is now 2017! I did explain that 1884 was the date that the original building was built and 2016 was the year that our new building was completed. The doors represent the work of the school in a rural setting.

We are tremendously grateful to Mrs Christine Allcott, our generous neighbour, who has funded the whole project. We will be placing a plaque on the wall beside the doors to mark her connection with the school. She has been a great supporter of the school and as she will be moving house in July, we wish her well and hope that she comes back to visit us.



PFTA THANKS

The work of the PFTA is vital in ensuring that the children gain as much benefit as possible from their time at Blackwell. As funding is reduced for schools across the country, our own fundraising and that of the PFTA is increasingly important. Although, we use PFTA funds for the 'added extras' such as circus skills, bangra dancing and bellboating, we are also fortunate in being able to fund Home Reading books and additional resources with the funds raised.

The PFTA has offered to fund half of a class set of laptops with funds raised as a result of the summer fair so please come along and join in the fun and raise funds for the children's education.

The PFTA AGM took place last night and nominations onto the committee took place. The following committee is now in place for September: Chair- Jenny Price; Vice Chair – Claire Richards; Secretary – Tammy Button and Treasurer – Jennifer Ehlersen. Thank you to everyone for supporting the school events.

Early Years training for staff

As part of staff development, we have been working on developing staff expertise in the area of Early Years environments. When Early Years teaching is at its best, it is some of the best practice you will see in schools.

The staff members have worked on:

- developing the environment to enable the children to access high quality, open ended resources for play to encourage independence and creativity;
- developing the adult role as facilitator during play to enable children's learning to move on without being adult led and
- developing the outdoor play experiences to provide those opportunities for developing physically and mentally and to play as children have always done...in the mud, the sand, with water and dens.

Sometimes, less is more. Toys available to purchase such as car garages and castles offer limited opportunities for engaging in open ended, creative play. Providing an empty box, kitchen rolls, masking tape, logs and a blanket offers so much more. Some of the quotes below resonate with us as teachers at Blackwell.



"Play is the highest form of research."

-Albert Einstein

Exposure to natural environments improves children's cognitive development by improving their awareness, reasoning and observational skills.

If you want to find out more, read 'Cotton Wool Kids' by Stella O'Malley. Mrs Cain recommends it! It explains why Forest School is important.

Never help a child with a task at which he feels he can succeed.

- Maria Montessori

It is not what you do for your children, but what you have taught them to do for themselves, that will make them successful human beings.

PARENT VOICE - I would like to meet with a group of parents to discuss informing you about your child's progress. I would like to know what works well currently and find out what we could do to further improve (within reason!) how we communicate on this important aspect of school life. It may be that some things that we do can be reduced, whilst some different things can be included. At the end of the day, it is the impact on the children of any communication that is paramount. Please contact me if you are interested in meeting with a small group.

Collective Worship

Our theme this week is 'Aspiration' and we are encouraging the children to have positive hopes and ambitions for their futures. We have discussed the roles of famous people with aspiration: Emmeline Pankhurst; Nelson Mandela; Mother Theresa; William Wilberforce; LS Lowry; E Nesbit and Mo Farah.

We also introduced the children to many role models in the police; fire service; medics; teachers; builders; electricians; musicians; journalists and scientists.

It is important for us to support the children in finding their place in the world and part of that will be how they impact on society through the world of work. Currently, the world of children's entertainment, the media and children's retail all too easily support the development of an idea that girls do some jobs and boys another, and we are working to make children realise that jobs are open to everyone and their interests are what matters and their aspiration to succeed.

Next week, we will start to consider 'Changes' as we prepare the children for transition into new year groups. They will already have started work in classes and their teachers will be talking to them about the new classroom and will help them understand new expectations. This is one of the advantages of a small school...the children know all of the adults anyway.

Sport and the Arts

Sports – It is time for the last Wake and Shake of the year! Each class will choose its own unique dance for this last one and the winner will be judged at the end of term. There may be a show of one of our favourites at the Summer Fair!

Arts – What a wonderful day some of the Year 3 children had at the Drama event at South Bromsgrove High School! The children developed: teamwork; public speaking; drama skills and performance drama. Well done children.



FOREST SCHOOL

Well done to Mrs Cain, Forest School staff and children for working towards our Gold Award. This indicates that the Forest School children have been working towards developing sustainability, developing awe and wonder as part of work in the outdoors and outdoor learning skills. Well done everyone.



The drama day at South Bromsgrove not only gives the children the opportunity to experience being on stage with lights, working with others and developing new drama skills, but it is also an opportunity to find out about other schools and experience a larger environment before their own transition to Middle School.

TERM DATES- Summer Term 2017

- 21.6 Storyclub- YR
- 23.6 Swimming
- 28.6 Storyclub- YR
- 28.6 YR Athletics at Ryland Centre
- 29.6 Red Class assembly
- 30.6 Swimming
- 30.6 Settling in visits for Nursery 8.30-9.30
- 1.7 PFTA BALL
- 5.7 Storyclub – YR
- 5.7 Malvern residential
- 6.7 Residential
- 7.7 Residential
- 7.7 No swimming
- 12.7 Bell boating regatta
- 12.7 Storyclub- YR
- 14.7 Swimming
- 14.7 Settling in – Nursery
- 15.7 SUMMER FAIR
- 17.7 Year 4s transition day
- 17.7 Nursery Induction meeting (in Red Class) – 5.30pm
- 18.7 Class swaps
- 19.7 Jungle Tea Party
- 19.7 YR induction meeting
- 21.7 Leaver's breakfast
- 21.7 End of term
- SUMMER HOLIDAY
- HOLIDAY CLUB- 24-28 July AND 29.8-1.9
- School opens – 4.9.17 – 2 Teacher Days