

NEWSLETTER

for Blackwell First School



**Artsmark
Platinum Award**
Awarded by Arts
Council England

Blackwell First School,
St. Catherine's Rd.,
Blackwell,
Near Bromsgrove,
Worcestershire.
B60 1BN
May 2017

Dear Families,

We have been awarded the Platinum Award for the Arts. This is the highest award.

I can hardly believe that we have reached the last term of this academic year. It seems only a few weeks since Red Class children were arriving for their first week and maybe time really does rush by as we age, because to me it only seems a little while since our Year 4s arrived as new Red Class children and here we are five years on, sending them off to Bellboating, on Residential and preparing them for transition to Middle School.

This term is a really busy one for the children and staff. We start the term with 'Inventions' and whether the children are investigating travel through the ages (Red Class) or the impact of the Industrial Revolution on the local area (Yellow/ Blue classes), the children will all develop their historical skills of enquiry, analysis and presentation of evidence. With a focus on promoting good role models for girls (generally and also within Science and Technology), it is interesting that a Birmingham engineer during the Industrial Revolution (Sarah Guppy) is not one that any of us had heard of and yet the impact of her work on Brunel was significant. We work to support all of the children in school, but are becoming increasingly aware of the impact of the media on our young girls and their aspirations are not as secure as they once were. They won't all be princesses and singers so we do need to project a balanced and aspirational view for them all!

We continue to work to support children's learning behaviours in school and we strive for children who are independent, resilient and aspirational. Through work in all lessons, Collective Worship, PSHE (Personal Social and Health Education), P4C (Philosophy) and our Afternoon Clubs, we offer activities and experiences to develop these skills. Please help at home by encouraging the children to organise their own belongings, make their beds in a morning, clear their plates from the table, carry their bags to school and take ownership of their reading and homework. It is a start in making them more independent in all areas of their lives.



Year 4s working collaboratively on their historical skills, explaining learning and sequencing historical information.



Toby showing a real determination and strong work ethic, skills we aim to develop in all of the children.

Year 4s showing why their independence and teamwork is needed, as they paddled the canals last week.



Artsmark- Platinum

From 2014 when the DfE's National Curriculum was implemented by schools nationally, we embraced the new curriculum and its expectations. The challenge set for the Arts was like never before and provided us with the opportunity to develop our Arts provision. For a number of years we have worked hard on developing Art as a skills based subject whilst also developing the children's understanding of Art History and the relevance of Art in our lives today. Likewise, in Music, Miss Evans works hard with all of the teachers to ensure that the subject teaching is strong, whilst also developing the children's understanding of music history and its place in our country's history.

Last year, we decided that the time was right to work towards the Artsmark to recognise the strong provision at the school. We undertook work (which is ongoing) on drama alongside Mr Chris Sugars at South Bromsgrove High School as we had identified drama as the area of the Arts that we wished to further develop. We also worked collaboratively with Charford and Millfields First Schools and have carried out joint Arts events and have worked as staff to develop subject expertise in these areas. The process of applying for the award was a lengthy and thorough one and we were, therefore, delighted when we heard before Easter that we had successfully been awarded PLATINUM!

The Artsmark panel commented that:

The panel was impressed by your school's high level of pupil engagement and development of pupil leadership skills. The rich and interesting music provision and opportunities for pupils was noted as a highlight. The panel looks forward to seeing your school sustain your commitment to arts and culture.

We firmly believe that amongst a national curriculum that strongly prioritises the basic skills of Numeracy and Literacy, it is important that we promote the Arts and Sport as well as other areas of interest, particularly to engage and motivate children in their learning.

School Council updates

The members of the School Council have been busy monitoring reading provision in school. Members will carry out a Learning Walk in afternoon clubs with Miss Townsend. The children fed back to the school leadership and also the school in Collective Worship.

Strengths:

- Reading areas in all classes
- Focus storytime books in each class
- Children could articulate their favourite books

The children also suggested an area for development:

- Plan another storyswap across the school

The Council will also invite Charford and Millfields First Schools to a storyswap at Blackwell and some of our Councillors will also visit Anderton Park Primary (thanks to Mrs Evans in Red Class) for the first time to learn about how they work in their school.

The Sports Crew will support our Sporting Games later in the term and will monitor the success of sport in school.

The monitoring by the children helps the children develop a sense of democracy and a feeling of being valued.

Work at Forest School

Mrs Cain and the children have been busy planting trees as part of their work on sustainability. Mrs Cain is working on gaining the GOLD AWARD from the Woodland Trust and so far has achieved the Silver Award. This week in 'Collective Worship' we shared a beautiful story provided by the Woodland Trust that, through a series of woodcuts, told the story of a man who planted acorns in the South of France and created a forest.

This year, as part of centenary commemorations for World War 1, the Woodland Trust plans to plant forests across the country and our trees will help to develop our Forest School area during this time.



Sainsbury's
SCHOOL
GAMES

Red Class learning journey –Red Class children are settled in school and have learned lots of basic skills and routines and are developing as early learners. They now work more in their workbooks as part of supporting them with their transition to Year 1.

They also have an art sketch book and a homework book.

The children will bring home a homework sheet every few weeks that they can work on each week, but these are optional. The details of what to do are explained on the sheet. It is most important in Reception that the children read every day. Homework can wait, but we know that some families/children like more work. How different we all are!

These homework sheets provide you as families with very detailed information about what is being taught in school. By reading the sheets, even if you don't do the homework, you will be able to talk about the children's learning with them or understand some of the things that they may talk to you about.

Please ask myself or Mrs Webb if you have queries.

School Sport and the Arts

- Swimming started last week for Year 3s and 4s and we are fortunate that we are able to offer this provision for our KS2 children.
- Piano lessons started again this week and the children have all received a little note book for writing messages in between home and school to help progress.
- Red, Purple and Blue Class children have produced some beautiful artwork which will be displayed at the regional Headteacher's Conference at the Chateaux Impney. We are thrilled that South Bromsgrove High School has asked Charford, Blackwell and Millfields to contribute work.

Collective Worship – We started our new term of worship last week by developing thinking around 'Appreciation'. This included thoughts about who and what we value. Over the next few weeks we will consider the Universal Values of **Equality** and **Diversity** as well as working on **Manners** and children's ability to **Try their best**. As part of this work we will discuss the diversity within our British population and prepare children for their future lives in a multicultural nation. We will consider how equality features highly in their everyday lives and how major historical figures such as Nelson Mandela, Rosa Parkes, Martin Luther King and William Wilberforce played a significant part towards creating equality in society.

A few things...

- Barnf Green 5K Fun Run is this weekend – sign up if you are interested.
- Please keep scooters safe on the walk to and from school as a couple of cars have been scratched. Please supervise the children as they scoot up/ down St Catherine's Road. Please also stop the children scooting on the playground at the end of the day as it is so busy.
- Label all clothes and equipment as many names have washed out and we are struggling to match lost jumpers to owners!

We hope that you like the Artwork on the front of the building. This was created by Andy Decomyn, a Birmingham based artist and shows the variety of experiences on offer at the school. Musa, Summaayah and William C were the models! The school name is to follow. We are also very much looking forward to the arrival of our stained glass window to replace the doors at the old entrance to the school. This is being funded by Mrs Allcott, our very supportive neighbour, and it will celebrate the school past and present.

Holiday Club – Thanks to Mrs Moran and Mrs Cain who ran a delightful holiday club over Easter. From egg cup painting and baking to designing and making, the children had a wonderful time and the teachers were invited in for lunch and afternoon tea each day, which was a real treat! Holiday club is running again during the first and last weeks of the Summer holidays so please book through Mrs Moran or the school office.

TERM DATES- Summer Term 2017

2.5 PFTA meeting 7.30pm
2.5 Science event Y2s
4.5 Class and Leavers photos
8.5 Paul Clarke assembly
12.5 Swimming
14.5 Family Fun Day- PFTA
15.5 Whole school trip
18.5 Yellow Class assembly
19.5 Swimming
25.5 BCM PE event- Y4s Millfields
26.5 Sport's Day (No swimming)
5.6 Circus skills day
7.6 Storyclub – YR
9.6 Swimming
14.6 Storyclub- YR
14.6 Outdoor learning day- BCM: morning Y3s
16.6 Swimming
17.6 Blackwell Festival
19.6 Bellboating Y4s
19.6 Drama SBHS Y3s
19.6 PFTA AGM 7.30pm in school
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 TEDs