

Dear Families,



Blue Class visiting the  
Saxon Hall

We are all pleased with how quickly the children have settled at school over the past weeks. Red Class and Nursery children have picked up routines quickly and it has been a delight to watch them start to build confidence in the classroom and outdoors. Thanks to Mrs Webb, Miss Turner, Mrs Mander, Mrs Allen, Mrs Franklin and Mrs Roberts for their hard work with our youngest children at this busy time of year for them. Thank you to all parents and staff for their hard work in helping everyone settle in. We would like Red Class parents to begin a gradual retreat! Please judge your child and decide whether to leave them at the classroom door, bottom of the steps, side of the playground or school entrance over the next few weeks. Remember all children are different and need different things at the start of the day. This may take many weeks. **All other children should now be left at the gate each morning.**

To ensure messages reach the office, there are two boxes in the reception area fixed to the wall to the left of the hall. One is for 'Items for the office' to be placed in and the other is for 'Hot Lunch orders'. We hope this enables you to drop off messages, money and forms more quickly and securely. Urgent messages should be passed to the office or myself on the gate.

**High attendance has a direct link to high attainment and progress** in schools and we strive to improve attendance rates at school. Last year our attendance figure was above 97%, which is high. This is thanks to parents supporting school attendance. Term time holidays is the main reason for poor attendance by children at Blackwell. Whilst we appreciate the financial benefits of taking children out of school during term time and also know that some work situations do not enable holidays to coincide with school holidays, we ask that you consider taking holidays during school holidays where possible as a holiday in term time can significantly impact a child's progress. Imagine if they miss the first ever lesson on addition, using a full stop or fractions whilst they are away, this can definitely impact on their future learning. The children are also often disappointed when they have to miss either the start or end of a topic of work and they miss either the big introduction or the finale where all their hard work comes to fruition!

**Late to school – We know that almost everyone is on time. Well done!** Unless you have a specific arrangement with school, if your child arrives late to school (after the main gate is closed at 8.30am), they **must be signed in at the office by you** and will appear as late on the register. If they arrive after 9am, they will be marked as absent for the morning session, following national guidance. This will impact on their attendance figure. If there are specific issues impacting on punctuality, please speak to me.

Spinning on  
our Viking visit



Purple Class boards  
a longship



Red Class finds runic  
writing

## Safety

**Pavement safety-** a concerned resident of St Catherine's contacted me to alert me to dangers with children cycling and scooting along the pavement coming to and from school. Please supervise children and advise them where to wait at points along the road. This will reduce the speed at which they travel. We are concerned about the safety of younger children who may not be aware enough to move out of the way in time.

**Dale Hill** – School traffic is still speeding up Dale Hill and causing difficulties for families walking up and down on their way to school. Please slow down.

**Nuts** – As we have several children in school with serious nut allergies, please do not send in nutty snacks or peanut butter sandwiches. Thank you.

**Sports** – Gold again! Well done Mrs Webb for all of the work involved with ensuring strong PE teaching and also planning competitive sporting events for everyone in school every year.

**Arts** – Christmas cards will be on sale after half term, designed by the children in their art lessons. Please don't buy them in the shops yet as you will definitely prefer the ones that your child designs and makes and this will raise money for school funds too.



**PRIVACY NOTICE** – Please note that there will be a new privacy notice on the school website shortly. This outlines information about data sharing at school. If you are new to school, please take the time to read it. (It is under policies.)

## Learning in the Early Years

We have now completed 'Family Learning' information meetings for Nursery and Reception and attendance was excellent at both meetings. The overriding message that we shared with parents was about the development of skills to support communication and independence. To support these areas, our curriculum in Early Years, engages children in provision that develops speaking and listening by providing opportunities for play involving talk and reducing technology used in isolation. It also ensures that children develop independence through self selecting resources, planning for their own projects and working with others. Teachers across the whole school work on developing these skills with children right the way through to Year 4. Please help us with developing these skills at home. Is it Mummy's/ Daddy's fault that you forgot your music book or PE kit? Actually, in Year 2 onwards children need to take responsibility for these things themselves. The children are also quite able to carry their own book bags and belongings so there is no need to be the packhorse carrying a variety of bags and boxes to school. Push them to be a little more independent! The hard work will pay off long term...

Now that we are all back into the swing of things and this half term has come to an end, it seems a good time to share with you some successes this term.

- Red Class – Well done for settling in so well and for learning routines quickly. All of the adults are so impressed with how grown up and sensible you all are.
- Blue Class – You are setting a fantastic example to everyone and have taken on the new responsibilities brilliantly. You certainly have risen to the challenge of being the oldest in school!
- Green Class – It is hard moving in to Year 1 and you are all working really hard and showing such good learning skills.
- Yellow Class – You have moved in to Year 3 and are showing us that your interest in learning is excellent. The Vikings is certainly a topic to inspire.
- Purple Class- Miss Kuriger is really enjoying working with you all and you have enjoyed being great historians together.
- Nursery- What little superstars you all are! Everyone has settled in well and routines are all established. A great start.

The opportunities the teachers are planning for the children this term are supporting them in developing their skills as independent learners by encouraging them to think for themselves, make choices about their learning and work co-operatively with others. These are areas of focus on our development plan. Challenge is a good part of learning.

**Complaints procedure** - At this time of year, we outline the procedures schools nationally have in place to deal with complaints. Any complaints should be addressed to the Headteacher. In the event of formal complaints being necessary, schools require a letter of formal complaint to be written and addressed to the Headteacher. If the matter remains unresolved, a further complaint should be addressed to the Governors. In the event of the complaint not being resolved, the County Council no longer deals with complaints and any further complaints should be addressed to the Secretary of State for Education. (For a copy of the Complaints procedure ask at school)

#### **Housekeeping**

**Messages to the office**- please phone in with messages before 2.30pm if possible as Mrs Bailey and Mrs Hargreaves find it tricky to deliver messages and answer queries at the same time at 3pm when people arrive for collecting time!

**Collection of children out of normal hours** – please make sure that you report to the school office to collect children for appointments.

**Late arrivals**- please send children in to the office to be signed in. It is important that children who arrive after the main gate has closed are signed in to ensure that they appear on our registration records

#### **Happy Half Term**

This has been a long half term for the children and they are tired! We hope they have a good rest and come back refreshed after half term. Please try to ensure they read over half term, complete any homework and mental maths (times tables in Y4) and perhaps investigate our next topic 'Festivals' (This has a focus on Buddhism).

#### **Governing Body**

The Governing Body works hard to ensure that the children at Blackwell School have the best start to their education.

The Governors are listed below:

Debbie Wilson- Chair  
Hugh Evans – Vice Chair  
Anna Moss – Headteacher  
Helen Townsend – Staff governor  
Leanne Gwilliam –Co-opted Governor  
Dean Brady – Co-opted Governor  
Simon Checkley – Co-opted Governor  
Darren Cormack – Co-opted Governor  
Clair McNeill – Parent Governor  
Paul Lewis- Parent Governor  
Debbie Bailey – Clerk to Governors

Thank you Governors for your hard work and support.

#### **COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

Working together, British Values and United Nations are some of the themes during this half term. We have considered life in the UK and how it is different for different people. We have discussed how important it is that we follow the law and why following rules in school helps us learn to do this.

#### **Burcot Grange – The Lodge**

Some of our children entered a competition as part of the building project at Burcot Grange. They provided ideas for items to include in the burial of a time capsule.

5 lucky winners were selected and were invited to bury the capsule and enjoyed afternoon tea at Burcot Grange.

Our relationship with Burcot Grange will develop next term as more of the residents return to read with children. We are looking forward to welcoming the residents.

#### **Staffing change**

We welcome Mrs Naomi Hampton who will teach afternoons in Green Class from after half term. We send our thanks to Mrs Freeman and wish her the very best for the future.

#### **ICT esafety**

Please see the copy of advice prepared for parents to support children in staying safe online.

Please also watch 'Lee and Kim' with your children –google CEOP Lee and Kim. They will watch it in school to explain about not sharing personal information. This includes posting photos of themselves in school uniform, identifying their school and placing them in vulnerable positions.

As adults, it is worth taking 15 minutes to watch 'Alright Charlie?' a video explaining CSE (Child Sexual Exploitation), supporting you in your understanding of the significant aspect of modern life and how easy it is for ANY child from ANY background to be targeted.

The more aware that families are, the less likely children are to be placed in vulnerable situations. Please watch the clips and read the documents.

Thank you.

#### **DIARY DATES**

##### **Autumn term 2017**

18.10.17 5.30-7pm Open Evening – Viking theme- everyone welcome

18.10.17 Break up for half term

30.10.17 School opens after half term

1.11.17 Open Evening for prospective parents for Reception 2018

1.11.17 Individual photos- please bring younger siblings at 8.30am if you would like the children photographing together

6.11.17 Early Years Portal opens for claiming hours- Nursery

6.11.17 12-8pm Parent Consultations

8.11.17 4-6pm Parent Consultations

17.11.17 Evening PFTA event- Jewellery Sale

30.11.17 8.45am Blue Class family assembly – Blue Class families welcome

8.12.17 Christmas plays being filmed for DVD sale- please look out for a letter

13.12.17 1.30pm Red and Green Class Christmas Play at church- toddlers welcome

14.12.17 9.30am Red and Green Class Christmas Play at church – **ADULT ONLY**

14.12.17 1.30am Purple, Yellow and Blue Christmas Play at church – toddlers welcome

15.12.17 9.30am Purple, Yellow and Blue Christmas Play at church – **ADULT ONLY**

18.12.17 2.30pm Nursery Coffee Afternoon

19.12.17 Pantomime (YR-4) and party (whole school including Nursery)

19.12.17 Term ends

##### **Spring term 2018**

3.1.18 Teacher Education day- no children

4.1.18 School opens for children

5.1.18 Theatre trip for YR-4 (not Nursery)- Y2-4 late return- see letters