

Dear Families,

Welcome back to school. As we begin the last half term of the year it is a good time to reflect on the journey that the children have made this year. It has been wonderful to see the development of our youngest children in Nursery and Red Class as they mature, ready for their transition into school or Year 1. Their levels of independence have grown tremendously thanks to the hard work of the staff and the provision in Nursery and Reception.

Our Year 1s and 2s have been working very hard under the careful direction of the staff, enabling them to develop the vital basic skills of speaking and listening, reading, writing and maths whilst also developing the key skills of independence, resilience and problem solving that our school curriculum supports. As for our Y3s and Y4s, the expectations increase considerably in anticipation of Middle School and they are rising to the challenge. Well done everyone.

Exciting learning at BFS- Summer 2022

Thanks to Mrs Webb and the staff for our wonderful sport's day, celebrating the enjoyment of sport and also the competitive element that can be associated with team games and individual competition. Well done everyone.

Paralympian, Darren Harris, visited us this week and shared his Commonwealth and Olympic successes with us. This helped the children develop their knowledge of the Commonwealth Games, coming to Birmingham this summer, and also their knowledge of Commonwealth and how it links to the Queen. He shared his skills and explained how his growth mindset had helped him achieve success.

Year 4 children enjoyed a morning with Astley Primary School children dancing around the maypole as part of traditional village celebrations as well as completing beautiful artwork. Thank you to Astley for bringing their maypole.

What a Jubilee celebration day we had on the last day of last half term! Following Sports Day, the children enjoyed the Jubilee street party. Thank you for your donations of food, enabling the children to celebrate in this traditional way. We took a whole school photograph to mirror the one of the children in 1953 to commemorate the coronation.

Our street party was the highlight of the week's work on the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. The children had learned about monarchy and its role in British history as well as comparing how the world has changed during the past 70 years. The children in Years 3 and 4 focused on finding out about the Commonwealth. Everyone also discovered a lot about Blackwell First School in 1953, from reading the log books. We even had a visitor, Susan Crawford, who was a pupil here in 1953 and remembers the coronation celebrations. She was very pleased to find her name in our admissions log from 1952.

Blackwell pets...

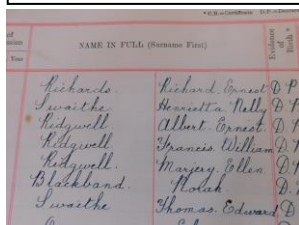
For those who were not at BFS when Hetty arrived, she is our school dog! She is looked after by one of our PFTA members during evenings, weekends and holidays and will visit school each day. Most of her day will be spent resting but she will 'work' during Collective Worship and support some of our children during the day. She is named after the first girl listed on Blackwell's admission book from 1911.

We also enjoy our Guinea Pigs and the Year 2s in particular take on the responsibility of caring for them each day. Miss Kuriger supervises and takes them home at weekends and in holidays.

We also have a chicken house and plan to build a run, thanks to support from the PFTA. **We are looking for some experts who may be able to help us care for them and organise a rota for holiday care. If anyone is able to help us, please let the office or Mrs Moss know.**

The benefit of having a school dog has been documented and supports children with both mental health and life skills. Hetty is fully trained and passed a 'test' before being able to come to school.

'Animals are used to help humans in different ways. Studies suggest that the effects of pet ownership can be beneficial to physical, social and psychological wellbeing. Research has found that stroking a pet can be relaxing and can result in a reduction in blood pressure. The presence of pets can also promote social interaction and reduce psychological responses to anxiety' Hall & Malpus (2000)



Staffing for September

Our staffing is almost finalised for September and is as listed below:

Mrs Moss- Headteacher

Miss Townsend – Deputy Headteacher (Special Educational Needs co-ordinator)

Mrs Webb – Early Years Leader

Teachers: Mrs James, Miss Kuriger, Mrs Mander, **Miss Chamberlain**,

Miss Davis, Mrs Edney, Mrs Hipkiss and Mrs Hampton

Music (recorders)- Mrs Hipkiss

Higher Level Teaching Assistant – Mrs Dyson

Teaching Assistants- Mrs Allen, Mrs Franklin, Mrs Reid, Mrs Thompson,

Mrs Flynn, Mrs Marks, Mrs Morgan, Miss Bailey, Miss Edwards, Mrs

Dudek, **Mr Spurgeon and two vacancies - welcome to new**

appointments

Blackwell Club Manager- Mrs Edney (Mrs Thompson – mornings)

Forest School Leaders- Mrs Flynn and Mrs Hipkiss

School Cook- Mrs Barker/ Mrs Miles and Miss Shepherd

Administration Team- Mrs Tomlinson (Finance), Mrs Garner (main

office). Mrs Bailey and Mrs Hargreaves are reducing hours and

training up new staff. **We will be advertising for an additional**

part time administrator. Please contact Mrs Moss to find out further details.

Site Manager and Housekeeper – Mrs Wilson and cleaning team

Bromsgrove Primary Alliance manager – Mrs Wilson

We will continue with violin (Mrs Grainger) and piano (Miss Johnson)

tuition through Worcester Youth Music. Mrs Cutler continues to

support music teaching. If you wish to sign up for recorder, piano or

violin lessons for September, speak to Mrs Garner.

Welcome to all new staff and best wishes and thank you to those

leaving us.

Esafety – Be aware...families at Blackwell, as everywhere, face real challenges. This is a problem for everyone to face.

Is your child safe online? How do you know? What are they accessing on their computers, ipads, tablets or your smartphone? We teach the children all the rules about social networking and not sharing personal details, but then we know that at home children can disregard the rules, especially when filters may not be as strong. It is particularly important that they know how to keep safe and also not to enter a world of bullying online. Games have an age restriction for a reason and we find that **children who access games beyond their age, develop challenges that are beyond their development.** We have had particular concerns regarding the playing of 'Fortnite' this year, particularly when older children are setting it up for their Y1 and 2 siblings, who are developmentally able to access it (age restriction 12) and are beginning to be targeted by older children when playing together online.

Please find further advice: www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents

Collective Worship

In current times, it is more important than ever that we support the children in becoming responsible citizens in a changing world.

This week our theme is 'Patience' and we will consider why this is an important value and how famous people in history have shown patience and its value.

It is important for us to support the children in understanding and valuing differences in our society and helping them play their part in living as part of our British culture with shared values that underpin a successful nation.

Sport and the Arts

Sports – Well done for a superb Wake and Shake Champion performance last half term and we look forward to next term's finale performance from Blue Class.

Sport's Day was a huge success thanks to Mrs Webb's hard work and was very much enjoyed by old and young alike.

Arts – Voices and Visions is underway at Worcester Cathedral for one more week so visit it if you have the chance.



Parking at 'Drop off/ Pick up' times

In an effort to keep everyone safe at the start/end of the day, please continue to park safely (not obscuring driveways). Please supervise scooters and do not scoot on the playground as there are so many children around.

Remember that it is illegal to park on the yellow zig zags and, to ease congestion if you are able, please walk to school. Where this is not possible, please use the full length of road to park and the roads at either end of St Catherine's to walk along. Thank you.

TERM DATES- Summer Term 2022

7.6.22 Nursery and Red Art Day – PFTA funded
9.6.22 Year 2 Science event with Charford First School (at CFS)

14.6.22 Green Class Art Day – PFTA funded

21.6.22 Purple Class Art Day – PFTA funded

28.6.22 Blue Class Art Day – PFTA funded

27.6.22 Whole School Educational Visit (not Nursery)

28.6.22 Yellow Class Family Assembly 8.45am

29.6.22-1.7.22 Year 4 residential

2.7.22 Summer Fair 12-2pm

5.7.22 Yellow Class Art Day – PFTA funded

6.7.22 New Nursery Stay and Play- with parent

7.7.22 New Red Class story session- with parent if not at BFS nursery currently

11.7.22 6pm New to Y1 parent meeting

18.7.22 5.30pm New to Nursery parent meeting

18.7.22 6.30pm New to Reception parent meeting

13.7.22 New Nursery Stay and Play- with parent

13.7.22 6pm New to Y2 parent meeting

14.7.22 New Red Class story session- with parent if not at BFS nursery currently

14.7.22 Red Class Family Assembly **NB 9.30am**

14.7.22 5.30pm New to Y3/Y4 parent meeting

15.7.22 Year 3 Sporting event with Astley Primary School (at BFS)

19.7.22 Piano concert for some children- afternoon

20.7.22 Piano concert for some children- afternoon

21.7.22 Year 4 leavers- 9am

