

NEWSLETTER

for Blackwell First School

Blackwell First School,
St. Catherine's Rd.,
Blackwell,
Near Bromsgrove,
Worcestershire.
B60 1BN
May 2021



Year 4 children have worked with Mark Riley on a sculpture described as a 'Gratitude Lantern'. Taking inspiration from our Rainbow Tree, the children used the colours as themes and created their own part, reflecting on gratitude. The lantern will hang in Worcester Cathedral between 20th June- 11th July. Do go and see it!



Dear Families,

As we approach 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. It is this provision that we will continue to develop in Year 1 in line with the developmental needs of the children.

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.

Some fabulous experiences have taken place this half term. Stamp designs for Royal Mail, a wonderful Voices and Visions Art project for the Year 4s with Mark Riley based on Gratitude, amazing fundraising from all classes for various African charities as part of their project work and the development of our community 'Reading Room'. These experiences celebrate life today in its various forms and support our vision in developing the 'whole child'. Thank you all for your support and have a good half term break.

After half term, we embark on a 'Fantasy worlds' journey and each class will receive a brand new book. All of our texts are chosen from lists of award winning children's books such as Kate Greenaway or Carnegie award winners. The teachers will be developing the children's English, Art and DT skills through this topic. Wait to find out what the class projects will be. I am not sure we can top the success of this half term's 'Africa fundraising', but you never know...

During this final half term, we prepare the children for transition into their new year groups by completing the learning for their year group and closing as many gaps as a result of COVID as possible. You will receive annual reports and will be notified of arrangements for next year as well as being invited to a parent meeting (date listed overleaf). The Year 4s will enjoy an adventurous trip and bellboating, as well as an overnight stay at school! Instead of our usual on site farewell event, we will send home a special treat for families to share. The PFTA is planning a Summer Fair and are contingency planning Versions A, B and C, dependent on COVID restrictions.

Despite the continuing restrictions in schools, we are pleased with how the school is operating, the progress the children are making and the support you are all giving us. We look forward to a happy last half term together.

Best wishes,

The children have worked so hard on their charity fundraising work. They raised over £1,500 for their chosen charities.

Red Class – African Promise supporting schools in Africa

Green Class – WaterAid supporting supplies of clean water and toilets

Purple Class – Dream Big Ghana foundation planting trees in villages

Yellow Class – Africa Wildlife foundation supporting wildlife and animals to live in harmony

Blue Class – Save the Children

Thank you all for your support with this project which has really brought their learning to life.



Here are some of the wonderful designs that we submitted as part of the national Royal Mail stamp design competition. We have a selection of heroes on these: nurse, teacher, family, police, refuse collector and bus driver. Fingers crossed that they appear on a stamp one day...



BLACKWELL READING ROOM

When the school opened in 1884, it was one of the few buildings with electricity and the hall was used as a 'Reading Room' for villagers in the evenings after the children had gone home. (On the days when school was actually open, as the log book suggests school was often closed for blackberry picking, potato harvesting, bad weather, staff shortages, outbreaks of mumps...)

The PFTA has paid for a new 'Reading Room' for the community in a small way. We will have two cabinets located outside school. One is for adults and one is for children. They will be open to the school and Blackwell community to exchange or borrow books from.

Please help us to look after this facility and keep an eye on it as you walk past school and remove anything that shouldn't be there. We know that this could be a wonderful opportunity for children to borrow books regularly on their way past school. Reading opens up the world to children and this opportunity could start some children on their reading journey. We hope you enjoy using it.

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 Mander (Nursery Manager), Mrs James, Miss Kuriger, Miss Phipps, Miss Davis, Mrs Edney (club leader), Mrs Hipkiss (Music and Forest Friends), Mrs Hampton (cover)

Teaching Assistants- Mrs Allen, Mrs Franklin, Miss Turner, Mrs Hampton, Mrs Reid, Miss Turner, Mrs Marks, Mrs Morgan, Mrs Moran, Mrs Thompson, Miss Gardner, Miss Burgess, Mrs Flynn, Miss Edwards, Miss Bailey and Mrs Dyson (Group provision lead)

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

Club staff- Miss Gardner, Mrs Franklin, Miss Bailey, Mrs Marks

Forest School Leader- Mrs Cain

School Cook- Mrs Barker and assistant Mr Wilson

Administration Team- Mrs Bailey, Mrs Hargreaves, Mrs Tomlinson and Mrs Garner

Site Manager- Mrs Wilson and cleaning team

Teaching School manager – Mrs Wilson

We will continue with violin and piano tuition through Worcester Youth Music. Mrs Hipkiss will teach recorder. If you wish to sign up for recorder, flute, piano or violin lessons for September contact the school office.

Sadly, Miss Chamberlain will be leaving us to train as a teacher but we wish her every success for her future career and thank her for her dedication during the last seven years. Miss Bailey and Mrs Flynn will also be training to teach with us through Bromsgrove Primary Alliance along with a further three students next year.

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.

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

Holiday Club

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.

School Sport and the Arts

Congratulations to Blue Class as current Wake and Shake champions. We look forward to selecting new champions soon. School Games will take place this week weather permitting as a non spectator event due to restrictions.

If you are able to visit Worcester Cathedral for the Voices and Visions exhibition, the Year 4s have produced their beautiful Gratitude Lantern to display.

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 'Simplicity' and we have focussed on the simple things in life that make our world a special place, from bees and butterflies to families and care. We discussed the Human Right of having a name and considered the circumstances leading to children not having a name. 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.

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 children crossing driveways.

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.

Are you supporting your child's mental well being?

Nationally, children's mental wellbeing is under increasing scrutiny as modern lifestyles have an impact on children and COVID has increased pressures for many. We have previously shared with you some simple things to do to support strong mental health, such as: sharing meals, reading stories at bedtime, limiting time on technology.

As a staff, we have been trained in emotion coaching, attachment theory and trauma and some of the messages may also help you at home.

- Show emotions to children in a 'controlled' way to expose children to all emotions and verbalise the emotion to them so that they can identify different emotions that they also feel
- Support children in understanding (through discussion) that all people experience all emotions but have to learn to deal with them appropriately in different situations

This will be a focus for work next year and we will share information with you.

20.6.21-11.7.21 Voices and Visions art exhibition- Year 4 exhibit in Worcester Cathedral

25.6.21 CBSO String Trio visit school

2.7.21 Year 4 adventure and overnight

5.7.21 Year 4 bellboating

12.7.21 5pm New Nursery parent meeting- virtual

12.7.21 6.30pm New Red Class parent meeting- virtual

13.7.21 6pm New Year 2 parent meeting - virtual

14.7.21 6pm KS2 parent meeting- virtual

14.7.21 Yellow Class assembly- virtual

15.7.21 6pm New Year 1 parent meeting- virtual

15.7.21 Red Class assembly- virtual

16.7.21 Year 4 leavers

21.7.21 Term ends

22-30.7.21 Holiday Club (except 24/25.7.21)

25-27.8.21 Holiday Club

31.8.21 Holiday Club

1.9.21 Holiday Club

6.9.21 Autumn Term starts

