



Over the summer we have completed a small building project of a group room to support some of our children, providing a splendid new room and enabling the hall to be freed up throughout the day.



Mark Riley, artist in residence, worked with the whole school before the summer break to create art work to reflect our school aims. This has been erected as part of our front playground development. Many thanks to the PFTA for funding this work.

Dear Families,

Welcome back everyone. Welcome to our new families both in Red Class, Nursery and across the school. Welcome to new staff too.

At the start of the year I remind everyone (staff, parents, children and governors) of the school aim:

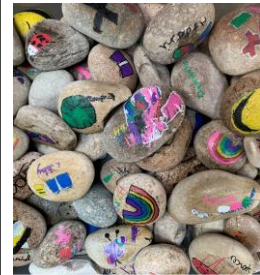
At Blackwell First School we aim to educate the whole child and to ensure children are happy, healthy and fulfil their potential in terms of development of skills for life, social and moral values and academic success.

During my summer holiday visiting family, I spent an afternoon at the home of the Norwegian composer, Edvard Grieg and was struck by this very sad quotation. "I have not the least doubt that school developed in me nothing but bad and left the good untouched." Thank goodness schools are different places nowadays! The children are at the heart of all we do and we are pleased that the collaborative work between families and the school supports the school vision. Here is a sample of what some Year 4 parents wrote at the end of the year on their feedback forms...

*...the amazing staff do the most wonderful job for the children...
...through your hard work, compassion and dedication, he has found his voice...
...you've change the course of his future...
...we are so grateful to the amazing team...
...we have all created the most fantastic memories. These are precious moments they will remember forever...
...it has really felt like being part of a family...
...it has been a privilege to be part of a school that is so nurturing...
...you have gone above and beyond your duty...*

Please see the new academic year's School Development Plan headlines attached, to see our focus for development this year and into 2023-24. We are looking forward to starting our whole school topics. Years 1-4 will be learning all about "Vikings" and we are looking forward to educational visits for Years 3 and 4 and Reception and Nursery will be learning "All about me" for the first few weeks in school. Mrs Mander is helping Nursery children 'settle into their home from home' and follows their interests as they learn routines and become experts at tidying up with a little help from experienced Nursery children! Class newsletters will provide you with further information.

Best wishes, Mrs Moss



We will also be using some new seating areas for small groups on the front playground and look forward to working outside as much as possible.



We are waiting for a new information board about the school, partly funded by the Parish Council. This will be available for the general community to share.

WELCOME The start of term is always busy as children settle into new routines. Support them by encouraging them to be independent and reassuring them about any changes. If there is anything you are wondering about please email the office@blackwell.worcs.sch.uk, give us a call on 0121 445 1622 or catch teachers at the end of the day. We will be hosting an informal open evening on site on **28th September 6-7pm** which is an opportunity to wander around school with your children, to get a feel for the whole school. Teachers will send out letters offering on site or zoom parent consultations during October. For new families in Nursery and Reception, there will be some meetings within the first few weeks to 'check in' with you about their settling.

Sports – Mrs Webb is busy planning for the sporting events on the calendar this year. As part of the All Active Academy, a Bromsgrove wide organisation, we are sharing event planning for all year groups. Well done to everyone, led by Mrs Webb for achieving the Platinum Sports Award. There is so much sport and PE to celebrate at school and this award reflects that.

Arts – Please contact the school office if you are interested in your child (Year 1 upwards) learning to play the recorder, piano or violin. We work with our music teachers Mrs Grainger, Mrs Hipkiss and Mrs Johnson from Severn Arts to offer lessons for children in school. Although they have a full timetable, we hold a waiting list and will offer spaces as soon as possible.

UNIFORM – Please ensure that all uniform is named as even with varying sizes it is tricky matching unnamed jumpers to owners! Children (YR-Y4) need trainers for outdoor PE lessons. They also need wellies, thick socks and gloves. Lost property is taken to relevant classes when named. We have both new and second hand uniform available.

PARENTAPP - Our main form of communication is through ParentApp so please sign up if you have not already by emailing office@blackwell.worcs.sch.uk
Thank you.
NB- When searching for older letters, click on 'content' and 'letters home' to find less recent letters easily.

Afternoon school clubs are offered on the school site for children from Reception onwards as a way of extending children's learning, providing additional curriculum linked activities and healthy activities in which to engage and stimulate the children's interests. This term your children in Years 1-4 will be engaged in some of the clubs listed here: Art; Yoga; Film; Forest School; Wild World and Library. We will inform you of your child's club group and Forest School day so that you can ensure that they attend school in plain blue, black or grey jogging bottoms on that day. The children are likely to be tired from a full day so the option of a 1.40pm pick up is ideal for some children at this time, particularly the younger children. The Reception (Red Class) children will participate in class based indoor and outdoor play for the first term until they settle in this familiar environment and over time we will begin to mix them with other children for afternoon clubs.

Medical Needs and administering medication in school

For children with medical conditions that require support above and beyond the average child in mainstream provision, we follow guidance as set out by the Department for Education in the document 'Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions- April 2014'. The school policy is available from the school office on request.

Administration of medication

In light of government guidance, when children are well enough to be in school, but require medication (such as antibiotics) we ask that parents request that 'where clinically possible, medicines should be prescribed in dose frequencies which enable them to be taken outside school hours' (Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions- April 2014).

Where this is not possible, in agreement with the headteacher, school staff will administer medication with written parental consent and only when in date medication is received in original packaging that is clearly labelled and includes instructions for administration, dosage and storage. (This includes travel sickness medication). This will be administered at or as close to 12 noon as possible.

If your child has an inhaler, epipen or any long term medication, please ensure that it is in date and in school. School documentation needs completing by parents prior to medication being administered. Please also remember to tell us of changing medical needs so that we can amend school records and ensure the best possible care is available.

COVID-19 - children must not attend school if they have the COVID-19 symptoms of high temperature, persistent cough or loss of taste or smell. Please notify us of your child's absence as soon as possible and keep us informed. Taking a LFD is advisable and the children should remain absent for three days (minimum) and can only return if they do not have a high temperature.

READING AND HOMEWORK - In light of guidance issued last year from Department for Education (DfE), we use a phonics programme called Little Wandle Letters and Sounds for the children in Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and the start of Year 2. This works by:

- Teachers teaching a set order of phonics;
- Children reading a book with the teachers three times a week that matches their phonic level;
- Children receiving details of how to access the same book that they read in school at home using an ebook once per week (this is to practise with you and should be one they are feeling secure with);
- Children bringing home a physical book once a week that matches the phonics taught but one that is less familiar and
- Children bringing home a book for their family to read to them each week as a library book to read for pleasure.

We will provide more details of this programme and offer support for helping your child learn to read in family workshops.

Homework for Year 1-4 children will also be sent home each Friday and we ask that you return homework on a Monday. Homework remains optional, with the exception of reading, which is vital to children's educational development. Help with mental maths and spelling is also greatly appreciated and will be shared with you on newsletters and homework sheets.

Thank you.

EDUCATIONAL VISITS - We are currently planning Educational visits and visits to school by visiting artists for this academic year as the children benefit hugely from the memorable experiences that these visits provide and the practical nature of the visits enhance their learning. There will also be events for families to support your involvement in school life. We look forward to sharing your child's learning journey with you.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP – We start this term with 'New starts' discussing making positive changes before moving on to 'Responsibility' next week, where we will consider the UN Rights of the child and associated responsibilities. We will cover the rule of law during this time as part of British Values education.

THE BLACKWELL KITCHEN – Mrs Barker is in her eighth year as School Cook in 'The Blackwell Kitchen' and is doing a superb job alongside Mrs Miles who joined us last year and Miss Shepherd in preparing such delicious, healthy meals for the children. Everyone who visits, from kitchen inspectors to other headteachers, comment on the quality of the food. We look forward to welcoming Red Class to lunchtimes next week, but it is good to see so many Year 3s and 4s taking up the option of School Meals once it is no longer free. It is so good to see how well the children eat our school meals when they are with their peers, helping to develop good eating habits. Our Nursery children eat their dinners brilliantly. Well done.

For the small number of children opting for packed lunches, please remember we adhere to government food standards for schools. Crisps, chocolate and sweets are not allowed. Thank you for your co-operation.

PFTA- The Parent Friend and Teacher Association helps to raise money for the school to spend to support children's learning. The group meets every half term and is looking for new members to support its work. The first meeting is on 19.09.22 at 7pm. This first meeting will be via zoom. Last year, the PFTA funded the purchase of £6,000 worth of reading books, the work of the artist in residence and art for the front playground, the visit by an athlete to school, the chicken coup and a host of other smaller projects.

FIRST AID – Children bring home a sticker or letter following first aid treatment. We will notify you of any head bumps via ParentApp so that you can monitor your child for 24 hours. Thank you. If you require support with ParentApp, contact the office.

Blackwell School Club is our school run Out of School Care provider. We are open from 7.15am until 6pm and provide a range of play based activities as well as breakfast and tea in a nurturing environment. Please see the office or Mrs Thompson/Mrs Edney for details.

Diary Dates Autumn term 2022

- 7.9.22 School reopens for children
- 19.9.22 PFTA virtual meeting 7pm
- 26.9.22 Yellow and Blue educational visit- Vikings
- 28.9.22 6-7pm Open evening for current parents and children
- 29.9.22 8.45am Green Class Family Assembly – front playground w/b
- 10.10.22 Parent Consultation meetings- letter to follow
- 15.10.22 Scarecrow Festival – details to follow from PFTA
- 17.10.22 Green and Purple educational visit- seasons
- 19.10.22 Blue Class Family Assembly- front playground
- 20.10.22 Yellow Class Family Assembly – front playground
- 20.10.22 Term ends for children
- 31.10.22 School reopens for children
- 2.11.22 6pm Red Class Family Learning meeting (adults only please)
- 5.11.22 OPEN DAY for prospective families for Nursery and Reception- by appointment only
- 1.12.22 Flu immunisation
- 1.12.22 Christmas event 5.30pm details TBC
- 8.12.22 Educational theatre visits- Reception- Year 4 (Years 3 and 4 late return)
- 9.12.22 FILMING CHRISTMAS PRODUCTION
- 12.12.22 9.30am Nursery and Reception Christmas 'show' – 2 tickets for Nursery families
- 13.12.22 9.30am as above – 2 tickets for Reception families
- 14.12.22 9.30am Year 1 and 2 Christmas 'Nativity' at school – 2 tickets for Year 1 families
- 14.12.22 1pm Year 3 and 4 Christmas 'Show' at school – 2 tickets for Year 3 families
- 15.12.22 9.30am Year 1 and 2 Christmas 'Nativity' at school – 2 tickets for Year 2 families
- 15.12.22 1pm Year 3 and 4 Christmas 'Show' at school – 2 tickets for Year 4 families
- 16.12.22 PANTO Day and term ends (School reopens 4.1.23)

NB- Please see overleaf for Christmas details.