



Over the summer we have completed a small building project of a small staff room for our hard working staff rather than sitting on the School Room balcony for lunch in the winter! It enables the After School Club kitchen to remain for their sole use.



Mark Riley, artist in residence, worked with the whole school before the summer break to create art work to reflect on community. Following COVID, rebuilding a sense of community has been a priority for us. Come along to the playground to enjoy this art. 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.

The start of the year is a good time to consider our school vision:

**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 the training days with staff, we considered the following quotation, 'I go to school, but I never learn what I want to know.' (Bill Waterson, American comic artist). 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. We aim to make school relevant and interesting for all children. Here is a sample of what some parents wrote at the end of the year on their feedback forms for Year 4...

*...I am truly grateful for all of the help and support...*

*...We are so grateful that we found this school...*

*...I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for all the care and support...*

*...I could not have wished for a better start to their education...*

*...Thank you so much for all of your care and support right from the very first story session...*

Please see the new academic year's School Development Plan headlines attached, to see our focus for development this year. We are looking forward to starting our whole school topics. Years 1-4 will be learning all about "Anglo Saxons" and we are looking forward to creating Floor books as projects to send home 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!

We are delighted to share another year with you all and send those who have moved on to Middle School our best wishes.

Class newsletters will provide you with further information.

Best wishes, Mrs Moss



Building our community with Mark Riley.

**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](mailto: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 **4th October 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, phonecall 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 all.

**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](mailto: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 enrichment 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, Music 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.

**In the event of 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 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 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 as well as a hard copy of the same book (this is to practise with you and should be one they are feeling secure with);
- Children bringing home a further 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. **Please send in all books each Friday to be changed.**

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.

**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 ninth 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 11.09.23 at 7pm. This first meeting will be at school. Last year, the PFTA funded the purchase of £4,000 worth of reading books, the work of the artist in residence and art for the back playground, bellboating for Year 4s, subsidised school visits 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.

## AUTUMN TERM 2023

**TERM STARTS - Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> September – School reopens to all children**

**11.09.23 PFTA Meeting at school - new families welcome**

**23.09.23 PFTA Sponsored Mile**

**04.10.23 Open Evening for current parents**

**19.10.23 Blue Class Bake Sale - 3.15pm**

**21.10.23 PFTA Scarecrow Festival**

**25.10.23 Blue Class Assembly- 8.45am**

**TE DAYS - Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> October and Friday 27<sup>th</sup> October - School closed to all children**

**HALF TERM HOLIDAY - Monday 30<sup>th</sup> October – Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> November**

**6.11.23 Individual photographs in school**

**8.11.23 Red Class Family Learning meeting- 6pm**

**16.11.23 Influenza immunisation**

**18.11.23 Open Day for prospective families- please call the office to book a slot**

**29.11.23 PFTA Wreath making event**

**1.12.23 Family Learning event**

**13.12.23 Green Class- Nativity 9.30am**

**14.12.23 Purple Class- Nativity 9.30am**

**15.12.23 Whole School theatre trips (not Nursery)**

**18.12.23 Nursery and Red Class Christmas Singing 9.30am**

**18.12.23 Christmas Storynight 5.30pm**

**19.12.23 Yellow Class Christmas Play 9.30am**

**20.12.23 Blue Class Christmas Play 9.30am**

**21.12.23 Whole School panto**

**TERM ENDS - Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> December - Last day of term for children**

**Christmas Productions**- These will take place in the hall and due to restricted room, we ask that no more than two adults per child attend as we do not have the space to accommodate more adults. A filmed version will be available for everyone to enjoy at home (details to follow). Many thanks.