



January 2012

Dear Families,

Thank you to all of you who completed parent questionnaires. Please could you return any others before Friday. The questionnaires help us to identify strengths of the school and to plan for areas of development. We will feedback on responses once the questionnaires have all been returned on Friday.

The children are all busily working on their projects. After our trip to Derby theatre, the children have been reading and listening to Roald Dahl stories. They are learning to tell stories and make stories of their own ready for their project, which is to make their own storybook. As part of the story work they have also been creating music and developing art techniques to help them design illustrations for their stories.

We are working hard to develop the children's ability to talk about their learning and articulate and explain their thoughts. The project is supporting us in this work. (Please see below)

#### LEARNING TO REASON

Part of learning to be independent is about the children taking responsibility for their own learning and to this end we have been working on encouraging the children to talk about, explain and justify when discussing their learning.

Rather than asking the children questions that require a YES or NO answer, we are using the question starts below to start the children thinking.

- How do you know...
- Give me an example of...
- If you had to explain to someone how to do it, what would you say?
- Justify your answer to me.

We are working with the children in helping them to develop some of these skills. You may be able to help us at home. Encourage the children to answer you questions more fully by changing the way you ask them! Rather than asking "Did you have a good day?" when they come out of school, ask them "What did you learn today?" or even better "Tell me what you learnt today and explain how to do it."

As part of this work on independence and to help with transition into Year 1, we would like RED CLASS children to be left at the school gate in a morning as soon as possible. Please encourage them to do this over the next few weeks in a casual way so that it prevents it becoming a difficulty for the children. Perhaps start by coming in some mornings and not others at the start. Thank

#### Behaviour Policy flyer

Good behaviour is key to good learning and we are proud of the children's excellent behaviour at Blackwell. A couple of parents have asked for clarification on the School Behaviour Policy and our rewards and sanctions system. Attached is a short introductory flyer that you may find useful and for the full policy, please see the school website [www.blackwellfirstschool.com](http://www.blackwellfirstschool.com).

#### BOOK BAGS

Several of the older children are bringing large bags into school, which we find hard to store during the day on coat pegs. The children only need book bags with their water bottles, reading book and any letters in. If they are bringing in spare clothes for a club, we understand they need a bag for kit, but please use the small book bags where possible as these fit in drawers!

#### SKYECYCLE

Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> February is the next Recycling Day in school, please watch out for flyers.

Thank you to Leanne Gwilliam for the fantastic calendars. The PTA raised £694 through their sale which went towards paying for the theatre trip.

23.1.12 8pm PTA meeting- Blackwell Club  
24.1.12 Tag Rugby Festival - Y3s and 4s  
30.1.12 Circus skills day- introduction to new project  
3.2.12 Skyecycle recycling day  
10.2.12 Break up for half term  
20.2.12 School reopens  
27.2.12/28.2.12 Parent consultations  
5.3.12 School Nurse drop in- 8.45am  
17.3.12 MAINTENANCE DAY-  
28.3.12 Artrix Olympic Festival- Y3s  
30.3.12 Last day of term

Mrs A Moss (Head teacher)