

# NEWSLETTER for Blackwell First School

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

Dear Families,



Join in the VE Day front garden/drive picnic on Friday afternoon

We will sing! I know that many of the children have been singing along to the hymns that we uploaded to the school website on the arts page [www.blackwellfirstschool.com](http://www.blackwellfirstschool.com) and we are launching our new YouTube channel this week so that we can share stories and some films with you. The introductory film and a story have been uploaded and a further film that we have prepared will be added later this week. It is entitled 'We will sing' and uses the song 'We Will Sing' by Kate Rusby. We often use Kate Rusby songs in our school productions and the children are familiar with her through listening in Collective Worship. Please visit YouTube and search for Blackwell First School and subscribe to our channel. We welcome in May with this happy song and send our very good wishes to you all for the coming month.

May 2020



## Hello 'Stay at Home superheroes' and 'In School superheroes'

### Supporting a return to school

Thank you all for your support with the children's learning at home. You have been amazing! As we explained in earlier messages home, anything that you have done will help and especially reading and keeping a routine going. When the children return to school, we will support their learning and ensure that missed learning is identified and help provided as soon as possible.

In terms of the children returning to school, we will receive guidance from the Government about a safe time to do this and will follow all guidance as instructed. In the meantime, drip feeding messages about it being 'lovely to see your friends' and 'everyone will be looking forward to seeing you' is important. The children will have become wary of being close to others who are not in their household and may find the return to school unsettling. It is important to make them feel positive and safe when they do return. If school is asked to open partially, maybe mentioning that school might be a bit different for a while will help prepare them for some social distancing measures that are in place, where possible. Saying things like, 'I wonder whether the tables will be more spread out,' will help them visualise the school setting and understand why it may be a little different for a while.

Perhaps show the children these photographs to help them see any changes that are happening in school. The hall has been sectioned into two to help keep groups apart and lower in number as they play. The children will soon settle into new routines if needed but seeing some changes may help them comprehend the changes they may see.



This week in school we have started using the classrooms for learning, to enable us to prepare for social distancing if needed.



**Moving on from Red Class into Green Class**

Moving from Reception into Year 1 can be a tricky time for children as they move from the 0-5 Early Years curriculum onto a new curriculum that includes Year 1- 6 and also an increase in expectation regarding the formality of learning.

We have spent a number of years developing our Early Years provision and know from evidence that this provision works for children of this age. Two years ago, we extended our child centred provision into Year 1 from September. We have been very impressed with the outcomes. The children have made excellent progress whilst enjoying the style of learning most suited to children of this age. External reviews have commented positively on the provision.

The provision includes children accessing whole class teaching for Phonics, English and Maths as well as all of the other National Curriculum subjects. They also all take part in small group and individual work routinely throughout the year, and, as and when it is needed, targeted intervention will support those children with specific gaps in learning or personal challenges. Crucially, this approach enables the children to select their own learning activities but rather than accessing 'toys' as they do in Reception, they access areas of learning, such as Performance, Experiment, Design etc. During the week they are expected to complete a number of set tasks which will provide evidence for their levels of independent learning.

It is an exciting time to be moving into Year 1 and we know from experience and research that this approach to learning makes it more relevant and engaging for children of this age. This transition is particularly important this year with the disruption the children have experienced. As the children develop throughout the year, expectations will rise and we will support the new transition into Year 2. A never ending learning journey...This year, our Year 1s moving into Year 2 will also have tailored transition to enable a smooth move from play based to formal learning.

We had planned a 'Meet the teacher' evening for each year group during the last week in July to share information with you about the following yeargroup. We do not know whether this will happen then or in the autumn, but will prepare information to share with you as and when and how we can!

**COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

This week we are considering TRYING OUR BEST and thinking about it in the context of VE Day 75. The children will look at the artwork 'VE Day' by L S Lowry and use a variety of video clips and reflections to compare the hardship of wartime and the hardship of lockdown.

Families who choose to spend some time reflecting on the presentation that has been sent home, will be able to talk through the comparisons, discuss history and consider the current situation.

If you are able to take part in Friday's VE Day 75 event, it will be an ideal opportunity to consider the Collective Worship in a practical way.

Mrs A Moss (headteacher)

**SCHOOL SPORT/ HEALTH AND THE ARTS**

Artsmark- The children have all been sending in their wonderful pieces of art, especially Yellow Class. The whole school is preparing for its virtual 'ART EXHIBITION' soon.

I know that children have been enjoying their class stories this half term and someone's grandad has even acted out Mr Gumpy across the internet! Well done Grandad!  
Sport's Day news coming soon...

**POSSIBLE SUMMER HOLIDAY CLUB**

As we do not yet know whether we will be fully open or not, we cannot definitely announce summer Holiday Club arrangements.

If we are fully open, then we will open for normal Holiday Club for at least four weeks this summer. This will enable the children to have an additional chance to socialise and time in school without formal learning and it will allow us to offer some transition back for those who may find another long break a challenge.

It will also allow us to recoup some of our losses sustained as a result of school closure during the summer term.

If we are expected to be socially distant, we will consider a streamlined version but will still hope to offer a service for those who would like this provision.

We will keep you informed as soon as we know more...

**Dates**

All dates are currently postponed

New school allocations will be issued as per planned national dates.

Internal induction for both Nursery and Reception will be issued on our website as and when we are directed to reopen.

If we do not reopen in time for planned induction dates, we will plan some 'virtual' and later dates prior to the children starting with us.

Yellow Class Family Assembly- Miss Phipps is planning an 'alternative' assembly through a newspaper. Watch out for further information.

For Year 4s- bellboating and residential trips are currently postponed. We will notify you of alternative dates for both and have provisionally booked dates during the summer holiday or a weekend in September, depending on when we are able to open.

Thank you.