

NEWSLETTER for Blackwell First School

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

April 2024

Dear Families,



In year 4, the children enjoy life on the canal with Andy Train, our bellboating expert. Miss Townsend is a trained helm and has been training the children for many years and Miss Kuriger and Mrs Marks are always happy paddling the canals!



Bellboating is a safe water sport and the children learn about water safety, teamwork and they require effort and strength in order to paddle their bellboat whilst enjoying being outdoors. This year was a sunnier day than some years. Lucky Year 4!



Here we are again entering our last term of the year, finding it hard to believe that the Year 4s who arrived as new Red Class children with Mrs Webb are now being sent off to Bellboating, on 'Residential' and are being prepared for transition to Middle School.

This term is a really busy one for the children and staff. We started the term with 'Take a Trip' and whether the children are investigating travel, food, clothing or homes, the children are all developing their geographical skills of enquiry, analysis and presentation of evidence ready to present to the school later this half term.

We continue to work to support children's learning behaviours in school. We strive for children who are independent, resilient and aspirational. Through work in all lessons, Collective Worship, PSHE (Personal Social and Health Education), P4C (Philosophy) and our Enrichment Clubs, we offer activities and experiences to develop these skills. Please help at home by encouraging the children to organise their own belongings, make their beds in a morning, clear their plates from the table, carry their bags to school and take ownership of their reading and homework. It is a start in making them more independent in all areas of their lives.

At this point in the year, it is a good time to consider how the school supports the children in developing healthy lifestyles through healthy eating and also participation in sport and fitness. Our aim is to enable the children to develop an enjoyment of sport and fitness so that they continue to exercise throughout their lives. Through curriculum PE, daily Wake and Shake, afternoon sport clubs and extra curriculum clubs led by school staff and external instructors, the children have access to a variety of sport in school. Whilst competitive sport is not the main aim of primary school sport, we also participate in Bromsgrove 'All Active Academy' which enables all children to participate in competitive sport. Bellboating and outdoor pursuits are part of Year 4 provision. We are also delighted that so many children take part in sporting clubs out of school. Together, we aim to support this generation in becoming fit and healthy adults.

Fluff the guinea pig has now retired and we welcome Susan and Sally as new friends for Gordon. Sadly, Greta the chicken died last week but Rosa and Ellie are still laying eggs for us each day. The guinea pigs, Hetty our school dog and the chickens all support the development of the children.

Thank you to those of you supporting our PFTA events and 'Tea & Toast' which is open each day for the school community between 8.30-9.30am and 3-4pm and we'd love more support. All proceeds support the resources and provision at school.

Finally, Sports Day takes place on the last day of this half term. Please come along for 9am on the main field where refreshments will be available. You may need a blanket or picnic chair with you.

Best wishes,
Mrs Moss



Paddling the canals involves learning the skill of paddling in time with others and the technique of using the paddle. It is not as easy as it looks, as the children found out.



Welcome to Susan and Sally, our new Guinea Pigs! They will keep Gordon company now that Fluff has retired. Pets help children to care for animals and the animals also support children's emotional wellbeing in school.



Sally and Susan

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. Six years ago, we extended our child centred provision into Year 1. 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. 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...

Join us for the information meeting for Year 1 2024 to find out more (see dates).

Collective Worship During the last few weeks we have considered the Universal Values of **Equality** and **Diversity** as well as working on **Manners** and children's ability to **Try their best**. As part of this work we discussed the diversity within our British population to prepare the children for their future lives in a multicultural nation. We will consider how equality features highly in their everyday lives and how major historical figures such as Nelson Mandela, Rosa Parkes, Martin Luther King and William Wilberforce played a significant part towards creating equality in society.

Updates

- Congratulations to Mrs Webb, who is expecting a baby! She will be taking next year off on maternity leave. Plans are in place for covering Mrs Webb during her time away.
- Homework for Year 4s is now compulsory to prepare the children for Middle School. Please remind them to hand it in each week.
- Please use ParentApp to read information that we send out so that you are up to date with what is happening in school. We are sending this newsletter in paper form as a reminder to check ParentApp for letters but routinely send all information via ParentApp.
- Following on from our Ofsted inspection in December, we are consulting with staff on both the School Day and the current Curriculum offer in light of the actions set by Ofsted. The outcome of this consultation will be shared with governors and any changes considered. If you have any comments to make regarding the alternative school day that we operate (8.20am-1.40pm for main curriculum teaching and the post 1.40pm enrichment offer) and/or your experience of the curriculum that the school offers, please do drop an email in to office@blackwell.worcs.sch.uk with the subject line FEEDBACK FOR MRS MOSS or alternatively make an appointment to pop in for a chat. We welcome your feedback.

Holiday Club Holiday club is running again during the first and last weeks of the Summer holidays so please book through the school office.

Red Class learning journey Red Class children have made a brilliant start to school and have learned lots of basic skills and routines and are developing as early learners. They now work more in their workbooks as part of supporting them with their transition to Year 1.

It is most important in Reception that the children read every day. Please support the children with this crucial part of their learning. Thank you as always for your support.

School Sport and the Arts

- Sport's Day will soon be here! The children will participate in traditional running races and novelty races and the children will also take part in additional sports and Year 4 will end with the finale of their race around the field. Tea & Toast will be open all morning so do come along to enjoy a cuppa.



Dates

23.4.24 Year 4 music event at Alvechurch TBC- please be aware that we may request drop off at AMS for 9.15am on this day.
29.4.24 Year 2 educational visit- see letter
30.4.24 7pm PFTA meeting on zoom
18.5.24 SPRING BALL- PFTA event
20.5.24 Class photographs
20.5.24 FILM NIGHT 5.30-7pm- book through PFTA
23.5.24 Green Class Bake Sale
23.5.24 Year 4 Arts Event- visitors from Astley Primary
24.5.24 SPORT's Day- 9am-11am Reception- Year 4/ 2pm Nursery
27th-31st May- Half term
3.6.24 School reopens
5.6.24 Science Day for Year 2 – on site
10.6.24 Year 4s bellboating
18.6.24 Dental Survey (Reception and some Y1s)
24.6.24 Reception- Year 4 Educational visit
27.6.24 8.45am Purple Class family assembly
1.7.24 Year 4s bellboating
4.7.24 Year 4s cross school PE event at BFS
5.7.24 Change the Rules Day – PFTA event
6.7.24 SUMMER FAIR- get ready for the PFTA event of the year. Get baking and enter the cake competition. Do you have showstopper ideas?
10-12.7.24 Year 4 residential
15.7.24 5.30pm NEW Nursery parent meeting
15.7.24 6.30pm NEW Red Class parent meeting
16.7.24 8.45-9.30am NEW Nursery settling in
16.7.24 Children all visit new classes for September
16.7.24 6pm NEW Year 2 parent meeting
17.7.24 8.45am Red Class family assembly
17.7.24 6pm NEW Year 3 (and 4s are welcome) parent meeting
18.7.24 School Tea Party
18.7.24 8.45-9.30am NEW Nursery settling in
18.7.24 Red Class and Nursery Bake Sale
18.7.24 6pm NEW Year 1 parent meeting
19.7.24 Year 4 Leavers' assembly 9am
HOLIDAY CLUB- 22-26.7.24/ 27-30.8.24