



Blanford Mere Nursery and Primary School

Mimosa Walk, Kingswinford, West Midlands DY6 7EA

Headteacher: Mrs N.J. Miller Tel: 01384 818365 Email: info@blanford.dudley.sch.uk

End of term 17th July newsletter 2020

Article 29

Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.

This is our final newsletter of this academic year. The last few months have been unprecedented and a time that we will never forget. We appreciate that the children have not only lost learning time in school, but they have also been away from their friends, teachers, learning environment, social environments, a wide range of learning experiences and regular routines. We know that the children have also missed out on the many face to face opportunities and experiences that we offer as a school and important transition periods to prepare for the next academic year.

We know that it has been a very stressful time for parents, trying to juggle 'work commitments' as well as home learning. Many parents have told us, that teaching would not be the career for them! So thank you for all of the support you have given to your children with their learning and the school. Many 'key worker' parents have told us how much the childcare provision supported them from March until June, including the Easter holiday.

For staff, they have been working remotely and been into school on a rota basis between March and June to care for key worker children in small groups. All staff have had to adapt quickly to new guidance and routines to keep themselves and children safe; Since June 1st all staff have been back in school daily, teaching 'bubbles' through a partial reopening approach.

We have tried our best throughout this difficult time to do the following:

- to keep the school open for key worker children from March 23rd 2020, through a booking system
- to provide your child with an education through home learning
- to partially reopen the school to teach key worker, Yr Rec, Yr 1, Yr 6 and Yr 5 where parents chose to send their child back to school
- to keep children and staff in school safe at all times, making the school 'Covid secure' following all health and safety guidance
- to communicate well with parents/carers
- to alleviate any worries that you may have had
- to inform you through SchoolLife, phone calls, emails and our website of any government announcements and what this meant for children at Blanford Mere
- to follow Safeguarding procedures and follow up any concerns raised
- to provide written reports for all pupils
- to provide 'transition packs' and PowerPoints for new children or children in Early years and Year 1



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- teachers have written letters to children in their previous and new class – explaining memories and new expectations for September
- to provide the opportunity to purchase uniform, so that parents are ready for September
- to keep you up to date and informed throughout the pandemic
- to give you an up to date plan of our intention to fully reopen in September
- to provide a risk assessment for reopening in June and September

It has been an extremely busy, unusual, but productive and challenging time for everyone.

It has been lovely the past seven weeks to see so many children back in school, sharing the children's achievements and keeping all children safe, following our new rules and routines. We are excited and looking forward to seeing all of the children back in September, albeit a new norm!

Staffing news

- Miss Stanton will continue as the acting Strategic Leader for the Foundation Stage.
- Mr Wade will be KSI Strategic Leader
- Mr Baker will be KS2 Strategic Leader
- We say goodbye to Miss Tate who will be leaving us to spend more time with her family. We would like to thank Miss Tate for her support and work over the past few years – she will be missed. We would like to wish her the very best of luck for the future.

Our teaching team have been preparing for September. They have already spent time in school getting to know their new classes and being part of the 'handover' of information to ensure continuity and a swift start to the new academic year. We would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to all of our staff team who have worked hard this year in their various roles, to make this very strange academic year a happy, successful and productive one for the children both in school and at home.

Year 6 'Social distance' farewell gathering

On Friday afternoon, Year 6 enjoyed their 'Year 6 Social distance, farewell gathering'. This time of year is usually full of SATs test relief, excitement, anticipation, new beginnings and closure. It is a time for saying goodbye and for growing up by moving on to 'Big school'!

Year 6 would usually have been busy with a leavers' production, leavers' books, induction days, and visit to Woodfield House etc. – all to mark the end of their time at primary school.

This provided an opportunity for the staff to say goodbye, for the children to be together as a year group for one last time and for us to present the children with their Leavers' Book and hoodie.

This was a really positive end to the term and the children really enjoyed the event to mark the end of their time at Blanford Mere. We wish Year 6 good luck with the rest of their education and look forward to seeing many of the children walk past the school and tell us about the new chapters in their life at secondary school. Year 6 have been a true credit to the staff and to each other this academic year.



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School lunch Dolce – School Grid

The new 'School Grid' <https://app.schoolgrid.co.uk/login.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2F> You will need to pre-order in this way all of the time from September. Meals continue to be free of charge for all children in Reception, Year 1, Year 2, as well as any child who is eligible for benefit-related free school meals. We will still be asking parents to pre-order their child's meal, even though there is no charge.

We are limiting the number of belongings coming into and going out of school, therefore, children in Reception, Year 1, and Year 2 should take up their Universal Free School Meal. **Please do not send them with a packed lunch – sandwich options are also available to order.**

KS2 children will be allowed to bring lunchboxes to school again, or order a meal online through the School Grid system. Each lunch costs £2.20 – you must pay online, Where parents have not yet logged in, a new link from School Grid has just been emailed to you – the link will remain active for ONLY 24 hours. You can register any allergies/dietary needs for your child. Thank you.

Water Safety

With the summer break fast approaching, I would like to make you aware of the RNLI campaign at the link below:

<https://www.respectthewater.com/>

What is the Summer Reading Challenge?

Please see the newsletter that was sent out on Wednesday 15th July for full details to take part. Reading is such an important life skill and at the forefront of all learning.

Home Learning Packs

There will be extra learning packs uploaded to the 'Home learning' pencil on the school website for your child to continue their learning should they wish to. There will also be a COVID capsule project that your children could complete to 'capture' this historic moment and to remember this time – which we hope never to repeat!

Holiday ideas

Are you wondering how to keep the children busy throughout the holiday? If so, please click on the links below for local activities that your child might like to join in with.

<https://www.dudley.gov.uk/events/play-week-2020-online>

<https://letsgowiththechildren.co.uk/events/>

Reminders:



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All inhalers and epi-pens MUST be in school on the first day of term. Can I remind parents that although we do our best to look out for expiry dates, it is the responsibility of parents to ensure that these items are in date. If your child is registered as asthmatic, you should complete the form that has already been sent out to you through the post. Please send the completed form into school with two inhalers and a spacer. These must be labelled clearly with your child's name. Please send into school on Wednesday 2nd September 2020. If your child has been diagnosed with asthma during the pandemic please email info@blanford.dudley.sch.uk with your child's name, year group and the subject as asthma. We will then email you the appropriate form for you to complete and return with your child in September.

Children are not allowed to take part in PE unless all jewellery/earrings have been removed. If you wish your child to have their ears pierced, can I suggest that you have this done at the very beginning of the summer holiday so that their ears have the full six weeks to heal.

Hairstyles: it is not suitable to return to school in September with shaven heads, tramlines or extreme colours. Please remind your children of the rules. Children who have long hair must tie it up.

Could you please make sure that your child has all of their PE kit available in school every day from the first day of term as our timetable starts immediately. Although staff will let you know when the planned PE sessions are, there are often times when we have PE for classes or when teachers take advantage of good weather to do PE.

Dogs are not allowed on the school premises at any time, and if you have a dog please do not obstruct the pathway/gate as a number of children, who are frightened of dogs, find this intimidating.

In September, children may return in either summer or winter uniform depending upon both the weather and your preference.

Children should not bring any money to school – there is nothing to buy.

Dinners should be pre-paid, where applicable online using School Grid. All lunches should be preordered on School Grid, regardless of year group.

All children in Reception Class and KS1 receive free fruit each day for tuck and therefore do not need to bring any food from home. A reminder that all children in Year R, 1 and 2 will be entitled to a free school meal, we would like all children in these year groups (Universal Free School Meals) to take this option from September, to restrict items bought into school. Children entitled to Free School Meals through benefits should also take this option.

Please remember to apply for free school meals if you are eligible as some of school funding depends on it.



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All children should bring a small clear labelled 'sandwich bag' with their own labelled pack of tissues, small hand gel/sanitiser for their own use, as part of our health and safety guidelines.

Children in KS2 should also bring a piece of fruit for break – there will be no tuck on sale initially. (No crisps or chocolate please.) KS2 children: May we remind you that we operate a 'healthy tuck' policy. Since schools are now subject to strict guidelines about the type of food that is allowed/available during the school day, we hope that parents will support our efforts to encourage children to make healthy choices. For parents of current Year 2 in particular, this is a real opportunity to continue the good habits established in KS1 where fruit has always been offered as the only choice at playtime. We also encourage children to bring in healthy lunchboxes.

Children should only bring a filled water bottle (not squash – see healthy tuck policy on the website). This needs to be named please so that children can easily recognise their own bottle and do not touch or drink out of bottles belonging to other children.

In the autumn term, we will not allow parents/carers onsite. The government guidance states: 'that gathering at the school gates and otherwise coming onto the site without an appointment is not allowed. This is to minimise contact with other adults for both pupils and staff and their own health and safety. This also offers public health benefits, as it reduces the network of possible direct transmission.'

Attendance/Absence and Holidays in Term Time:

From September, attendance in school is compulsory again following the government advice after the Coronavirus.

The most important symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of any of the following:

- a new continuous cough
- a high temperature
- a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

For most people, coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild illness. However, if you have any of the symptoms above you must stay at home and arrange to have a test to see if you have COVID-19 and inform school of the results.

Don't forget that our policy on attendance, reporting children's absences and holidays in term time is on the school website. If children are too ill to attend school then parents must phone the school office by 9.05a.m. to let us know the reason why children are not in school—unexplained absences are recorded as "unauthorised". It is then your responsibility to ring school before 9.05am on any future days of illness, so our registers are kept up to date. Our policy reflects the government's stance on holidays in term time.

We have been informed by Dudley Investigation Service that they are issuing Fixed Penalty Notices (fines) for a leave of absence in term time which is for a period of 5 days (10 sessions) or more. Please can parents be aware of this information when booking any holidays, trips etc.



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Holiday Dates:

A reminder that we break up for the summer holidays on Friday 17th July. School re-opens for the children on Wednesday 2nd September 2020.

Please familiarise yourself with the information about start/end times and entrances/exits for your child(ren), that was sent out to all parents in a newsletter on Friday 10th July 2020. This can be found on the website in the 'Newsletter' pencil.

Dates for next academic year

Autumn 2020

Term starts – Tuesday 1st September 2020

Half term – Monday 26th October – Friday 30th October 2020

Term Ends – Friday 18th December 2020

Spring 2021

Term starts – Monday 4th January 2021

Half term – Monday 15th February – Friday 19th February 2021

Term Ends – Thursday 1st April 2021

Summer 2021

Term starts – Monday 19th April 2021

Half term – Monday 31st May – Friday 4th June 2021

Term Ends – Wednesday 21st July 2021

INSET Days 2020 / 2021

Tuesday 1st September 2020

Friday 23rd October 2020



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Friday 12th February 2021

Friday 28th May 2021

Wednesday 21st July 2021

Polling Day – Thursday 6th May 2021 – to be confirmed

A great big thank you for your support, understanding and cooperation this year. It has been an extremely challenging time for parents, children and staff alike.

We value the partnerships between Home and School, which makes sure that children make the most of their learning opportunities. Have a restful holiday.

We look forward to seeing you all in September.

Best wishes,

Mrs Miller and Miss Stanton



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