

7th September 2018

Head Teacher

First of all, we welcome all new Reception children – who had a fantastic first day. Seeing children start their first day enthusiastic, happy and willing to explore is a great start to their time at Byfield. Also a welcome to Mrs Williams, our Year 3 and 4 teacher – who already has established a wonderful working relationship with the children in her class. Finally, welcome back to all children and parents. It was great to see how every classroom yesterday had a wonderful ‘learning buzz’ of children wanting to work with their friends and be the best they can be; especially after the school being a building site all summer!

Topics:

Children in each class started their topics yesterday.

Robin Class (Reception) – All about Me. Learning about ourselves is a fundamental part of childhood development, especially as pupils start to ask questions about how everyone can be the same, or different from others. In this unit children will be learning about their new classmates and explaining what makes them special.

Swallow Class (Year 1 and 2) – Toys. Children will be using toys as a stimulus to learn about history, geography, science, art, and DT. They will compare toys in the past and those today. Look at toys from different countries, and consider whether all children have the same access to toys. Investigate how toys can be made from recycled materials, create art work based on their own toys and design their own toy. In English they are writing stories based on Traction Man by Mini Grey.

Kiwi Class (Year 3 and 4) and Owl Class (Years 5 and 6) – World War One. This year marks the centenary of armistice day and children will be completing work in preparations for Byfield’s own ‘Pop-up’ WW1 museum. As well as learning about life in the trenches, they will be learning about how the war affected daily life in Byfield. Their creative work and written work will be used by the Byfield branch of the Royal British Legion on the 11th of November in the remembrance.

Celebration Assembly:

Praising children is one of the most important aspects of our ethos – so celebration assemblies would never be dropped. However, having no hall for celebration assembly gives us a problem, but also an opportunity to trial something new. Each week, teachers will send home invitations to their class celebration assembly of children who have done an amazing piece of work. During the class celebration, this work will be presented to the rest of the class, the parents/grandparents, and myself. This work will then be copied several times – to be displayed via twitter (if parents have ticked our GDPR compliancy box,) in the classroom, in the school entrance area and a further copy to go home. We will still give awards out for the “Superhero of the Week” – where the children write about what makes their classmates superheroes. Also please use this as an opportunity to bring in any certificates or awards children have from outside of school. So that I can be part of these celebrations, each classes assembly takes place on a different day.

- **Robins – Friday 2:45**
- **Swallows –Thursday 2:45**
- **Kiwis – Monday 2:45**
- **Owls – Tuesday 2:45**

Class Dojos:

We are still using the class dojo, an electronic system to reward children in school. A letter is going home this week which tells you how you can get a sign in to see your child's rewards. If you already have a login to the website or app from previous years, you do not need to do anything.

Reading Logs:

Reading Logs go home with the children's reading books however they need to be in school every day, ideally in a book bag. The purpose of these logs is to record when children are reading at school with an adult and reading at home. There will be rewards this year for children who are regularly reading at home – our only way of monitoring this is by the reading logs being filled in by the grown-up. When your child reads at home, please write in the reading log the date, the page numbers and a signature/initials. You may leave a comment if you wish. Older children are expected to do this themselves, however please could the grown-up still sign it at the end of the week. Parents who read this newsletter regularly are probably familiar with my regular 'reading rants'. All the evidence shows that children who read regularly have better developed language, listening, spelling, comprehension, vocabulary, imagination, empathy and cognitive ability.

Building Work Over The Summer Holidays:

The good – our windows have been fitted and installed by Martin Dale Windows. I am very impressed with the quality and looks. Not only are they in keeping with the character of the Edwardian building – being hardwood, the double glazing, light-reactive glass, should keep children warmer in the winter, cooler in the summer and save us money on heating.

The bad – we have had several delays in the demolition of the hall, which has required a change of hall design, due to access being so tight and the need to have more substantial foundations than originally designed for. We are currently waiting for the gas and electricity to be disconnected so that we still have these essential services in the infant block. Once this happens, demolition can happen in earnest.

The ugly – the old hall as it stands is unusable as it now on a building site, and having undergone internal preparations for demolition.

Arrangements for no hall:

Arrangements for no hall remain exactly as explained before summer.

Access to the school:

The school electronic gate is not currently in operation (and the fence posts are due to be dug out today!) For safeguarding purposes, we have a padlock on the metal gate. Everyone will be required to use the small pedestrian gate to come in and out of the school.

Lunches:

Lunches are now provided by Limes Farm, and the children I spoke to yesterday, who had the pasta, meatballs and lemon drizzle cake yesterday gave glowing reviews. Whilst there is no hall, Reception children will remain in class for lunches, whether they are hot dinners or not. All other children with school dinners are happening in the infant rooms, and children with packed lunches will be in either the key stage 2 classrooms, or eating outside if the weather holds.

PE:

All PE lessons will be outside, until half term, children will still be going out whenever possible unless the weather makes it unsafe. The PE days are as below, but while work is going on, please try to provide a PE kit everyday – as it could be swapped if there is particularly bad weather.

Robins - Thursdays

Swallows – Tuesday and Wednesday

Kiwis – Monday and Friday

Owls – Monday and Friday

Bikes and Scooters:

We have no current facilities to store bikes or scooters. If children would like to cycle or scoot to school, parents would need to take their bikes or scooters back home with them. Sorry for this inconvenience.

Assemblies:

Assemblies will be happening in classrooms – 2x weekly they will be assemblies with another class, a celebration class assembly, a value based class assembly and a student council assembly. Please note that celebration assemblies have different arrangements and times. On special occasions, such as harvest, we do plan to use an alternative venue.

After School Clubs

Monday night Construction Club from 3.15-4.30pm – cost £2

Tuesday night – Art and Crafts (KS1 focus) – cost £2

Wednesday night – Computer Club from 3.15-4.30pm – cost £2

Thursday night – Art and Crafts (KS2) – cost £2

Friday Night – Film Night – 3.15-5.30 pm - cost £3

Children are welcome to stay at After School Club until 5.30pm. Charge for this is £3.80.

Please contact the office if you would like more information or to book.

Breakfast Club – every day from 8am – cost is £3 per session.