



BLACKTHORNS COMMUNITY PRIMARY ACADEMY

NEWSLETTER – 10th February 2017

What's great at Blackthorns?

- Class RH have been making story maps for their own version of 'Lion Hunt'
- Class 1T have been making some wonderful "Bob, the Man on the Moon" DT moon buggies
- Class 2N have been displaying great control, rehearsal and improvement of movements in their gymnastics sessions
- Class 3C have been sketching and making watercolour pictures of sandpipers
- Class 4T have been taking part in some excellent free writing sessions
- Class 5D are doing brilliantly with fractions! Understanding is really embedded
- Class 6J have also been doing gymnastics, really focused work
- Class 5D have been creating imaginary creatures and have been completing some excellent writing
- Class 4H are really enjoying their topic learning on 'Rivers.'

Staffing Update

It is with great reluctance that I must inform you that Mr Harris will be leaving Blackthorns at half term. Mr Harris' working hours have been reducing gradually for the last year or so, but he has decided that now is the time for him to retire properly (having retired as a headteacher 9 years ago and then very quickly found himself at Blackthorns as our PE teacher and sports coach). I know that our children and parents will be as sorry to say goodbye to Mr Harris as the staff are. We have so much to thank him for, but particularly for making sport so important at Blackthorns and for the many successes we have celebrated over the last 9 years as a result of his expertise, passion and brilliant relationships with the children. He will be hugely missed by the whole school community. We wish him a very long, happy and healthy retirement and hope that he will stay in touch.

I am delighted to announce that Mrs Claire Bellamy has been appointed as our new Finance and HR Assistant, to work alongside Mrs Ramsbottom, our School Business Manager. We were fortunate to receive many very impressive applications and are very pleased to have appointed Mrs Bellamy. We expect her to start at Blackthorns during March.

An Update from the Local Governing Body

Over recent terms, the Local Governing Body at Blackthorns has welcomed new faces and said goodbye as long standing members have moved on; so we thought an update might be helpful as an introduction for newer parents to the school and a refresher for those with older children.

The local governing body at Blackthorns is here to strengthen the Academy's strategic leadership which it does through three core responsibilities:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Overseeing the educational performance of the academy and its pupils, and the performance management of staff;
- Overseeing the financial performance of the academy and making sure its money is well spent.

The Governing body is active all year round and meets as a Full Governing body twice termly. In addition, Governors sit on sub-committees and fulfil link roles with specific responsibilities within the academy such as curriculum, personnel, buildings/health and safety and finance.

Governors include parents, teachers and people from business backgrounds and the local community and are required to attend training and update days and these are mostly provided by the University of Brighton Academies Trust. Governors also conduct scheduled visits to the school linked to different priorities; these would involve activities such as learning walks, visits to classrooms and book scrutinies.

The Governing Body is responsible for approving the Blackthorns Academy Development Plan and follows a Governors' action plan which is based on key Ofsted criteria and ties in with the priorities identified in the Academy Development Plan.

More information can be found on the website about the Governing Body, its responsibilities and profiles on the Governors <http://www.blackthornsprimaryacademy.org.uk/community/governors>. Please feel free to approach any of the Governors if you have specific queries relating to the responsibilities of the Local Governing Body which they may be able to raise on your behalf.

Wear a Woolly Hat Day

Your children may have told you that we were visited last Monday for our assembly by Mr Young, who is the CEO of the charity 'Off the Fence'. Mr Young talked to the children about the charity and how it supports homeless people locally. On Thursday 16th February we are asking our children to wear a woolly hat for homeless people. In return we would invite £1 donations for the charity. More information on the work of 'Off the Fence' can be found on their website: www.offthefence.org.uk

Hot Meals

Please may I ask that when ordering hot meals you enter the correct year group for your child(ren)? If you have a regular order please check this information – thank you.

Key Dates:

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| Tuesday 14 th February 2017 | Class 3C to Bluebell Railway |
| Thursday 16 th February 2017 | Woolly Hat Day |
| Friday 17 th February 2017 | Break up for half term |
| Monday 27 th February 2017 | INSET Day – school closed |
| Tuesday 28 th February 2017 | Academy re-opens at 8.50am |
| Thursday 2 nd March 2017 | World Book Day – please come to school in pyjamas |
| Friday 3 rd March 2017 | Key Stage 1 Film Friday |

Please see attached updated term dates for 2017/2018 academic year.

Kind regards

Marianne Brand