



BLACKTHORNS COMMUNITY PRIMARY ACADEMY

NEWSLETTER – 9th June 2017

What's great at Blackthorns?

- Before half term we welcomed the teachers from Desmond Anderson Primary Academy, who spent two days at Blackthorns, sharing in the children's learning and observing the teaching. This was a really useful experience and the feedback about our wonderful children and their positive approach to learning was excellent
- We also welcomed author and illustrator Christian Darkin before half term and he worked with the children in every class, talking about the process he goes through when he is writing. The children really enjoyed the experience
- Our enthusiastic and very tuneful Singing Club performed at the Lindfield United Reformed Church Lunch Club this week. The concert was very much enjoyed by the members of the audience. A big thank you to Mrs Davies and Mrs Moffatt for their work with the children

Village Day

Thank you to everybody that supported Blackthorns at Village Day last weekend. Our walking procession looked absolutely wonderful and we were delighted to be announced as winners for the **16th year in a row!!!!** A big thank you to Mrs Neller for her wonderful creativity and vision and to all of the teachers and children for the enormous effort in preparing all of the props.

Staffing News

Mrs Type will be leaving us at the end of the academic year. We are delighted to have appointed Mrs Emma Cheeseman as a new teacher from September. She attended Blackthorns as a child and has also previously run the netball club here. Mrs Cheeseman is joining us from a school in East Grinstead and we look forward to welcoming her to our team.

We are very sorry to be saying goodbye to Mrs Dawborn at the end of this term, after 12 years working with our youngest children at Blackthorns. Mrs Dawborn is going to be pursuing other interests, but I am sure we will all be seeing her as she walks her dog around the village.

We will also be saying goodbye to Mrs Collins, our wonderful Modern Foreign Languages teacher at the end of the summer term. Mrs Collins does a really great job and we are sorry to see her go, but she has been offered a role that fits in better with her children's term dates that is also nearer to home.

Announcements regarding class allocations for the next academic year will be made later on this term.

INSET Days 2017/18

We have previously published our INSET Days for 2017/18, which included INSET days on Monday 23rd and Tuesday 24th July 2018. However, in order to align term dates in East and West Sussex, the University of Brighton Academies Trust board of directors has decided that the summer term will finish on Friday 20th July 2018, which is the day that we would have finished anyway. Therefore, there will be an additional two INSET Days, on Friday 20th October 2017 and Thursday 29th March 2018. These dates will be added shortly to our website.

Woods Team

Our new Forest School Club, run by Suzanne and Jen from Nature Nurture Sussex, is going really well and the children are thoroughly enjoying it. Mrs Thomas has been discussing our grounds with Suzanne and they have

come up with a plan to refresh our slightly tired-looking woodland area. We are hoping that a group of parents will be interested in working with us on this project. If you would be keen to help us to improve our learning environment for our children, please let Mrs Day in the office know and we will arrange a time to bring everybody together, with Mrs Thomas and Suzanne. Everybody is welcome, however green-fingered you are!

"From the governors" Viv Cole, Chair of Finance Committee

Fellow parents quite often ask me what I've been doing as a governor. Although I appreciate their interest, I have to give quite neutral answers as it's important to maintain confidentiality about matters that affect teachers, pupils and the school. In this newsletter I wanted to share a flavour of what's happening in the background.

The main thing that has been keeping us busy on Finance Committee has been scrutinising the budget for next year. As you may be aware, government funding for education continues to decline, giving us the challenge of maintaining and improving the school's activities, whilst balancing the books. This can involve some quite difficult trade-offs in terms of the quantity and quality of teaching, extra-curricular activities and the school environment. We have been looking at ways we can invest in order to save costs e.g. installing the school's own broadband 'pipe' and how to generate other revenue streams.

We have also recently received the go-ahead for a capital grant to replace the school roof which has lasted well beyond its expected life, so the funding picture is not all bad news. As ever we are grateful for your support as parents and FoBs for providing time and money that allows our kids experiences above and beyond what the funding allows.

For more about who the governors are and their responsibilities, please see <http://www.blackthornsprimaryacademy.org.uk/community/governors>

Parking and Driving around the academy

Unfortunately, I find myself having to ask parents yet again to drive and park with care and consideration in the roads around our academy. I have recently had reports from local residents of driveways being blocked, corners of roads being parked on and also the academy's safety zig-zag lines being parked on. Please also refrain from parking or driving on the grass verges on Blackthorns. Quite apart from the inconvenience caused to our local residents, our children's safety is at risk.

Gilbert and Sullivan Project

We are very excited to have been invited to be involved in a Gilbert and Sullivan project, led by professional tenor Barry Clark. Barry and his team will be working with our Year 5 children for the next five weeks and this project will culminate in a performance of The Pirates of Penzance on Friday 14th July 2017. More details to follow.

Key Dates for the next two weeks

Tuesday 13 th June	-	Dance Workshops in school
Wednesday 14 th June	-	FOBs Meeting at 7.30pm
Tuesday 20 th June	-	Year 4 to Fishbourne
Wednesday 21 st June	-	Year 1 River Trip
		September Intake children to visit
Thursday 22 nd June	-	Big Business Trading Day 1
Friday 23 rd June	-	Library Open

Kind regards

Marianne Brand