



BLACKTHORNS COMMUNITY PRIMARY ACADEMY

NEWSLETTER – 15th December 2017

This is the last newsletter of the Autumn Term 2017 and what a busy and productive term it has been! The academy is full of the sounds of Christmas nativity plays and carols. We are aware that this is the longest term of the year and the children (and staff!) are really feeling the impact of this and are more than ready for a rest and a break.

Roof

I am sure that you will have noticed that the scaffolding has now been removed! The new roof is complete and our solar panels have been returned to their positions. We still have some internal repairs to be completed, but the project is now largely complete, which is a big relief. Therefore, the scooter and bike area on the other side of the Key Stage 2 part of the building is now open for use again. Thank you all very much for your understanding while this major project took place. Although it was not complete by October half term as we were promised, we are all delighted to have the reassurance that the roof is not about to fail at any time!

Key Stage 1 Decking Area

During the summer holidays one of our oldest oak trees fell and damaged the Key Stage 1 decking area. As a result, the outside area by the Key Stage 1 classes has been out of use since the summer holidays. The project to fully replace the decking and fenced area around it has been completed this week and so will be in use for the children in Years 1 and 2 from next term.

PSHE Scheme

We have just introduced a new PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education) scheme across the academy, from Reception to Year 6. Following some considerable research from Mrs Jago, our Curriculum Manager, we identified the 'Dimensions. 3D PSHE' scheme as the most suitable for our children. The scheme is full of interactive activities and some lovely resources. The children have been using the scheme for the last few weeks and the feedback from the teachers and children has been very positive. Classes have covered topics such as budgeting, friendship and aspirations and there have been some really lovely learning experiences, as well as opportunities to write and apply the writing skills from English lessons.

Staffing News

We have recently welcomed Mrs Rachel Gambiragio as our new Finance and HR Assistant and she works in the school office for 4 days each week.

Mrs Dawn Smith has been working at Blackthorns for one day each week and she will be stopping this arrangement at Christmas. We are very pleased that she will still be working here on an ad-hoc supply basis, even though she is no longer able to commit to the regular session each week.

I am really excited to inform you that Mrs Wendy Paul will be taking on part of Mrs Smith's teaching commitment from January and we are all very much looking forward to welcoming Mrs Paul back to Blackthorns.

STEM Week

We will be returning to school for the Spring Term on Thursday 4th January 2018. The first full week of the Spring Term will be our annual STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) week.

FOBs Party Lunch

FOBS will be providing the children with a party lunch on **Wednesday 20th December**. If your child has a special diet or has any allergies please could you provide them with their own lunch – thank you?

Parent View Website

As I have mentioned previously, I would like to encourage you to complete the Ofsted Parent View website with your views about Blackthorns. This can be found using the link below:

<https://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk/>

Communication

I would like to remind you that you are welcome to speak to your child's teacher, myself or other members of the Senior Leadership Team should you have any queries or questions about anything. It can be frustrating to hear that people have been given incorrect information by other parents, when a simple conversation with a member of school staff could solve any confusion or concern immediately. As you will know, either myself or a member of my senior team are available by the school gate at the beginning and end of each day. If this is not convenient, please call the academy office to make an appointment. Although mornings are very busy for class teachers, you are welcome to speak to them after school or via a telephone call if this is more convenient for you. Confidentiality restrictions mean that staff will not discuss other people's children with you and we would also encourage you as parents to respect one another's privacy by refraining from discussing other people's children with one another.

Swimming

Please note that swimming commences on Friday 12th January 2018.

Key Dates

Monday 18 th December	-	EYFS/KS1 Nativity 2.00pm
Tuesday 19 th December	-	EYFS/KS1 Nativity 9.30am
Wednesday 20 th December	-	FOBs Party Lunch for children Christmas Raffle/Mulled Wine 2.30pm
		Last Day of Term
Thursday 4 th January	-	Start of Spring Term 2018
Week beginning Monday 8 th January	-	STEM Week

I would like to wish you all a very merry Christmas and a happy new year!

Kind regards

Marianne Brand