



Head Teacher Newsletter

Wednesday 18th September 2024

Behaviour and Learning Routines

I am pleased to share the children are continuing to quickly settle in to learning routines and behaviour expectations at our school. Children focused on learning, working collaboratively is a common feature of my observations in every class. I am convinced even more children will achieve their pen licence this year than last. Should your children complete any additional work/learning at home, please let us know. This includes but is not limited to achievements from any clubs they are a part of such as dance, football, rugby or music. We love to celebrate learning that goes 'above and beyond!'.

Collective Worship

Reverend Jonathan Bish led a lovely Collective Worship with a focus on Harvest and being thankful for what we have. School will send further information to all families notifying them about how we will mark this occasion. I am delighted so many children are applying for the position of class Collective Worship lead. Good luck to each of you!

Healthy Snacks

We have a number of children that suffer from nut allergies are therefore a nut free school. We encourage children to enjoy a healthy mid-morning snack and offer a tuck shop where they can purchase toast or fruit. We have noticed children bringing snacks from home that are unsuitable. Please ensure snacks sent to school are limited to a piece of fruit, dried fruit, cheese strings or yoghurt (in the form of a tube). Cereal bars, crisps or any food containing chocolate in any form are not permitted. Thank you for helping keep all children in our school safe.

Play apparatus

Over the years, Bywell has been able to invest in play apparatus for the children which we know they love to use. This apparatus (climbing frames, trim trails, the tyre park etc.) is only for use during the school day when Bywell team members are supervising. It is not to be used before or after school, even with Parents/Carers supervising.

PINS - Partnership for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools

We are excited to be taking part in the PINS pilot which has been launched by the Department of Health and Social Care and the Department of Education. As part of this, the children's charity Barnardos will be coming in to school to offer workshops for parents and carers.

- Managing Emotions - 24th October, 2pm - 3pm
- Executive Functioning - 12th November, 2pm - 3pm
- Boundaries, Demands and Behaviour - 26th November, 2pm - 3pm
- Transitions - 9th December, 2pm-3pm
- Sleep - 14th January, 2pm-3pm

These workshops are open to all parents. We hope to see many of you there.

Attendance

Our school attendance average overall at the moment is 97%. Last academic year, in addition to 'Attendance Heroes', school set a target of *at least 97% attendance for every child*. When this was achieved by the end of the year, the child accessed an attendance reward. Last year, this reward was a trip to the cinema.

School is repeating this initiative with this year's reward still to be decided. The target of 97% attendance takes into account that children can occasionally fall ill. School's decision is final when calculating who has achieved this reward. Good luck everyone!

The school Attendance Policy has been reviewed to reflect the most up-to-date guidance /legislation from the Department for Education. This can be found on our school website and I urge families to read it.

In summary:

- All leave of absence requests should be made at least two weeks prior (an online form can be submitted from our school website or an email sent for my attention to the school office email)
- Holidays should not be booked before the leave of absence request is made
- Repeated unauthorised absences (for any reason and not limited to family holidays) will result in penalty notices issued (which have increased to £80 per parent per child)
- Further repeated unauthorised absences will result in prosecution - this can lead to fines of up to £2500
- **NEW** - School INSET days now count towards unauthorised absence if immediately preceded or followed by an unauthorised absence.
For example, INSET day Monday 4th November. The child is absent on Tuesday 5th November - Friday 8th November. The child's attendance will be recorded as unauthorised (unless there is medical evidence of illness) from Monday 4th November - Friday 8th November. This will trigger a penalty notice/prosecution in line with school policy.

It is never pleasant to issue penalty notices nor prosecute families. However, there is an expectation from the Government that schools do everything they can to promote the highest levels of attendance so the amount of missed learning is minimised. There have recently been a number of high-profile news stories in the media regarding this. If you are struggling with attendance and/or punctuality, please speak to your child's class teacher.

See you at the gate!

Kind Regards

Ms Z Adam
Head Teacher