



Blackawton Primary School Weekly News



Contact us: parent@blackawtonprimary.org.uk
Please talk to us about any issues or make an appointment.

20th March 2020

Dear Parents

Firstly, I'm sure all the families would like to join me in thanking all the staff at Blackawton for everything they are doing, have done and will continue to do to support all the children and their families at this unprecedented time.

The children have been amazing this year, and we have many things that we should celebrate. Underpinning everything that we do has been about providing a quality education through a Broad and Balance Curriculum. Driving this is **Article 29 (Goals of education)**: Children's education should develop each child's personality, talents and abilities to the fullest. It should encourage children to respect others, human rights and their own and other cultures. It should also help them learn to live peacefully, protect the environment and respect other people.

The teachers and children have worked together to create and plan learning that provides a rich, broad and balanced curriculum. The children have experienced a range of performances - The Hobbit, I Believe in Unicorns, the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra and the Elves and the Shoemaker. The children have learned through dance, drama, art, music, sport, languages and film.

The children enjoyed performing the 'Wonderland' dance and the staff were immensely proud and delighted that this unique performance gave the children the opportunity to be involved in a collaborative, creative project that has brought together so many elements of the Blackawton Curriculum. The Nursery and Reception children sang and acted beautifully in "A Miracle in Town" in the Nativity in the Church.

We launched the "Reading like a Champion" initiative to encourage children to have a love of a wide range of books. Topic this year have ranged across the school from finding out all about the History of Blackawton, Crime and Punishment, Rivers, Migration, Volcanos, Space and People who Help us in our Community.

We have had many visitors into school who help including Ollie from the Fab Lab in the brilliant Science Week. We were delighted to reach the final three from 1000 schools in the Peter Melchett Award and Anne and I travelled to London and were very surprised to find ourselves as the national winners.

We entered the Rotary Youth Speaks Competition and three of our Year 6 children reached the final. We took a group of children to London for the WE Day conference.

FOBS and volunteers from our community have supported all the way through.

At the moment we do not know when the school will reopen, but when it does we, like I'm sure many of you, will want to have a fabulous celebration. We will let you know, when we know.

Please keep in touch, we will be monitoring parent mail but it may take longer than the usual 24 hours to respond to your questions. We would also love to hear your creative ideas about activities that the children are doing, so please send those in and let us know if your happy for these to be shared in the Weekly News that will continue coming out every Friday afternoon.

Rachel Burris

Home Learning

I'm sure that parents are wondering what to do now with their children at home and what this will look like for different children.

The teachers are busy behind the scene working out a plan on how you can help your children at home. These will be sent out by parent mail next week.

One suggestion for next week is to choose some activities from the attached document "40 things to do with your child at home." We would also encourage you to do daily reading, maybe starting a diary to do some writing, daily number counting and daily exercises. Children from Year 1 to 6 also have access to SPAG and SPARX; logins and passwords for these will also be sent next week for you.

Ideas for Reception and Nursery children will be posted on Tapestry; please let us know if you have trouble logging in.

There are numerous websites with ideas but at the moment we are suggesting that you take this slowly. For example, Bear Grylls has teamed up with the Scout Movement with the Great Indoors Initiative. You may want to create some structure to your day but also if you may also be working from home and trying to manage a curriculum for more than one child, this may well be quite a challenge.











Supporting your SEND child during school closure

All children, but particularly those with additional needs, will be finding this an unsettling time. For many, the structure and routine of school is vital and parents who find school holidays a challenge under normal conditions may be worried about the prospect of an extended period at home.

Please be assured that we are still here to support you. Every school has a system in place so that you can contact us with concerns, questions and requests; we will be doing our very best to help you during this period. I will be contactable by email and will continue to make referrals, requests for statutory assessment and run Early Help support plans. This will ensure families continue to be supported throughout school closure and normal service resumes when we return.

The following suggestions may help you as you adjust to a new way of learning alongside your child at home.

Routine: One of the reasons children feel safe at school is that it is predictable. Generally, the same things happen at the same time every week. Create a visual timetable for the home (an example is attached with your newsletter this week) and put it together each day with your child.

Special play: Make the most of the opportunity to spend time with your child without the usual time pressures. Set aside 10 minutes each day for child-led play. Sit alongside them and play whatever they wish (within reason!). Give time warnings when special play is soon to be over and if they're disappointed at the end, remind them that it will happen again tomorrow. If you have more than one child at home, give them special play time separately.

Mindfulness: Practise being still and using calming techniques to ease anxieties and tension. Lots of apps and videos can be found online.

Exercise: Keeping active is very important for our mental as well as physical health. Even in isolation you can set up an obstacle course in the garden, go for a walk or a bike ride in quiet, uncrowded places, or try out a kids exercise video on Kidstube!

Sensory: If your child has sensory issues, consider setting up messy play, a sand or water table or use plasticine or clay. You could try massaging them with a ball rolled up and down the body. Ensure you have regular movement breaks.

Be creative: Use art and craft activities to explore emotions - paint your feelings, draw an animal to represent how you feel today, create a collage of your favourite things, build a model of your dream place.

Reach out: Already groups are springing up on social media - join them, connect through your experiences and know that you are not alone!

Dear parents,

At this time of uncertainty, we are very aware of the need to support mental health needs as much as academic ones during the period of school closures. The Link Inclusion Hub have produced this excellent resource for practical ideas and strategies to support both you as parents and your children during this time.

Therapists who are no longer able to do face-to-face counselling sessions are also offering their time at a greatly reduced cost as telephone or Skype sessions. They are listing their details on a Facebook page called **Therapy Bunker**. You can read their profiles and make contact with a therapist if you feel you need someone to talk to. If counselling is something you have considered before but couldn't afford, this is an opportunity to access it at a low cost.

Please also remember that school staff are still available to support and help you throughout this time.

With very best wishes,

Sarah Simnett



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