



# Blackawton Primary School Weekly News



Contact us: [parent@blackawtonprimary.org.uk](mailto:parent@blackawtonprimary.org.uk)  
Please talk to us about any issues or make an appointment.

12th June 2020

Dear Parents

## Local Update on Covid-19

*There have been some media reports about the R number being quite high in the South West. This generally refers to the SW government region that stretches from Bristol up to Gloucester, across to Swindon, Poole and Penzance.*

*We have now been given permission to share with you data for Devon itself, which paints a different and more positive picture. There have been no deaths across Devon related to Covid in the last two week reporting period. At the 3<sup>rd</sup> June, there were 13 Covid patients in hospital in Devon. Devon ranks 145 out of 150 LAs across the country for total confirmed cases per 100,000 resident population. (rank1 = highest rate of cases.)*

*Whilst we need to remain careful and vigilant, we some find some reassurance in these figures. We are maintaining the high level of precautions and cleaning as children and staff return to school, and again thank all the staff.*

*Roger Pope CEO*

## Poetry at Blackawton Primary

Children in Years 5 and 6 have been part of an ESW wide project creating a glorious anthology of poetry that will be published in the near future. We thought you would enjoy a "sneak" preview of some of the children's contributions.

Mrs Buckle has gathered the poems from across the year - some came out from an inspirational day of training, and others inspired by outdoors learning during 'lockdown.' Some are random...enjoy!



Meredith's beautiful Forest  
School painting

## Warmth

*I share my lovely warmth with my dog bed  
And my human as well  
She comes and cuddles me before I have my  
supper.  
I would like to share my treats with someone  
But all I have is my human  
I always bring my toys to my dog bed.  
I would like to have a ball so it can only be in  
the dog bed  
With me and I can then chew on it and play  
with it.  
By Jack Bond*

## The Shade of Black

*A symbol of night  
A symbol of death  
The sound of sadness  
And beauty at rest*

*A vast empty darkness  
That makes us forget  
Like a silent black panther  
Stalking its prey*

*It's also a new beginning  
At the end of time  
Like death, like darkness  
and vast empty space  
For you to start anew*

Nia Wilmott

## Oh, ginger cat

*Oh, silly ginger cat sat on the red mat*

*Oh, naughty ginger cat, why do you  
have my hat?*

*Oh, athletic ginger cat playing with  
the tennis- bat*

*Oh, emotional ginger cat in the puddle  
of tears he sat. By Phoebe Tozer*

## A Winter Poem

*White frost, a thin spiral around  
It watches me as it curls on the ground  
Nearly Christmas for everyone  
Trees evergreen or bare  
Everything so endlessly jolly  
Red berries on holly, for us to share  
Brightening the hedges that you see*

*Magic winter for you and me  
A drop of dew that froze in the sea  
Growing plants have gone and reappeared  
It is cold in the night for the reindeer  
Curling blue all of the things you see  
Winter magic is a delicate breeze.  
Nula Nightingale*

## Daddy

*After a hard day at school,*

*I wonder down to the cemetery to visit Dad.*

*Whilst I'm down there, I share all my  
worries and dreams with Dad.*

*I leave trees, flowers and special coins with  
Dad*

*Also, I leave my words of love with Dad.*

*My tears of sorrow, sadness and grief*

*Drip onto Dad's grave, whilst I mourn his  
loss.*

*I fill Dad in on my day to day plans,*

*my happiness and proudness, sadness and  
failures.*

*Although Dad cannot respond,*

*I know he is always listening.*

By Matilda Mault

**Reminder** that we are a Nut & Kiwi Free school as we have pupils with severe allergies to both.

Please be mindful of what food you send in to school in lunchboxes etc.





Nursery read the story 'Mr Gumpy's Outing' by John Burningham and then acted out Mr Gumpy's boat trip on the playground.



**Remember that you can raise funds for the school by shopping through Easyfundraising and choosing Blackawton school as your charity.**

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/blackawtonschool/>

## The Signpost

I hope that you are all keeping well as we complete another week of home learning (or a mix of home and school for some of you). This week the following website was shared with me and it contains some fantastic resources for children with SEND. Please do take a look.



<https://www.sunshine-support.org/Resources>

I have also spoken to many parents who report that their children are having difficulty sleeping at the moment. The following tips were taken from the website: <https://www.evelinalondon.nhs.uk/our-services/hospital/sleep-medicine-department/coronavirus-sleep-tips.aspx>

### Coronavirus (COVID-19) sleep tips for families

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic many children and parents are at home all day. Parents are finding that without the routine of school and work, the whole family's sleep is affected. This can be particularly evident for children with neurodevelopmental issues such as Autistic Spectrum Disorder, who are often very sensitive to changes in routine.

Here are some brief tips from Dr Shreena Unadkat, clinical psychologist in the Evelina London sleep team, about how to help maintain sleep quality. [Download these tips](#) (PDF 104Kb).

### Circadian rhythms/body clock

Our natural body clock is affected by many things, including daylight and daytime activities. When you are stuck indoors it is hard to get the external cues we all require to keep our body clock in rhythm, and you may find that your sleep pattern becomes more erratic. In order to give your body the best chance of staying in normal time, consider following these tips:

Although the temptation is to allow your routine to slide if you have nowhere to go, we recommend sticking to your normal wake and sleep times as much as possible.

- Limit lie-ins to the weekend, and make sure that everyone wakes up no more than one hour later than you would on a normal/school day.
- Get creative about how to get as much daylight as possible. If current government advice allows you to go outside then go for a walk first thing in the morning for at least 20 minutes.
- If you are self-isolating and need to stay indoors, open up all the curtains/blinds first thing in the morning. Opening windows for 20 minutes in the morning will help you to get a blast of fresh air.
- Make a daily timetable of what you will be doing as a family to keep some structure. This can be a loose timetable and should involve lots of fun activities! For younger children or children with neurodevelopmental difficulties, making this a visual timetable can help to soothe the anxiety that comes from a change in routine. Helpful information about creating a visual resource, including templates, can be found on the Autism UK website: [www.autism.org.uk/about/strategies/visual-supports](http://www.autism.org.uk/about/strategies/visual-supports).
- Get some exercise during the day. If you can go outside then this is best, however if this is not possible then try to use the spaces in your home creatively. Follow an exercise video together as a family, set up an obstacle course in your living room, or make up some games that involve jumping/skipping/running. When we have less physical activity in the day, we often find it harder to get to sleep, and sleep quality may be worse.

At night, make sure you are closing the curtains/blinds and dimming the lights at the same time every day. Keep your calming bedtime routine the same as you normally would. There may understandably be an increase in screen time during the day at the moment, however we still recommend turning off screens for one hour before bedtime if you can. Switch instead to hand-eye co-ordination activities such as drawing or puzzles.

### Anxiety and worry about COVID19

Many children might be feeling anxious and worried at this time, which may affect their sleep quality. This is understandable and normal as we are in extraordinary circumstances. In fact, feeling totally relaxed and at ease at all times may not be realistic. If you find that this anxiety and worry is impacting on bedtime or sleep, here are some tips to try and manage this:



- Start by acknowledging your child's feelings, and letting them know that their reaction is normal.
- Make a dedicated time and space to talk about this in the daytime. This should be earlier in the day, and separate to the bedtime routine. Talking through difficult feelings too close to bedtime can raise anxieties, which can stop your child from feeling sleepy.
- Drawing out your feelings about the situation as a family (using coloured pens and paper) can open up conversations and be a good place to start.
- If you find that your children are wanting to talk through their worries at bedtime, it may be helpful to note these on a piece of paper together and put them in a box. Alternatively, you can give them to a Worry Monster or Teddy Bear to look after overnight. Then find a time the next day to look at the worries together. It is very important that worries are talked through together with a suitable adult so that they are not ignored.
- Carry out some body based relaxation exercises to try and calm the body down before bed. One example of a fun exercise is "Bumble Bee Breathing". Sit together with your child and take a deep breath in. See if you can notice how the air feels in your nose. Then as you breathe out through your mouth, say buzzzzzzz quietly for as long as you can. Repeat six times, with different sounds (such as hmmmmmm, or ahhhhhhh). Many other exercises are available online.

*Sarah Simnett*

