



RAF Benson Community Primary School



Newsletter

Thursday 05 September 2024

Dear Parents,

Welcome back to an new school year and a very warm welcome to our new children and families! I hope that you all had an amazing summer break and are able to cling on to the warm summer memories – I am writing this as the rain is thundering on the roof of my office and many of you are outside collecting your children. Summer seems to be well and truly over.

We have had two really productive training days and the team have worked hard to get the rooms and curriculum ready for a fabulous year ahead – one we are very much looking forward too and hope you and your children are too.

Over the summer we sadly said farewell to Mrs Mason in her role as Finance and Personnel Officer. I am sure you will join me in thanking her for all she has done and wish her well in her new adventure. We have recruited, for an interim period, Mr Hastings to this role and I am sure you will give him a warm welcome as you see him around school.

Here are a few messages, reminders of some key dates and some bits of information. Please get a nice warm cuppa or a beverage of your choice before settling down to have a read:

13 September – Battle of Britain Day. We are asking children to come dressed in clothes of that period and there will be an exhibition in the school hall with work that reflects that time. Parents will be very welcome to come and view the exhibition of battle of Britain work which will be at 9am on that day in the school hall.

25 September – Meet the Teacher Meetings. Please save the date for this event – we are currently discussing the final format of this as we would love to have as many of you at this and we might have a small tweak or two to hopefully make that happen for you all. Watch this space!

6 November – Parents Evening. This takes place in the school hall with classrooms open for viewing books and work. Online booking will open 1 week ahead of this date.

WC 11 November – Learn With Your Child . We will be having a Learn with you child week again where we invite you into class to take part I a lesson with your child. A time table of sessions will be issued closer the time.

Nativity dates for children in Reception, Years 1 and 2 are in the process of being confirmed with the Station Church and we will be back in touch with you once this is complete.

Parent Helpers – we were delighted to have parent helpers in school last year who came in to help with reading, learning activities and school trips across many year groups. We are looking to increase help and support this year as it makes such a difference. We will need to provide you with some training ahead of starting and we may need to use you in other classes to where your child is so that we are using your skills to support the greater need. If you are interested in supporting learning in school, please drop an email to the school office.

School Lunches – A reminder that should you wish your child to have a school lunch, these must be ordered by 11pm the day before. Children in KS2 pay for school lunches whereas Reception, Years 1 and 2 have meals provided by the government and these are free. If you have not

provided a packed lunch for your child and they are not on the list for a hot school meal, we will contact you to bring in a packed lunch by 12pm – we do appreciate that from time to time parents do forget to order lunches, however, the school kitchen is not able to make additional meals this year due to increases in costs etc. Thank you for your help with this.

If your child has an allergy, you must let the School Lunch Company know and they will provide you with a form to complete. We do have many children in school with a variety of allergies and we ask that children do not come into school with any nut products, including chocolate spread on sandwiches. Thank you for helping keep our children safe.

If your child has a packed lunch, our procedure is that they keep the rubbish and left over food in their lunch box so that you can see what they have/have not eaten. This is working well as, in the past, parents were unaware that some children were throwing unwanted food away and we hope this continues to be helpful to you in knowing what your child has eaten.

Contact with school – As a reminder, should you need to speak with a member of our fabulous staff team, all teachers are available first thing in the morning when the children arrive in school and at the end of most days (unless they are running a club or have a staff meeting). Outside of these times they can be contacted by email via the school office or telephone.

We are really keen to ensure that we have strong, open and clear communication with you as parents and that we have positive relationships to benefit the children in school. All staff have a code of conduct on how we are presenting ourselves both to each other and to our community and as a LA school, we have the same for parents too to ensure a positive relationship. Please see our parent code of conduct at the link below which is issued on enrolling at our school and is on our website: <https://primarysite-prodsorted.s3.amazonaws.com/rafbenson/UploadedDocument/0e477afe-536e-4aed-bcfaeb5a2dde57d0/parent-code-of-conduct-sept-2023.pdf>

Raising Concerns - If you have any concerns, the first port of call is to see the class teacher and we ask that parents come in with an enquiry and discussion based approach rather than a blame approach. If, after seeing the class teacher things don't appear to have changed, please see the class teacher again to identify what has taken place since the last meeting. If you are not happy at this point then parents are welcome to make an appointment to see me. Further information can be found in our raising concerns/ complaints policy here: <https://primarysite-prodsorted.s3.amazonaws.com/rafbenson/UploadedDocument/42336987-81f7-464a-a757-fb62c576a8ff/draft-complaints-procedure-dec-2022.pdf>

Attendance – The attendance policy is in the process of being updated to reflect the new guidance will be in place from 19 August 2024 and this will be circulated once it has been signed off by governors. In the meantime, we will be issuing the holiday warning letter from the LA as we do at the start of the new school year.

Thank you to parents last year for engaging positively with our Attendance Policy and for appreciating and understanding that we have a duty to inform you when your child has low attendance or is deemed a persistent absentee.

The expectation is that children should be in school for 100% of the time however, we understand that bugs and other circumstances prevent this from happening and has an impact on good attendance. We will be notifying you when attendance is below 95% and also if your child becomes a persistent absentee (where attendance drops below 90%). In the first term, your child may become a persistent absentee if they have 3.5 days off or more however, over time with good attendance, this figure will significantly improve.

Here is the link to the Annual Penalty Notice letter we have to issue to all parents as requested by the local Authority. Please do read it carefully as it contains changes from the previous one in line with recent guidance. <https://primarysite-prod->

Thank you for all you do to help your child be in school every day. Learning in the primary years is key as they are building the foundations for their future years and positive outcomes. Should you have any questions, please do ask.

Uniform – Just like our community, we pride ourselves on our school uniform and looking smart and tidy. We would be really grateful if your child came to school in the correct uniform and please see the school uniform page for more details: <https://www.raf-benson.oxon.sch.uk/school-uniform-2/>

Mobile Phones – A reminder that mobile phones are not to be used on the school premises please. This request stems from not only a safeguarding perspective but also seeing children enthusiastic to share their day with parents who are walking off on their phone. It has been so lovely since bringing this in to see parents and children positively chat about their day and we want this to continue with your support.

School Car Park –The school car park is not for use by parents at the start and end of the day as it is for staff and visitor use only. This is also to mitigate any incidents as children walk across this space to get to school by limiting moving vehicles at peak times. We appreciate that many parents walk to school due to the close proximity, however, should you need to arrive in a car we ask that you use the Station car park between the school carpark and nurse building. If you are picking up or dropping off your child up for an appointment during school hours, then we are happy for you to use the car park for this purpose. We will be monitoring this so that children and adults walking to school remain safe in this space.

Deadlines – We are really grateful when parents meet the deadlines that the office staff issue and we would like to ask that all of our parents are able to do this please. The school office is a very busy place and the staff do not have time to chase parents for forms, payments or other information. We do appreciate that from time to time deadlines do slip, however, we would be really grateful if everyone could do their best to support the staff in the office by adhering to the deadlines they set.

What is your child learning? – As a reminder, class teachers will update the class web page with photographs during the term to reflect what your child has been learning in class. At the start of each term, you will receive a Topic Web which will share with you the areas that the children will be looking at over the next term and you will also get a Knowledge Organiser which details the key facts that the children should be able to know and remember by the end of the term. Please feel free to rehearse these facts with your children to support their learning in school. These documents will also be put on the class web page too.

Cycle Safety – We like to ensure that the children are moving about to community safely and provide Bikeability sessions for children in Year 5 and 6 which are coming up over the next few weeks. However, please could you all speak with your children about cycling around the community in a safe way. There have been ‘near misses’ outside of school hours and unrelated to school where some children were almost hit by a car as they shot out of an exit really fast without looking. We will continue to speak to the children in school about keeping themselves safe however, it would be great if road awareness and safety was reinforced at home. Thank you for your support.

I think that is it for the start of this term. Sorry this is a newsletter of epic proportion – we just wanted to ensure you have all the information for the start of the year – we will be feeding the odd reminder into newsletters over the year.

It has been so lovely to welcome you all back and I look forward to seeing you around school over the coming weeks.

As always, should you have any questions, please do get in touch.

Best wishes

Steph Fawdry

Steph Fawdry
Headteacher