

NEWSLETTER 1 – 7th September 2018

Dear Parents, Pupils & Governors,

Welcome to the new school year – everyone arrived looking smart in their uniforms. Thank you to all the parents who encouraged their children to complete work over the holidays and take part in the library Reading Challenge. I would like to thank Mr Littleford and his team for their hard work over the summer in preparing the school building for the start of term, the school looks fabulous.

Over the holiday an Early Years activity area was installed. The suppliers need to return to replace some of the components and install the surfacing so we hope it will be available to use by the end of this half term. A big thanks to the Perkins Educational Trust and the BSA for funding the project.

Term Time Holiday Information from Attendance Compliance Enforcement Service – Please read the attached page outlining the Warwickshire County Council policy on term time leave of absence.

Reception Class - Reception children have made a really good start, thanks to parents for preparing them for this big step and to the BSA for helping our new parents with a welcoming coffee morning.

Contact Details & Consent (GDPR) – Your child has brought home an envelope containing:

- **Data collection sheets**– the information requested has changed in line with GDPR - please check the detail carefully and amend as required. Safeguarding regulations require us to have at least **2** emergency contacts.
- **Consent forms** – for recording & use of images (KS1 & KS2) and for data sharing (KS2). Please complete the forms for each of your children.

Signed forms should be returned by Friday 14th Sep at the latest. Our Privacy Notice detailing how we use information about children is on our school website.

School Safety – There has been a near miss on the road outside school with children crossing the road between cars. Please ensure you use the crossing to keep our children safe.

Sims Agora - During last term users were given the opportunity to migrate to the new system or skip until next logon. After a number of skips a new activation code is required. Contact the office for a new activation code if you now need one.

Governor Vacancy – We currently have a vacancy for a Parent Governor – please see the separate letter for more details.

Reminders:

- **School Meals** – The price of a school meal is £2.30 for children in KS2 and are free for children in Reception & KS1. Families of children entitled to income dependent free school meals should still register so that we can claim Pupil Premium of up to £1390 to help support your child in school. Please go to www.warwickshire.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals to apply or contact us in confidence for further information. *Delibags* are available for children in Reception and KS1. These must be ordered at morning registration and orders cannot be changed at lunchtime.
- **Bump Notes** –We send home a ‘bump note’ if a child has any kind of bump to the head during school time (however minor), so that parents can look out for any possible after effects.
- **Water Bottles** – All children should bring in a named water bottle each day. Do not send in juice.

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- **Nut Allergies** - Several children in school have severe nut allergies. Please help us ensure their safety by not including any nut products in packed lunches.
- **Milk** – If you would like your child to receive milk during the school day, please apply online at www.coolmilk.com. Children who are **under 5** receive free milk, but parents still need to apply online. Children who qualify for welfare free school meals are also entitled to free milk – please ask at the office.
- **Book Bags** – Children in KS1 should use bookbags for transporting books to and from school. Please do not use a rucksack.
- **Reading Books** – Please check at home for school reading books that you may still have.
- **Clothing** - All children should have a coat for playtimes and come into school in their full PE kit on their PE days (not Reception). Please ensure everything is named – we have already had some mislaid items!
- **School website** – Please use our website (www.bidfordonavon.warwickshire.sch.uk) to find lots of useful information about school including term dates, diary dates, dinner menus, newsletters, activities and policies.

Clubs – During the year we provide a variety of after school activities. Some of these are privately run by external providers who take responsibility for the children and charge a fee.

- French Club (for all years) starts Mon 10th Sept 3.20 – 4.20pm (fee payable)
- Girls Football (for Years 3-6) starts Tues 11th Sept 3.20–4.30pm
- Artbase Year (for Years 1–6) starts Tues 11th Sept 3.20 – 4.20pm (fee payable)
- Dodgeball (for Years 3 & 4) starts Thur 13th Sept

Letters are available from the office and details of other clubs will follow over the next few weeks.

Dates for your Diary –

- *Bidford Gardening Society Annual Show* – is being held at the Crawford Hall on Sat 8th Sept with a veggie monster competition for children which should be taken in between 11am and 12.30pm.
- *Year 3 Swimming lessons* start on Weds 12th Sept, please send your child to school in their PE kit, contribution per week is £3.40 which can be made online or at the office.
- *The 'Bidford Bash'* is being held on Sat 15th Sept, on the Big Meadow. Family fun with stalls, rides, live music, raffle, food stalls, bars, Zorbing and lots more.
- *Individual pupil photographs* will be taken (where consent has been given) on Tues 9th Oct.
- *School Open Mornings* for prospective parents will be on Tues 16th Oct 10 to 11.30am and 1.30 to 3pm.
- *Teacher Training Day* (school closed to children) on Friday 26th October.

Book of the Week – Children in Mrs Ellwood's class have been reading 'Harry and the Dinosaurs go to School' by Ian Whybrow. It is Harry's first day at school. He and his dinosaurs are very excited and perhaps a little bit nervous. But when Harry's dinosaur friends don't join him in the classroom, Harry is not so sure he's going to like school.....

Mr A Simms

LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME

UPDATED INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

The Supreme Court recently reached a decision in the case of Platt v Isle of Wight Council which has clarified the law on unauthorised leave, including holidays, during term time. The parents of children of compulsory school age are required to ensure that they attend school on a regular basis. The Supreme Court has made clear that attending school 'regularly' means that the children must attend school on every day that they are required to do so. As such, the parents of any child who is absent from school without authorisation for any length of time are likely to be considered as committing an offence under s444 of the Education Act 1996.

Head Teachers retain the ability to authorise leave in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. When considering such requests for a leave of absence, the school are obliged to act within the law. Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application. If the leave is granted, head teachers are able to determine the number of school days a child can be absent for.

It is for the Head Teacher to decide what is 'exceptional' and it is at their discretion if the circumstances warrant the leave to be granted. The school can only consider Leave of Absence requests which are made by the 'resident' parent.

Each application for a leave of absence will be considered on a case by case basis and on its own merits.

Where applications for leave of absence are made in advance and refused, the child will be required to be in school on the dates set out in the application. If the child is absent during that period, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence, which may result in legal action being taken against the parent(s), by way of a Fixed Penalty Notice.

Failure to make an application for leave in advance can also result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued to the parent(s).

All matters of unauthorised absence relating to a Leave of Absence will be referred to the Attendance, Compliance and Enforcement Service of Warwickshire County Council

It is important to note, Fixed Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each absent child, (for example 2 children and 2 parents, means each parent will receive 2 invoices in the amount of £120 each, totalling £240 for both children, this is reduced to £60 per child if paid within 21 days).

Where a Fixed Penalty Notice is not paid within the required timeframe as set out on the notice, the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council's Legal Services to consider instigating criminal proceedings under S444 Education Act 1996.

Fixed Penalty Notices are issued in accordance with Warwickshire County Council's Code of Conduct for Penalty Notices.

Your child's progress academically as well as socially is our shared priority

Warwickshire Primary School pupils recorded 29,703 half day sessions of absence due to holiday in the Autumn/Spring term during the academic year 2017/18. This is an increase of 6,256 on the previous year.

The latest from Bidford School Association...

Welcome to the new school year!

The BSA would like to warmly welcome all new and returning families to our school. We have lots of fun events throughout the year and the first will be an Autumn Disco.

**All are welcome to our AGM on Thursday,
4th October at 7pm in the ICT Suite.**

We will be appointing a new Chair as Emily will be standing down after four years. We hope to see lots of parents / carers at the meeting to help vote in the next Chair!

If you have any questions, please get in touch as below.

The BSA Committee:
Emily, Glenda, Milly and Sue
Emily Lee – Chair (07989323997)

Glenda Vassie – Vice-Chair (07928656855)
Milly Deguara – Secretary
Sue Woodward – Treasurer