

Dear Parents,

**Staffing**

We are delighted to have appointed Mrs Radnedge as a learning support assistant to cover Ms Salmon's long term absence. Mrs Radnedge will work in Reception in the mornings and mainly with KS2 children in the afternoons. Miss Lockwood also joins us this term as a play-helper and support assistant in the afternoons. We hope both will settle in quickly and find their time at Bledlow Ridge School happy and fulfilling.

**SATs Week 11<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> May**

The week beginning 11<sup>th</sup> May is a crucially important time for Year 6 as they take their end of Key Stage 2 national tests. The children have been working hard to revise and practise their English and Maths, but they do all need to be in school every day that week as there is no opportunity for re-sitting these examinations at a later date. Even if they feel unable to stay the whole day, please ensure they attend school in the mornings. Year 2 continue to be assessed on a formal and informal basis for their Key Stage 1 SATs, but there is greater flexibility over the timing. 'Optional' SATs for pupils in Years 3-5 will take place during the week of 15<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> June. Along with most other schools, we use these tests to track progress throughout Key Stage 2, so pupils in those years also all need to be present that week please.

**Phonics Screening Check 15<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> June**

The week of 15<sup>th</sup> June is also an important week in the school calendar, since all Year 1 pupils and some Year 2 pupils will take their statutory Phonics Screening Check.

**Barton Hall Class 4 Residential Visit – Voluntary Helpers needed!**

Class 4 (Years 5 and 6) are going on a Residential visit to Barton Hall, in Devon, from 22<sup>nd</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> June and the children are really looking forward to it.

However, our plans to staff this visit have unfortunately had to be changed as Mr Haywood will be on paternity leave, Mrs Sond will have to be looking after her own children and Ms Salmon will not be back at work. I will lead the party as usual and Miss Harris has agreed to come, but we will require two volunteers from any parents or governors willing and able to help on the residential, including at least one male (for legal reasons). Please would you get in touch if you feel able and willing to come away with Class 4 in June for that week, or even to discuss the possibility of what might be involved? PGL staff teach the skills and organise all the activities; but we need responsible adults to care for the children and encourage them throughout the day. Parent / governor voluntary helpers could have some time off during the day and in the evenings for work purposes if necessary. Naturally all adults would have to be DBS checked. Taking children away on residential visits is pretty exhausting but immensely rewarding.

There will be an important Barton Hall meeting for all Class 4 parents and pupils on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> June at 7.30.

**Class 3 Swimming**

We are delighted to be able to offer to teach non-swimmers in Class 3 the opportunity to learn to swim, after many years of no school swimming, following the enforced closure of our own school pool. With the new National Curriculum, comes the requirement for schools to ensure pupils are able to swim 25 metres. When we had our own pool, we were extremely fortunate in being able to offer swimming lessons from Reception to Y5, as a normal part of the PE curriculum. However, as you will no doubt realise, the cost of transport, tuition and entry for all pupils to a public swimming pool on a weekly basis, would be prohibitive. Governors have therefore sought to find a solution, using a combination of Government Sports Funding and a small voluntary contribution from parents. As a trial for this summer term, we have decided to take Class 3 non-swimmers to Risborough Springs Swimming Pool for swimming lessons, whilst the remainder of the class also have a PE lesson, albeit in school. I realise that some parents feel this is very unfair and that we should be taking all the class, perhaps on a two weekly cycle, but I hope they will understand that this initiative is simply to teach the basics to those unable to swim more than 5 metres, not to offer swimming as a normal part of the PE curriculum, and the primary reason for this is simply financial. Just this term's provision for twenty pupils will cost £1196!

**School Lunches**

Unfortunately the County Council are still having difficulties providing infant hot school lunches. Part of the problem lies in the uncertainty over the future funding of this coalition government initiative. The County Council and schools are unwilling to commit to funding £2.30 per child per day in the event that the grant is withdrawn. Equally understandably, the meals provider does not want to spend huge amounts of capital expenditure on setting up school kitchens without the guarantee of income in the longer term. Negotiations continue, but for now we are informed that it is extremely unlikely any hot meals will be possible this academic year.

**Inset Days - Monday June 3<sup>rd</sup> and Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> June**

School will finish at the normal time of 3 p.m. on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> May and re-open for children on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> June at 8.40 a.m.

## Clubs

If you would like your children to attend any 'school organised' clubs this summer term, you need to send in a club request form, even if your child has already been a member of the club previously. In addition to the variety of clubs you were informed about at the end of last term, Mrs Sond has very kindly agreed to run a Class 4 Cross Country Club on Monday afternoons until 4 p.m.

## Art Week – 3<sup>rd</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> June

Art Week from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> June will be a hugely enjoyable time for pupils. This year, our theme is 'Voyages' and the children will participate in a range of group and individual art projects, using a wide range of differing techniques and media. It is a wonderful opportunity for them to try something new and develop skills in all sorts of areas, not just artistic. In Art Week, and indeed in real life, children need useful attributes such as patience, perseverance, resourcefulness, and the ability to get on with and work with others. If you have any resources that you think might be useful for us during Art Week, please do get in touch.

## SSAP / 11+ Meeting Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> June

On Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> June at 7.30 p.m. there is a meeting for all Year 5 parents and any other parent who might be interested, to give information on the 11+ and Secondary School Allocation Procedure (SSAP) for Secondary School entry in September 2016. This is very important, particularly for parents of our present Year 5 pupils and I would urge you all to attend.

## New Parents' Meeting Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> July

If you have younger children due to start Bledlow Ridge School in September 2015, then please note the date of our New Parents' Meeting at 7.30 on 2<sup>nd</sup> July. As usual I shall outline policy and procedures, and give parents the opportunity to meet each other and the Reception teachers.

## Forthcoming BRSA Events

I'm sure you don't need reminding about the Ridge off Roader on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> April and the School Fete on Saturday July 4<sup>th</sup> from 12 – 3 p.m. The Ridge off Roader Team is still in need of help on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> April, particularly for ten additional adults to help with marshalling the course. If parents haven't decided whether or not to run, the organisers would prefer the help with marshalling. Perhaps you could involve friends, neighbours or other members of your extended family? Bledlow Ridge School is a very good cause to support. Many thanks to the parents who have organised such a big event - let's hope for fine weather!

## Parking Problems in School Car Park

It has come to my attention that at pick-up time, there are often four or five parents double-parked in the car park, thereby blocking in the cars that are appropriately parked in designated spaces. Also, the line of cars sometimes extends out of the car park and along Church Lane back to the main Chinnor Road. For the safety of the children and to prevent inconveniencing others correctly parked, I should remind you of the Governors' Parking Policy, a copy of which you all received when your children started at Bledlow Ridge School, and which is attached to this newsletter. Here are the relevant paragraphs:

*'Enter the car park from the Old School end and leave by the Studio end.'*

*The police have indicated that where possible it is safer to reverse park into a space as this avoids the need to reverse and requires less manoeuvring on departure from the car park when there may be children around. It would also improve the flow of traffic through the car park. Please park for the minimum time possible, and never park to obstruct the free passage of cars from the entrance to the exit.*

*Having a child at school does not guarantee a space in the car park, treat the car park as you would a commercial car park i.e. if there is not a space do not park, park elsewhere and walk.'*

## Dates for Next Year

I attach the next two years term dates for your information, but here is the link in case you would find this more helpful.

Academic Year 2015-2016 PDF (70 Kb)

Academic Year 2016-2017 PDF (51 Kb)

On a personal note, I should like to thank everyone for their kindness and good wishes for recovery during my absence last term. It is lovely to be back!

Yours sincerely

R T Rochefort  
Headteacher