



Head Teacher's Welcome



Spring is well and truly here and the extreme temperatures and snow and ice just a distant memory now! Amazingly, Easter is only a few short weeks away!

Richard Culham

Snow Closure



As I write this it was only 2 weekends ago that we were wearily trudging through the sludge. A few days before that, schools were faced with what is always a difficult decision to make – do we trust the weather forecast?

It's not that our meteorologists aren't good at their jobs (although I am old enough to remember the famous forecast of 1987 when Michael Fish told us confidentially that there was no storm on the way!) but our weather can be unpredictable and change quickly and quite dramatically at times. In the end at 7 am I spoke to our Chair of Governors to say that I was going to close the school at 1 pm. I would make a decision about Friday once we could see the way the weather was going. In addition to the children's safety the other factor for me is whether we can safely get enough staff into school to be able to open. We have teachers who live in Bridgewater, Taunton, Cheddar, Mere and Dorchester amongst other lovely parts of the South West! They also have to be able to get home.

A little over 75% of our school roll came into school which is great. English and Maths lessons were carried out successfully, Year 5 went swimming and everyone had lunch and then went home. It all felt very continental!!

I hope that our planning helped you as well as I know lots of businesses opened for much of the day too. I also hope though that there was also plenty of chance to play in the snow!!

Safeguarding

We take the children's safety very seriously here at Birchfield and we are constantly reviewing our procedures so that we can improve them. One area that I have noticed recently is that I want our gates closed earlier in the mornings. At the moment Zac, the Year 6 whose job it is, locks them once the register is called. I will be asking him to lock them from 9 am. That still gives you 5 minutes to complete any business at the School Office. After 9 am you will have to leave by the front gate.

Thank you also for your support on not using mobile phones on the school premises.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Pre-School, Breakfast Club and Tea Time Club

The first piece of news is that our new Pre-School on the Bucklers Mead site will not be opening as early as we had hoped because of a badger set in the area. Once their breeding season is over we hope to be able to start work on updating and improving the provision and get it ready to open.

We have, though, seen a very healthy rise in applications for our current Pre-School. In order to meet the increased demand we are going to re-open the previous building but as a setting for our 4 year olds as a "School readiness" setting. Our current setting will continue as a setting for 2 and 3 year olds. More information on this will be sent to Pre-School parents / carers this week.

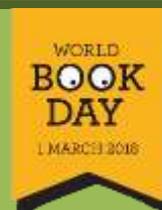
This will mean that our Breakfast and Tea Time clubs will need to move to their previous setting, the "Music" hut. Again more information about this will be given later this week.

Uniform

I have just spent a frustrating 30 minutes with one of our wonderful Year 6's whose job it is to collect all of the coats left abandoned in the Playground at the end of lunchtime and try to return them to their owner. It was frustrating because of the 6 coats that he found the hard working Kieran could only return one coat as it was the only one with a name in it!

Please label your children's clothing!

World Book Day



Although for many this was interrupted by the snow we here at Birchfield decided that we would celebrate World Book Day – by reading! As you know we are recording every word that the children read and keeping a total. By last Friday we were 132nd in the country having read 67551 words. We still have 2 weeks to go – keep reading children and let's get even higher up the leader board!!

Car Parking – Community Centre

Parking around school remains a major issue for us all. Even with more yellow lines having been painted and with the Traffic Warden visiting more often we still get people parking illegally! I really don't understand why our children's safety isn't more of a concern for some.

On the same note, we have again been asked by our friends at the Community Centre to ask you **not to park** in their car park or in front of their gates. Your support in this would be greatly appreciated. Hopefully with summer just around the corner more people will be keen to walk to school!

Staff News

We say 'farewell' to **Miss Marker** from Reception who is leaving at the end of term to start a new job closer to home and to **Mrs Richards** from Pre-School. We wish them all the very best.

We 'welcome' **Mrs Horsey** who has been appointed as our Finance Assistant. We hope she enjoys her time with us.



to **Miss Mathieson (6BM)** and **Miss Griffiths (LSA)** who are getting married over the Easter holidays. We hope they have a lovely day.

Attendance - Medical Appointments

The number of day time medical appointments has reduced - thank you, this will greatly help your child's attendance figures and to encourage a positive attitude to school. Can I please remind everyone that if you have no option other than to make a day time appointment though, then please ensure that the Office know and see the appointment card.

Child Sexual Exploitation Awareness Day

CSE Awareness Day is **18 March 2018**. All Somerset schools have been asked to inform parents of this day as an important part of their Safeguarding responsibilities.

Please follow this link for more information www.nwgnetwork.org/event_type/national-cse-awareness-day-2018/

Leaflets will be available from the school office and information is on our school website under the 'Safeguarding' tab.

Date for your Diary

Mon 19 – Fri 23 March: Sports Relief Week – School Councillors will be running an event (further details to follow)

Wed 21 Mar: Y5 Viking Boat Day

Fri 23 March: INSET Day and start of Easter holidays

Mon 9 April: School re-opens

Wed 11 – Fri 13: Y3 residential trip

Thurs 12 April: Y6 swimming starts
FoBS meeting 3.30 pm

Sun 15 – Sat 21 April: Erasmus trip to Italy

Fri 20 April: Non school uniform day – gifts for Bingo hampers (further information to follow)

Mon 23 – Tue 24 April: Y2 trip to Gore Farm

Fri 27 April: FoBS Easter Bingo (further details to follow)

Tue 8 – Wed 9 May: Y1 trip to Gore Farm

Mon 14 – Fri 17 May: Y6 SAT's