



Head Teacher's Welcome



I am writing this at the tail end of our glorious Easter holiday – I hope that you enjoyed some good quality family time.

Richard Culham

ParentPay



Over 70% of you have now signed up for this and we have received some very positive feedback already.

For those of you who have not signed up yet it is important that you do as soon as possible because increasingly we will be adding new areas for payments such as trips, visits and school residential journeys.

This is also the way that all school meals need to be ordered – even if you don't currently pay for them. This will help reduce waste food and reduce paper.

If you have any questions about ParentPay then please do contact the School Office.

Parking Outside of School

Every school that I have worked at has had this problem! When older schools were designed little thought was given to the huge expansion in car use and of parking!

Previously you were given permission to park at Birchfield Church for dropping off and picking up and some staff were able to park there all day. The Church has now changed ownership and function and the new owners have decided to limit its use by charging which will also help them cover any costs. The letter that they have sent us about this is now on our website with a copy of the downloadable booking form under 'Latest News'. The new system starts on the 6th May.

In this fine weather perhaps parking a little further away and walking is a better answer!

Email Address and Contact Details

I intend for all letters to be sent home electronically before too long. Some schools already do this and it seems to work well. Please ensure that we have an up to date email address for you and that you keep us informed of any changes to contact details.

We are also looking at a school app that will work from Smartphones and when this is launched it will also be a way of accessing school news and letters.

Hot Weather



I'm aware that the forecast is for "changeable" weather but in the hope that summer hasn't disappeared for this year can I please remind you that sun hats, water bottles, sun screen and school uniform summer clothes are very much advised for the summer months. Can I, again, please ask you to write your child's name into each item of clothing so that we can return it when it gets taken off and left in the playground when they get hot!

Attendance



Ofsted left us with one of our action points being to improve attendance and therefore I am requesting that everyone continues to try hard to avoid absences. In particular, at this time of year, I am referring to term time holidays which I know are considerably cheaper but do have a considerable negative impact on the children's learning.

Erasmus

Our 2 year involvement is fast coming to an end! We have 2 more trips both coming up very soon. Firstly we are taking 8 of our Year 5 children to Portugal for a week so that they can meet up with children from all of the 9 other European countries involved in the project and share and gain knowledge, skills and experiences. Shortly after that there is a teachers' trip to Lithuania to study their education system and see what can be learnt. It has been a fascinating project and of great benefit to Birchfield as 14 children will have had the opportunity to travel abroad and 10 staff will also have been able to gain valuable insight into education practices beyond our own!

We have just completed an application for a further project which will start next year ... fingers crossed for more great learning opportunities.

Staffing Updates

Congratulations firstly to *Danielle Barter* on the birth of Bethany and to *Ms Babiy* on the birth of Theodore. I'm very happy to report that all are well and thriving!

Sadly, our ICT technician *Sam Howie*, resigned somewhat suddenly just before Easter and has decided to return to his native Newcastle. His time with us was brief but he achieved a great deal in that time and his contribution will be very much missed.

Finally, 2 members of our wonderful Premises team *Marilyn and Derek Trim* retired at the end of last term after 17 and 10 years respectively. They were given a lovely send off with our huge thanks for their years of loyal service to the school.

Dates for your Diary

Thurs 25 April: Y6 swimming starts

Fri 26 April: Bingo evening

Mon 29 April: Reception trip to Axe Valley Wildlife Park

Mon 29 April: 4JR trip to Gore Farm

Tue 30 April: 4DP trip to Gore Farm

Fri 3 May: Book Bus (further information to be sent out)

Fri 3 May: FoBS selling Donuts at 3 pm

Sun 5 May: Erasmus trip fly out to Portugal

Mon 6 May: Bank Holiday – school closed

Tue 7 May: School re-opens

Tue 7 May: 1JW trip to Gore Farm

Wed 8 May: 1SA trip to Gore Farm

Sat 11 May: Erasmus trip return

Mon 13 – Thur 16 May: Y6 SATs

Thur 23 May: Birchfield Tournament

Fri 24 May: YR & Y6 Height and Weight measuring programme

Mon 27 – 31 May: Half Term holiday

Mon 3 June: School re-opens

Sat 29 June: School Fete 12 noon – 2.30 pm

Mon 1 July: KS2 Sports morning 9.30 am

Mon 1 July: KS1 Sports afternoon 12.30 pm

Tue 9 July: Reserve Sports Day for KS2 (am) KS1 (pm)

