

28.5.21

Dear Parents and Carers,

We have come to the end of a brilliant half term with sunshine on our faces and a really positive feel in the air. I've included a few updates for you all in this newsletter and would like to say that we are looking forward to an exciting last half term after the holiday.

Over the course of this term, we have had a big focus on significant people in history with the children learning about diverse characters such as Winston Churchill, Florence Nightingale and Queen Elizabeth II. Our weekly assemblies have been on the theme of celebrating and understanding diversity and cultural tolerance. This has linked well with two of our historic characters who were Martin Luther King Jnr and Rosa Parks who played such an important part in the civil rights movements of the 20th Century. The children's sense of fairness and tolerance has been amazing and their wish to not see prejudice in our society is very strong. We are all really proud of them.

Trust School Review

Richard Light, our Director of Primary School Improvement, visited the school for two days to carry out a review of how we are doing. In previous roles, Richard was a Primary Headteacher, an OFSTED inspector and then a Senior HMI for the Department of Education. He was very positive about the improvements the school has made over the last year and said some wonderful things about the children. These excerpts really stood out:

"The headteacher, deputy headteacher and all staff have worked tirelessly to redress historical issues identified in the curriculum. A 'root and branch' overhaul prompted a re-think about the content of the curriculum and how it is implemented. The five values of 'belonging, curiosity, sustainability, creativity and empowerment', now form the bedrock of curriculum decisions."

"Children's behaviour has improved markedly since February 2020 because of more consistent approaches to teaching, behaviour management and the use of adults in class. Actions are resulting in a highly positive culture of respect at the school. Children are calm, orderly, and polite and engaged in their learning. They enjoy coming to school as seen in their improved attendance."

"School leaders should be rightly proud of the achievements of the past year, particularly given the demands of the global pandemic. The school's achievements should now be celebrated. Parents and carers should be made fully aware of the improved quality of education and culture now experienced by children at the school."

SAFE, RESPECTED AND READY TO STEP OUT INTO THE WORLD

Belong

Creative

Sustainability

Curious

Empowered

School Gardener

You may have seen a new member of staff busy in the school garden over the last few weeks. Libby Hamilton has joined the team and will be working some afternoons developing and improving the school grounds. This is part of a wellbeing project that has been supported by Buckfastleigh Town Council. We hope to make the outside spaces a wonderful place for children and staff to be in and Libby is leading on this. Groups of children will be working with her over the coming months growing vegetables and supporting any other gardening jobs that need doing. Libby has also planned some volunteer days to get things under way. Check out the information on Class Dojo or email her on lhilton@buckfastleigh.devon.sch.uk if you would like to help.

New Parent Visits to School

We are starting to encourage new parents to visit the school over the coming term. If you know of a family who might be interested in sending their children to Buckfastleigh Primary School, please encourage them to give us a call. I will be doing tours of the school to show off the brilliant learning that the children are doing in every class.

Attendance

I would like to thank everyone for the good attendance we have had since we came back to school from lockdown. Over the last few years, the schools overall attendance has been around 95% which is below the National average. This year, it is much improved and we are currently at around 97%. Let's work together to keep that good attendance going!

Parking - Last week, I put a message in the newsletter about cars parking on New Road. This week, I have noticed a lot less cars parking there. Thank you so much for helping with this.

COVID in Half Term - As during previous holidays, we are continuing to monitor our school emails over the holiday in case any children or staff develop symptoms and test positive for COVID-19. Please email the school if you or a member of your household develops symptoms or tests positive. This will enable us to inform any direct contacts to self-isolate and keep everyone safe.

Clubs - Clubs will continue after half term on the same days. There are no changes at present.

Bags 4 Schools - Thank you to everyone who donated to the Bags 4 School charity. 90kg of unwanted clothing was donated and this raised £29 for FOBS.

Lunches - Please remember to book school dinners for after half term by next Thursday.

Have a great half term and take care,

Eddie Brown

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