



Enjoying our learning...
...aiming for excellence.

Bells Farm Primary School
Bells Farm Close, Druids Heath
Birmingham B14 5YG
Tel: 0121 675 8666
Headteacher: Miss T Williams

Dear Parent / Carer,

It has been wonderful to welcome our children back and see how quickly they have settled back into routine. The children were very excited, in their first assembly back, to discover a large range of playground equipment has been purchased for them to enjoy! We now have a huge selection of PE resources the children can access at lunch time to keep them moving and happy. We have tried to purchase items that will appeal to all children; a range of balls and beanbags, target games, ribbons for creative dance and even a parachute! Our playleaders are also very excited about all the possibilities for the new equipment. You can see pictures of them enjoying the new equipment on our school website.

Wraparound Care

I would just like to take this opportunity to remind you that wraparound care should be used solely for **essential childcare**. Recently we have had cases of parents who have no alternative childcare not being able to book, because children are taking up spaces and attending unnecessarily. Our aim as a school is to support parents with our wraparound care to enable them to access work or education. We can only do this if other parents help us to do so. As I said before Christmas, if you are in this difficult position please do contact us and we will be happy to discuss potential solutions to support.

We are also having a lot of bookings for places that are then only used for a short time. This makes things very difficult for staff as we book food and prepare it for all the children who are booked in for the evening. As a result of this issue, we are now going to fall in line with how wraparound care works in most settings now and begin charging for the booking that has been made. This has been a difficult decision to make as I know sometimes circumstances can change. However, a lot of school money is being wasted on providing places for children that are not then needed and likewise spaces are being taken up by children by people who are block booking and then not using the space.

We are going to give a two week grace period which should allow for cancellation of any bookings that you are not planning on using. From Monday 29th January, the new rule will be that if you have booked for breakfast club or after school club **you will need to pay**, regardless of whether your child has attended or not. If you do not pay, then your child will not be able to attend wraparound care, as per the agreement set out at the beginning of the year. If you need to cancel any bookings and are unable to do so on the school app for any reason, please get in touch

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with the school office who will be happy to help. Hopefully this will mean after school club will be able to function in everyone's best interests.

You will continue to be refunded if your child has been absent from the school and you have booked for that day of absence beforehand. **No other bookings will be refunded after Monday 29th January.** It is your responsibility to book for the time you will need to use. Thank you for your understanding with this.

Curriculum, maps, and knowledge organisers

Teachers have been working hard preparing their newsletters to share our curriculum with you and these will be sent out on Monday. You will receive this letter in paper form as attached will be a copy of the knowledge organisers for this term. Teachers will send a knowledge organiser for Science, History and Geography. This is so you can support your child at home with learning the key facts that appear on their knowledge organisers and talking to them about the vocabulary. We thank you in advance for your support with this

A full version of our curriculum maps is available on our school website. These will be updated by Monday for the spring term. These maps go into even more detail about what specifically your child will be learning across the term, including knowledge, skills, aims and objectives to help you to understand more about our school curriculum.

Attendance

As some of you will already be aware, letters were sent out at the beginning of this week regarding attendance last term. This is a standard letter that school has to send out to inform you of your child's attendance. As it stated in the letter, should you wish to discuss your child's attendance any further or you need support with your child attending school, then please get in touch with the school office to book an appointment with myself, Miss Hackett or Mrs Scott.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind you that it is a legal requirement that your child attends school every day, unless they are too unwell to do so. We will always send poorly children home and look after them while they await collection. We were hugely impacted by winter germs before the Christmas holidays and our attendance ended on 94.3%. As you are aware, by the end of this academic year our school target is 96%. We do hope once the winter germs are out of the way that attendance as a whole will improve.

We are also aware (following my letter on Monday) that there are cases of measles in the local area. We would strongly encourage you to take the advice given in that letter and ensure your

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child has been vaccinated. If you would like further support or guidance with this, please let us know.

I have continued to have requests for holiday absence to be granted as authorised. I would like to reiterate what I said in my letter in September and what it states on our school website. I am unable to authorise any holiday unless there are **exceptional circumstances**. These exceptional circumstances have to be shared with our board of governors so they truly do need to be exceptional. We understand it is difficult to arrange family holidays with the cost of living in holiday times but really do encourage you to do so.

Having said that, I would like to thank parents who have applied for holiday for their honesty in doing so and their understanding when the refusal letters have come through. It is so important that we continue to work together to ensure we know where every child is during term time. So, if you have chosen, as their parents, take them on holiday during term time, please do inform us of your decision to do so by filling in the form available from the school office. Should that holiday be more than five days in length, as per school policy and local authority guidance, you will be fined for taking your child out of school.

After School Clubs

Our selection of After School Clubs start on Monday and by now you will have received confirmation of the places your child has received. These clubs are always oversubscribed so please do try and be understanding if your child did not receive a place this time. If your child has a place, you will need to collect them promptly at 4:15. If you are continuously late for this collection, your child may lose their place in the club.

Book Breakfasts

Our Book Breakfast events are starting this term and we are very much looking forward to them. The dates allocated for your child's class are on the calendar below. It was lovely to see so many parents manage to join us in the autumn term for our reading, phonics and maths workshops. Children love sharing their school with parents and it's a real event when we have parents in school regardless of the activity taking place.

As you are aware, we are reading for pleasure school and the Book Breakfast event is to share our enthusiasm for reading with you as parents and offer a taster of some special activities our children enjoy in school. We do hope you'll be able to join us on this day. Please do send a family member on your behalf should you not be able to attend.

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As Mrs Calbreath has been poorly this week, we have been unable to arrange the Y4 Book Breakfast for the coming Monday so this will now take place on Monday 11th March.

Safeguarding

As you are aware, safeguarding is extremely high on our agenda as a school. It is our responsibility, and essentially mine, to ensure all children are safe at all points during the school day. I have had a few parents this week express their concern about football being played at the beginning of the school day. It has been reported that there were four different games happening this morning and it was difficult to avoid being in the path of footballs. I have therefore decided that football will no longer be permitted on the playground before school starts. This is for the safety of all children and I do hope you understand the reasons for this decision being made.

I would also like to remind you that, when the playground is busy, your child should not be on their scooter or bike. They should push it through the playground instead. If it is quiet and there is a clear path then this is not a problem.

Finally, I have attached a copy of our new arrival and collection policy. Please do take the time to read it to ensure you are clear on our expectations of your role and ours.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Arrival and collection policy

Kind regards,
Miss Williams
Headteacher

Dates for your Diary

* Please note – changes and additions are highlighted

Date	Event	Details
Monday 22 nd January	Y2 Book Breakfast	Details to follow
Monday 29 th January	Y5 Book Breakfast	Details to follow
Friday 26 th January	Young Voices	Letter sent – available on website
Monday 5 th February	Y6 Book Breakfast	Details to follow
Monday 5 th February	Year 1 trip to Synagogue	Letter sent – available on website

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Tuesday 6 th February	Year 2 trip to Mosque	Letter sent – available on website
Wednesday 7 th February	Y3 Book Breakfast	Details to follow
Thursday 8 th February	Year 4 trip to Buddhist Temple	Letter sent – available on website
Friday 9 th February	Year 5 trip to Gurdwara	Letter sent – available on website
Tuesday 20 th February	Year 6 trip to Birmingham Cathedral	Letter sent – available on website
Monday 26 th February	Y1 Book Breakfast	Details to follow
Monday 4 th March	Reception Book Breakfast	Details to follow
WC 11 th March	Book Fair in school	Details to follow
Monday 11 th March	Y4 Book Breakfast	Details to follow
Tuesday 9 th April	Year 3 trip to Shri Venkateswara Balaji Hindu Temple	Letter sent – available on website

* You can find a copy of this letter on our school website *

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