



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,

I hope this letter finds you and your family in good health and high spirits. As we begin this new academic year, it gives me great pleasure to extend a warm welcome to each one of you. It was so lovely to see the children arrive yesterday morning in their school uniforms, looking fresh and ready to learn. I do hope you had a relaxing holiday, but, like myself, I am sure you were ready to get the children back to school and into a routine!

I am truly proud to be writing to you for the first time as the Headteacher of Bells Farm, and I am excited about the incredible journey that lies ahead of us. I hope I can continue the amazing work Mrs Butterworth did for our school and keep the amazing family feel we have here at Bells Farm as it is truly a special place to be. Mr Ball (our new Deputy Head) and I are already working together to ensure everything is in place to ensure all children are safe and happy in school.

Our primary goal at Bells Farm is to provide a safe, nurturing, and stimulating environment where every child can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. We are dedicated to fostering a love for learning, encouraging curiosity, and helping your child discover their unique potential. This will continue to be my priority as Headteacher.

Throughout the year, you can expect open communication from us. Mr Ball and I believe that a strong partnership between home and school is vital for your child's success. Please feel free to reach out to us with any questions, concerns, or suggestions you may have. Your input is invaluable to us. I will be available each morning on the playground door and Mr Ball will be available on the front entrance. Miss Hackett and Mrs Johnson will also be available as needed.

As this letter is the first of the academic year, it will contain lots of important information and reminders. Therefore, we are sending a paper copy to ensure it has been received by all parents. However, we will continue with our primary method of communication being the school app. If you are new to us and haven't yet downloaded the school app, you will find all the information you need, including tutorials, on our school website: [School Gateway app – Bells Farm Primary School](#). It is essential all parents have the school app, as you will need to use it to book your child's lunch and all further communication will be via the app.

School Lunch

Thank you to those of you who have been booking your child's lunch using the school app. We would like to request that you also book as 'home packed lunch' if your child is bringing their own lunchbox. If your child is bringing lunch from home everyday then you are able to select home packed lunch for the whole school year. This can be changed if and when you wish them to have a school lunch.

Once your child has tried the three-week menu, we would like to request that you book for the term so we can order ingredients as needed. Please don't order school lunches for 2024 yet as our menu will change after Christmas to keep it fresh for the children. Booking will close at 8:00am each morning for that day. Bookings required after this point will need to go through the school office.

Wraparound Care

I will be sending a separate letter about wraparound care as there is a lot of information and new agreements for you to sign. In the meantime, **please book** both Breakfast Club and After School Club via the school app. We would ask that you only make use of these facilities **if you have no alternative childcare options**. We do have a legal responsibility to safeguard children meaning that numbers need to be capped. We never want to be in a position where we run out of spaces for parents who have no alternative childcare.

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Home School Agreement

Along with this letter you will find a new home school agreement. Having worked at Bells Farm for a while now, I know how keen you are to be involved in your child's education. This agreement is important for us to continue to work together and clarify our roles and responsibilities. Please share the information on the agreement with your child and sign to say you also agree before returning it to school. Children thrive the most when they see school and home working together, so I do hope you will support this new agreement.

Acceptable Use Agreement

When your child started Bells Farm, you were given a copy of our Acceptable Use Agreement (AUA). This needs to be in place to ensure children use devices in school appropriately. Our Computing and PSHE curriculums have been designed to ensure all children learn the importance of staying safe online. We also have our Digital Ambassadors and e-safety assemblies throughout the year, to raise awareness and understanding. You will find a copy of the AUA which has been shared with, and signed by, your child in class. This copy is for your information and does not need to be returned to school.

Punctuality and Parking

School opens for children at 8:50. The register is taken at 9:00. During those ten minutes your child is greeted by a teacher, has time to settle into class and they are then given an independent learning task to complete. We would therefore **strongly encourage** that you drop your child into school as close to 8:50 as you can.

I understand you may have difficulty parking in order to drop your child but wish to remind you that you are **unable to park at the front of school**. We do not own the land at the front of school; it belongs to the farmhouse, along with the parking spaces and they have now fitted removable bollards which restrict access. I know there were issues last year which I do not want to affect our working relationship with the staff at the farmhouse. I would really appreciate you being respectful of this and that you enter school via Brockworth Road if you are driving.

School Contacts

We would like to ask that you provide an extra contact in case of emergency. We would like your third contact to be someone that is available during the school day to take phone calls and collect from school; this may be a grandparent or aunt/uncle. It is extremely important we are able to contact someone for your child in the event they are ill or have an accident during the school day. If you already know we only have two contacts for your child, please send the information of a third contact into the school office. Over the next few weeks, our office staff will go through the records and get in touch with you if a third contact is required.

Uniform

It was lovely to see the children arrive in their smart uniforms, yesterday. This is just a polite reminder that it is an expectation that all children have the following uniform, as per school policy:

- Grey trousers or skirt
- Grey pinafore dress
- White shirt, blouse or polo shirt
- Navy blue jumper /cardigan, with school logo if possible
- Black shoes (black boots allowed in colder weather). Trainers can be worn, but must be all black
- Plain navy/black headscarf (for religious reasons)
- School book bag

PE

- Dark blue/black shorts and white t-shirt
- Black pumps
- One-piece swimming costume (girls KS2)
- Swimming trunks (boys KS2)

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*Tracksuit and trainers for outdoor PE in winter
Long hair must be tied back for health and safety reasons*

Attendance

A copy of our new attendance policy will be available on the school website from Monday and I would strongly encourage you to read it. Last year our whole school attendance was 94%. This is significantly below our school target of 96%. This year, we will be having a high focus on raising attendance to our target of 96%.

If your child is absent from school for any reason please contact the school office on 0121 675 8666 before 9:00 OR report absence via the school app. You must do this on every day of the period of absence. Mrs Butterworth contacted parents whose child was persistently absent at the end of the summer term. These children will be closely monitored this year and you should therefore expect a phone call and/or a safe and well check if we are unable to contact you. As a school, we have a legal responsibility to ensure your child receives their education and I hope we can work together on this, in the best interests of your child.

Please remember medical appointments should not be arranged during the school day, other than in exceptional circumstances. Dentists in particular can usually offer appointments after the school day and in the school holidays.

Updates and Changes

If your child is unable to do PE for any medical reason, they must bring a note from you to give to Mr Millar-Evans explaining the reason. This is to ensure no PE time is missed unnecessarily and that we are fulfilling our duty for your child to receive the correct amount of PE, whilst ensuring they are fit enough to do so. This letter should be handed to myself or Mr Ball to pass on.

I have adapted the food policy slightly as I am aware some children, try as we may, will just not drink water. We would prefer your child to be drinking than not, particularly in this late summer we appear to be having, so from now on children will be permitted to bring squash. Please do try to ensure it is 'no added sugar' and obviously our preference would still be for them to bring water.

Safeguarding

I am now the Designated Safeguarding Lead for Bells Farm. Ms Stoiber, Mrs Johnson and Miss Hackett are also trained DSLs and Mr Ball in completing his training this month and will therefore be a DSL from October. If there is anything you are concerned about relating to safeguarding, please make an appointment to see one of us through the school office. We know that safeguarding can be scary but we would like to be clear that it is about ensuring all children in our school community are safe and happy. We hope you are willing to work with us on this.

During the summer term, we were made aware of members of the public using our school playground to cut through to Brockworth Road. This could potentially be a safeguarding risk, as there will be times (e.g. when clubs end) when members of the public could try to gain entry to school. Due to this, we are arranging for number locks to be installed on the gates so that you will access the school playground by entering a code onto the number lock. When they have been installed, we will provide you with the code. The gate at the back of school by the woodland walk will no longer be used. While we await the new locks, we will continue to use the side gate and playground gate, but with a higher level of vigilance from staff. We would also ask that you support us with this by reporting anyone you think shouldn't be on the site to a member of staff, to enable us to maintain our high level of safeguarding.

We will no longer be using our password system for collecting children at the end of the day. This decision is for the safety of all children and follows a review of our safeguarding policy. At the moment, staff are still becoming familiar with parents and

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carers, so children will be asked who is collecting them as they are dismissed. Please do bear with staff while this happens and you become more familiar with each other. If someone other than a named school contact is collecting your child, you will need to inform the school office. This message will then be passed onto the classroom staff. If you haven't informed the school, then your child will not be released to anyone who staff do not recognise. They will be taken to the school office and a phone call will be made to seek verbal consent. We do hope you understand this is for the safety of all children.

Support

We would like to invite you into school on Monday 18th September at 3:00. This will be a chance for parents who are new to us (particularly our new Reception parents) to meet key members of staff who are available in school to offer support. We are keen to ensure relationships with parents are positive and that you understand we are able to help and support you in lots of different ways, in the best interests of your child. Along with myself and Mr Ball you will have the chance to meet:

Miss Hackett – Family Support Coordinator

Ms Stoiber – SENDCo

Mrs Johnson - Senior Learning Mentor

Clubs

After school clubs will begin week commencing 18th September. You will receive a separate letter next week. Clubs will be allocated on a 'first come, first serve' basis and you will only be able to access clubs if you have paid your £5 towards school fund.

I look forward to working with you further this year and please do not hesitate to get in touch with any questions or queries.

Kind regards,
Miss Williams
Headteacher

Dates for your Diary

We are currently updating our school calendar very regularly, as we try to arrange everything! The dates given here may be subject to change and you will receive further communication about events as the term progresses.

Date	Event	Details
Friday 15 th September	Class newsletters home Curriculum maps available on school website	
Monday 18 th September	New Parents 'Meet the Team' 3:00	
Friday 29 th September	Reception phonics meeting 2:30	Details to follow
Tuesday 3 rd October	Reception eye test	
Friday 6 th October	Y1 reading meeting 2:30	Details to follow
Monday 23 rd October	Whole school flu	Details to follow
Monday 13 th November	Anti-bullying week	Friday 17 th – wear spotty clothes for Children in Need
Tuesday 14 th November	School photos	
Friday 8 th December	Christmas Fayre	Details to follow
Friday 22 nd December	Christmas jumper day Christmas production Class parties	Details to follow

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