



Blundeston CEVC Primary School



A Place to Flourish

"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full" (John 10:10)

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School Newsletter – Friday 18th October 2024

Busy School Life – Celebrating Success and Children Flourishing

It has been lovely to see school as a hive of activity. The learning that I have been seeing across the classes so far this term is fantastic. The teachers have put an enormous amount of effort into making sure the curriculum fits the needs of the children at Blundeston, engaging them in topics that generate curiosity, wonder and awe.

A good example is the Space topic currently being taught in Y5. Mrs Houlgate arranged for a Planetarium to come into school to bring this topic to life and the opportunity for all year groups to access this was too good to overlook. Before its arrival, we **hoped** the children across the school would have an amazing time and after they had been, it was lovely to hear comments like, *'I wasn't that interested in space before but now I feel inspired to learn more about it.'* *'I enjoyed learning about the planets and seeing the stars in the Milky Way.'*



Equally, opportunities from the Mental Health Team to come in and talk to the Y3 & Y4 classes have been very inspiring. Hopefully, this has given the children more insight into how to take care of their mental health and well-being.



The Y6s have been having a great time learning about World War 2. They loved their dressing up day and had a wonderful trip to Flixton Aviation Museum. They have also been visited by an army veteran, who brought in a WW2 Jeep. It created a real buzz at the end of lunchtime as all the children outside were fascinated by its arrival. Most importantly for me was the **thoughtfulness** of the email he sent after his visit:

Dear teachers and support staff,

I just wanted to thank you for an amazing experience of doing a history presentation on my WW2 historic jeep. Your young are amazing. They were polite, respectful, attentive, inquisitive, asked so many questions. Your staff were lovely. It was an absolute privilege and an honour to be part of your day. It's a day I will never forget, and I'm sure your pupils won't either.

If I can ever be of service again for presentations, school fetes, open days etc. Please just ask, the answer will be yes.

Kindest regards.

Mike Daley (a very happy veteran)



Lowestoft in Bloom

We were delighted to receive two awards for our entries in the Lowestoft in Bloom competition. We won a bronze award for Best Scarecrow and a silver award for Best Wheelbarrow. The judge who presented the awards wanted to take a picture of me holding the prizes but that just wouldn't have felt right so I asked Mrs Walker and Primrose to be in the picture too for recognition of all their hard work and **wisdom** in putting together the displays. A big thank you to Suzi for donating the flowers and helping, too. Well done, ladies, your hard work really paid off.



Y1/Y2 Harvest Festival



It was lovely to see so many parents in attendance at the Y1/Y2 Harvest Festival at Blundeston Church – it was a great way to bring our school **family** together. The children demonstrated brilliant **collaboration** and **courage** reading poems, prayers and in their singing to such a large audience. Thank you to all those who donated items for the food bank - they were delighted to receive our delivery of goods.

Rotary Club

We were very lucky to have Peter visit our Y3 class last Monday. On behalf of the Rotary Club, his job was to hand out a named dictionary to every child in the class. The **hope** is that this will be an invaluable tool for the children to use to support their studies as they move through the school. Miss Holt-Whittaker and myself were extremely proud of the way the children were so **respectful** as they collected their dictionary. Afterwards, Peter told me that they were by far the most well-behaved children he had presented dictionaries to. Well done Year 3 😊



Y5/Y6 Football Tournament

There was lots of **collaboration** and **courage** on display as the Y5/Y6 boys and girls football teams went to Barnards Meadow for an inter schools football tournament. Both teams did exceptionally well, finishing second in their respective groups, both losing only one game to the eventual runners-up in the whole tournament.

After a 1-4 loss in their first game (not a true reflection of the game), the boys went on to play some superb football. They then registered a 6-0 win followed by a 1-1 draw, conceding with the final kick of the game.

In our play-off game against a second placed team from another group, they got off to a great start and were 2-0 up inside the first two minutes. The rest of the half didn't go to plan and they started to play as individuals. When I spoke to them at half time, I told them that was the worst half we had played all day. Let's get back to playing as a team, finding the player in space, making that extra pass to set up a better opportunity to score. They all agreed and came out in the second half firing on all cylinders. Playing attacking, passing and move football, they scored four more goals, one of which started on their own goal line and involved six of the seven boys in the team touching the ball as Harrie got to the byline to cut the ball back for Oscar to tap in. To get a 6-0 win against strong opposition was a fitting end to the tournament.

Afterwards, there was still time for a friendly against another team, which the boys fought hard in to win 2-1.

A big well done to Arthur and Kenzie for volunteering to go in goal in what can be an

unforgiving position. They both did admirably, given their lack of experience playing in that position. Harry, Carter and Theo were solid in defence, with Harrie, Freddie, Oscar and Rhys interlinking and playing fluidly in midfield and attack.

The girls did equally well in their matches, winning four of the five games they played. Even in the game they lost, at one stage they were 2-0 up, eventually losing 2-3. They all got stuck in and all informed me that they thoroughly enjoyed playing. One of the girls even announced that she wanted to join a team after having the opportunity of taking part. This is exactly what these tournaments are designed for – to increase participation levels in all forms of sporting and leisure pursuits. The girls results were a 5-0 win, a 2-3 loss, a 2-0 win followed by a 7-1 win. Bella and Darlee were on fire, with 14 of the 16 goals, with Evie chipping in another and an own goal completing the scoring.



Gallery – In all honesty, I could have written so much this half-term about all of the fabulous learning and wonderful achievements that have taken place. The children have been **flourishing** in so many ways, so I thought I would share some more examples.



Parental Engagement

Supporting your child with anxiety

**A workshop for parents and carers delivered by the
Mental Health Support Teams in Schools**

You have spoken and we have listened. We are aware that many people would have liked to attend the recent Mental Health Team support meeting that took place during school hours but were unable to make the time. As a result, the mental health team have agreed to be available for one of our Parent Consultations in the New Year, on Thursday 6th February. They will be on hand to talk to any parent wishing to know information about how they can help support any concerns you may have around the mental health of your children. When the time comes, please reach out and talk. It is really important to have that outlet. The resources from the mental health workshop on anxiety will be added to the school website with a link on dojo next week.

Of course, February is a long way off and you may be experiencing issues that cannot wait that long. Speak to us or the mental health team direct. Don't just hope for the best and that these problems will simply go away. We want to support the children and our families as best as we possibly can so may be able to give that help direct or signpost to other services who can deliver a specialist approach.

Parental Engagement - Book Share and Reading Meeting

Thank you to all who were able to make the Book Share with your children in class. The question prompts on the board were really helpful to structure the talk from the children about their learning. Some simple tweaks of wording could help you to gain a better understanding of how your child has performed at school each week. For example, rather than say have you had a good day, to which the answer will most likely be short and not very informative, you could try asking:

- Tell me about a piece of work you were proud of today/this week.
- What was your favourite piece of work? Why did you enjoy that so much?
- Was there any work that you found tricky or needed help with?
- Which school value(s) do you think you have demonstrated today/this week?

We also **hope** you found the reading meetings informative and helpful. We really want to empower parents with the **wisdom**, skills and confidence to help support your children on their reading journey. Please remember though, just because they can read the words on the page, does not mean that journey has finished. Becoming a good reader means you need to be able to make sense of the words you have read too. This means being available to listen to and share the reading with your child all the way through school so you can not only check their decoding skills but also their understanding (comprehension) skills. Again, these resources will be added onto the English page of the school website with a link send out via dojo next week.

Maths Homework - TTRS and Numbots

Depending on the age and ability of your child, they will have access to either Times Table Rock Stars or Numbots – there may even be some overlap in the middle years so they can access both maths programmes. Having analysed the effects of children's usage and engagement with the programmes, the results are showing a clear trend in terms of the progress being made by each child in class.

It should not come as a surprise to find out that those children who are regularly practising their times tables or completing Numbots activities are progressing at a faster rate than those who are not. There are also clear signs that the children accessing the maths programmes are more confident in maths, enjoy the subject more and have underpinned their knowledge.

Completing these activities does not have to be onerous. All we ask is that the children do a minimum of three minutes a day. That's the equivalent of an advert break on the TV. Three minutes every day is far better than doing twenty minutes in one go once a week. Obviously, the more practice the child puts in will lead to better outcomes. Five minutes a day will clearly help the child to consolidate the learning even more. We want to make sure every child progresses at an accelerated rate, so please explain to your child that this is an incredibly important aspect of their learning.

Attendance

I thought it would be helpful to share our attendance figures for the start of the year. The school average attendance rate is currently 96.6%. That is 1.1 percentage points above the national average of 95.5%. This places the school in the top twenty per cent of schools nationally, a good achievement for our school of 177 pupils.

However, a worry for me are the nineteen children currently classified as persistent absentees. This means their attendance is below 90%. In some cases, their attendance has fallen into the 60% or 70% bracket. Some of this can be attributed to unauthorised holidays and some to sickness.

As a Local Authority Grant maintained school, our **responsibility** is to ensure as few children as possible miss school. Mrs Malmquist, our attendance lead, and myself have a meeting scheduled with the school's Education Welfare Officer (EWO) officer next week. We will be discussing children with falling attendance rates as well as those classed as persistently absent. We may decide to take further action, if the children's attendance does not improve. Before we get to that stage, we always want to work with parents and explore every avenue possible to help by working together. If you are struggling in any way, come and talk to us – the door is always open. It is better for us to understand your circumstances and work together to improve outcomes.

Reflections - Values

You may have noticed lots of words have been written in bold throughout the newsletter. Don't worry, they weren't typos. They were the values we have seen demonstrated throughout the school. Last newsletter, I shared the values that underpin our school. With some fine collaboration and expertise between Mrs Gillings, Mrs Ward and Miss Gowen, I can now share with you another way of viewing these. They have been popping up all over school as a way of reminding the children of the positive values we want to see on display all of the time.



We are currently working hard on embedding the values throughout our curriculum and in our everyday school life. Flourishers on Friday mornings are based on the positive values the staff in school have seen in action. We believe this is leading to a common language of mutual respect and understanding that the children can apply to every aspect of their lives. This is helping them to be great citizens and role models, supporting each other, which is significantly improving our school environment further. Why not ask your child if they can name some of our school values at home?

Term Dates and Events

Autumn Term

Friday 18 th October	Y5 & Y6 School Trip to East Norfolk Sixth Form College
Friday 18 th October	Flu Vaccinations for any children who missed last date
Monday 21 st October	Y4 School Trip to Norwich Castle
Monday 28 th October – Friday 1 st November	Autumn Half-Term
Monday 4 th November	Teacher Training Day - Trauma and Attachment Aware Practitioner training
Tuesday 5 th November	Children return to school
Tuesday 5 th November	Firework Lunch Menu
Wednesday 13 th November	TTRS England Rocks Launch Day
Thursday 14 th November	Y6 Crucial Crew Trip
Thursday 14 th November	Y4, Y5 & Y6 Cross Country Competition
Friday 15 th November	Parent Workshop for Behaviour
Wednesday 27 th November	Selected Y1 & Y2 Children at Social and Literacy Festival
Wednesday 4 th December	Selected Y5 & Y6 Children Ice Skating
Friday 6 th December	Parent Workshop on Neurodivergence and Mental Health
Tuesday 10 th December	EYFS (YR) Nativity Play 9:20 – 9:55
Wednesday 11 th December	Reverend Andy in School Making Christingles with YR & Y6
Wednesday 11 th December	EYFS (YR) Nativity Play 2:45 – 3:20
Thursday 12 th December	YR and KS1 Seagull Theatre Trip
Thursday 12 th December	Y3/Y4 Carols in Church 2:45 – 3:15
Friday 13 th December	Y5/Y6 Carols in Church 2:45 – 3:15
Tuesday 17 th December	KS1 Nativity 2:40 – 3:10
Wednesday 18 th December	KS1 Nativity Play 9:20 – 9:50
Wednesday 18 th December	YR & Y6 Joint Christingle Service at Blundeston Church (pm)
Thursday 19 th December	Xmas Dinner and Christmas Jumper Day
Friday 20 th December	Last day of Autumn Term
Monday 23 rd December - Monday 6 th January 2025	Christmas Holiday

Spring Term 2025

Monday 6 th January	Teacher Training Day
Tuesday 7 th January	Children return to school – Spring Term starts
Friday 24 th January	Parent Workshop – Sleep for Children
Wednesday 29 th January	Book Share with Parents 2:50 – 3:20
Tuesday 4 th February	Parent Consultations
Thursday 6 th February	Parent Consultations & Mental Health Support Team
Wednesday 12 th February	Boogie Bounce for all Classes
Friday 14 th February	Last day of half-term
Monday 17 th February – Friday 21 st February	Spring Half-Term
Monday 24 th February	Children return to school – 2 nd Half of Spring Term

Spring Term Continued

Friday 14 th March	Anxiety and Separation Workshop for Parents
Tuesday 18 th March	Dance Rehearsal at Marina Theatre
Friday 21 st March	Red Nose Day
Week Beginning 31 st March	Easter Services at Church Y1/Y2, Y3/Y4, Y5/Y6
Friday 4 th April	Last day of Spring Term
Monday 7 th April – Tuesday 22 nd April	Easter Holiday

Summer Term 2025

Wednesday 23 rd April	Children return to school – Summer Term starts
Monday 12 th May – Thursday 15 th May	Y6 SATs Week
Thursday 22 nd May – Saturday 24 th May	Y6 Hilltop Residential
Friday 23 rd May	Parent Workshop focusing on children’s behaviour 1:30
Friday 23 rd May	Last day of half-term
Monday 26 th – Friday 30 th May	Summer Half Term
Monday 2 nd June	Class Photos
Monday 2 nd June – Friday 13 th June	Y4 Multiplication Check to be Completed
Monday 9 th June - Friday 13 th June	Y1 Phonics Screening
Friday 20 th June	Parent Workshop – Sleep for Children
Tuesday 24 th June - Wednesday 25 th June	Benjamin Britten High School Open Days
Week beginning 7 th July	School Reports go out
Wednesday 9 th July – Friday 11 th July	Y6 Transition Days to Benjamin Britten High School
Tuesday 22 nd July	Last day of Summer Term
Wednesday 23 rd July – Tuesday 2 nd September	Summer holiday
Monday 1 st & Tuesday 2 nd September	Teacher Training Days

Finally, if you haven’t already seen our promotional video, please take a look. Working in collaboration with students from East Norfolk Sixth Form College, we have put together this video to promote the excellent work we do. We want all the stakeholders in our school to be proud of Blundeston Primary School and showcasing the school helps to reinforce our values of **family**, **respect** and **flourish**.

<https://www.blundestoncevcp.co.uk/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OEKoz4loQvY>

Mr Edwards