



THE BISHOPSWOOD SCHOOLS FEDERATION

Bishopswood Infant & Junior School
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Executive Headteacher: Mr G Golding

Friday 17th December 2021

Dear Parents and carers,

The end of the Autumn Term is always a time of excitement and celebration. It is also a time to reflect and give thanks to the large number of people who throughout the year support the school. This year has been like no other within education and society as a whole and I would like to pass on sincere thanks to the different groups within our school community who have helped us to navigate the many obstacles that 2021 has placed in our way.

Our Children

In January school opened for one day before being closed for several weeks. Remote learning returned along with the many restrictions of a national lockdown. Our children had to adapt again to either learning at home or learning in 'bubbles'. Many of the old routines and activities were either cancelled or replaced with new ones, mainly centred on handwashing, one way systems and not being able to mix with friends. In spite of these changes the children displayed resilience, flexibility and the ability to find joy from new contexts. In turn they brought joy and laughter to school during a time of anxiety and concern. I would like to thank and congratulate all the children for their hard work, flexibility and continued enthusiasm. You are the reason why working in our school is the best job in the world.

Our Parents

Just like the children you have had to be resilient, flexible and creative this year. At times you have been required to home school your children whilst also trying to work. You have needed to collect your children from school to arrange tests and to self-isolate. You have been asked to adhere to the various protective measure placed upon you as guidance has kept changing. I am sure there have been times that you have disagreed with some of the decisions that have been made and have felt real conflict about sending your children to school, but I thank you for supporting the school regardless. As a parent myself it is very rare that you are either thanked or praised for being a parent even though it is one of the hardest jobs in the world. So on behalf of the children and staff, many thanks and well done, you have all earned a Gold Sticker!

School Governors

For the last 18 months schools have been required to write Risk Assessments, Outbreak Management Plans, to send lap tops home and provide food vouchers during the holidays. Schools have not been given

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the necessary funds to cover loss of income or staff absence but they have been given funds to help catch children up. These are but a few of the challenges that our Governing Body have been held accountable for this year. As a group of volunteers who have busy lives themselves, I thank you for your continued dedication and commitment to improving the lives of the children in our community. Be reassured that as a staffing body we love our governors all year round, not just at Christmas.

Bishopswood PTA

Huge thanks go to the members of the PTA; when most people take the opportunity to use Covid as a perfectly good excuse for not doing something, the PTA actively looks for ways around it and to ultimately beat it. Even though the world has changed the PTA have continued to find ways of raising funds and providing experiences for the children of the school. They may be a small team, but they are a mighty one.

The Staff Team

Finally I would like to share the admiration and gratitude I have for all the staff team. The last 12 months have been incredibly challenging, but I can honestly say that the character and commitment that I have witnessed over these last 12 months has been exceptional. The team have had to cope with the opening and closing of bubbles; teaching in person whilst also trying to teach remotely; covering colleague's absences and responsibilities in addition to their own workloads. But, most impressive for me has been the willingness to go the extra mile to ensure that Covid doesn't completely dictate what we do. During 2021 we have still undertaken residential visits and school trips. We have had a wide range of visitors in school to enrich the curriculum. The children have still taken part in sports days and sporting competitions. This has all resulted in school feeling as close to pre Covid times as possible and the children being engaged with their learning. Thank you team, you are amazing, enjoy a well-deserved break.

Special Thanks to Mr Manners

One last note of thanks has to go to Mr Manners. As Covid numbers increased and the Nativity had to be cancelled, Mr Manners stepped in to video the Yr R Nativity for us. We think it looks great and are sure you will too. Although it can never match the magic of a live performance, it is pretty close. I hope that you enjoy watching it with your families. Thanks Mr Manners you are a super star!

Change of INSET Day

Due to the Queen's Platinum Jubilee on Friday 3rd June 2022 falling in the summer half term break, all schools in Hampshire have had an extra day added to the summer holidays. Therefore the last day of this academic year is Thursday 21st July 2022. The INSET day that we were going to take on Friday 22nd July 2022 has had to move to Monday 28th February 2022. Apologies for any inconvenience this causes.

Therefore the remaining INSET days for this academic year are now Friday 18th February 2022, Monday 28th February 2022 and Friday 27th May 2022.

To conclude communications for 2021 and on behalf of all the Bishopswood Team, I wish you all a safe, healthy and happy Christmas and fingers crossed for an amazing 2022!

Yours sincerely

Mr G Golding

Executive Headteacher

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