



10th November 2023

Newsletter No.5

Dear Parents/Carers and Children,

It has been a very enjoyable week at The Bellbird. Senior team members have had the pleasure of leading review mornings in Reception, Year 3 and Year 6 this week. During these we spend the morning in a year group, looking at focus areas we have identified from analysis of data, previous monitoring and teacher reflections. Following this we celebrate the many areas of strength seen and identify next steps to help each year group get even better. This is all part of our continued commitment to the cycle of school improvement and reflects the whole team's desire to 'soar to success'.

Reception have been so busy over the last two weeks. Last week they learnt 4 new phonemes and worked really hard with their spelling. They spelt the words, cat, top and bed! As their topic this term is 'Festivals and Celebrations' they discussed how people celebrate Halloween and they made their own Jack O lanterns. They also dissected a pumpkin and discussed how they could keep the seeds to grow our own pumpkins one day! This week they are focussing on Bonfire Night and Remembrance Day. The children have created their own firework pictures and independently wrote firework words on them, such as pop!

Year 1 have been learning all about tigers! They have learnt about their appearance, how they hunt and what they eat. They have read about them and written simple non-fiction facts about them. Excitingly they managed to see real tigers at Shepreth Wildlife Park on Thursday! (They saw lots of other interesting animals here too.)



Year 2 have been busy putting together their non-chronological reports about spiders. They are excited to share these with the children in Year 1 to help them to find out more about these amazing arachnids! They also enjoyed their 'breakfast week' event where they tasted sausages, made pancakes and even saw a tractor.

Year 3 have had an exciting week, with a visit from some farmers who taught them all about where their food comes from. They tried sausages, cooked pancakes and learned what different cereals can be turned into. In English, they started writing a fact file about their own fictitious insects! [also see some Year 3 weaving on the last page]



Year 4 have been having great fun this week learning where in the world chocolate comes from and the process by which a cacao bean is turned into one of our favourite sweet treats. They have learned how the Ancient Maya first used cacao beans to make a bitter chocolate drink, and couldn't wait to find out more about them and their lives when they went to see the artefacts at the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology in Cambridge on Thursday!



Year 5 have been enjoying working with charcoal and pastels on all things Antarctic: animal eyes, penguins and Elephant Island!

Having completed their class text '*Letters from the Lighthouse*' **Year 6** have created seaside inspired clay tiles. They also worked with mixed media to create a seaside landscape with 3D elements. Don't they look fantastic!

Further lighthouse creations from Year 6 and jaw-dropping charcoal creations in Year 5 can be found on the final page.

Cont.

Term Time Leave requests

We are very grateful for the support of parents/carers in ensuring their children are at school, unless too poorly to attend, and for following school procedures in reporting absences.



In line with the Government initiative 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' [May 2022], can we remind parents/carers that we cannot authorise term time leave requests that are neither exceptional or unavoidable. In light of this, and following advice from the our Local Authority Attendance Officer, we have slightly amended our policy to be clearer that any unauthorised term time leave for 3 days or over will result in a penalty notice. I have copied Section 10 of the policy here, with the clarification of the process highlighted in blue, so all families have seen it. Unfortunately we do not have capacity to warn families in person that a PN will be issued, instead it will be indicated on the new Term Time Leave Request Form reply which we will now return to you via post and email. Both the Term Time Leave Request Form and Attendance Policy can be found on our website.

Penalty Notice for Unauthorised Term Time Leave (including holiday)

Failure to ensure a child's regular attendance at school is a criminal offence. Any parent/carer who takes a child out of school for term time leave for 6 consecutive sessions (3 days) or more, not authorised by the school (under the exceptional circumstances rule), will receive a Penalty Notice. Therefore, Penalty Notices will be issued for single event absences of at least 3 consecutive school days or more where these absences are unauthorised because they are neither exceptional nor unavoidable. The absences will be recorded with a 'G' code in the attendance register. Such cases will have to be supported by evidence of parents/carers being warned about a potential Penalty Notice, through the Term Time Leave Request forms and the school's Attendance Policy. A box will be ticked on the Term-Time Leave Request Form, to indicate a Penalty Notice will be issued on the child's/children's return to school, if the leave is still taken. The Term-Time Leave Request Form will be returned to parents/carers in paper form via Royal Mail and electronically via email, to ensure it is received. There will be no phone call from the school to further let Parents/Carers know a Penalty Notice has been requested.

Parental Contributions

We are conscious that this half term has seen some additional *voluntary contribution* requests asking parents/carers to support the enrichment activities we have planned for our children, such as the Year 1 trip to Shepreth, Year 4 trip to the fudge factory, Breakfast event for Year 2 and 3 and History off The Page for Year 6. We wanted to thank all the families who have been able to contribute to these events, which makes these enrichment activities possible. And of course we want to thank the parents/carers who have given up their time to support these events too.

Remembrance Assembly



Thank you to The Royal British Legion and Reverend Kathryn of Sy Marys Church, who led a Remembrance assembly for Year 1-6 on Monday. Our children did us very proud, listening well, reflecting on the meaning of remembrance and showing their respect in a minute silence. Well done, Bellbirds.

Odd Sock Day [Monday 13th November]

Next week is Anti-Bullying week across the nation. This year's theme is 'Make a Noise About Bullying'. To mark this event we invite all children to wear odd-socks to school on Monday 13th November. The Anti-Bullying Alliance started Odd Socks Day in 2017 as they wanted to create a new and fun way of celebrating Anti-Bullying Week and what makes us all unique. Odd Socks Day is an opportunity to have fun, be yourself and spread awareness of the core values Anti-Bullying Week promotes.



We would like to invite participating children to make a £1 donation (or whatever you feel the right donation should be) to support the Anti-Bullying Alliance. Money will be collected at registration by the class teachers. See attached parent flyer for full information.

Parent Governor

Thank you to everyone who returned their ballot paper for the parent governor election. The votes will be counted on Monday and results reported to candidates, then parents/carers, as soon as possible after that.

Do not forget the school is closed on Friday 17th November and Monday 20th November for teacher training. All staff will be having their annual safeguarding training and teachers will be looking at high quality teaching and learning.

Have a wonderful weekend everyone and we look forward to seeing you on Monday morning at 8.45am.

Best wishes, Mrs Emma Clayton and Mrs Rebecca Pentney, Co-Headteachers

Week beginning	Key Events
13 th November	17/11/23: STAFF INSET DAY NO SCHOOL
20 th November	20/11/23: STAFF INSET DAY NO SCHOOL 21/11/23: Individual and sibling photos
27 th November	
4 th December	SATURDAY 9/12/23: FABS Christmas Fair
11 th December	12/11/23: Reception nativity performance 1 13/11/23: Reception nativity performance 2
18 th December	18/11/23: Christmas dinner (special lunch menu) 19/11/23: Parents and Children to Church for Christmas Service—in Houses [more details to follow] 20/11/23: Last day of the autumn term 21/11/23: Christmas holidays begin

<u>Term Dates 2023-24</u>	Spring Term	Summer Term
Term Starts [first day of school for children]	Thursday 4th January 2024	Monday 15th April 2024 [May Day - 6th May]
Half term	19th-23rd February 2024	27th-31st May 2024
Term Ends [last day of school for children]	Thursday 28th March 2024	Thursday 18th July 2024
Professional Days [school closed to children]		Friday 19th & Monday 22nd July 2024

