



## The Bellbird Newsletter

### Dear Parents and Carers,

As we come to the end of another half-term, I would like to wish all our pupils – especially our Year 6s who completed their SATs last week – and staff members a well-deserved and restful break.

It was a pleasure to see so many of you at last weekend's parent working party – thank you for your continued support (see below for more details).

A quick reminder for Year 6 parents and children: our PGL residential trip takes place on Monday 2nd June, immediately after the May break.

I have everything crossed for good weather, next week. Please note, there is no staff training day on Monday 2nd June.



### Farewell to Mrs Tollhurst

After an incredible *thirty years* at our school, it is time to say goodbye—and a huge thank you—to our wonderful Mrs Tollhurst. From her early days as a school cook at the John Paxton School to becoming the heartbeat of our school office, she has done it all—with efficiency, humour, and a little bit of sass.

Mrs Tollhurst has served under ten headteachers, seen multiple generations of families pass through our gates, and even became Deputy Headteacher for a day—making sure absolutely *no one* got away with being late! From organising legendary events like the Jubilee street party (complete with a surprise Red Arrows flypast that some still believe she orchestrated) to surviving The Great Tractor Panic of 2023, her stories are the stuff of legend. A secretary, a courier, an athlete—and above all, a friend—Mrs Tollhurst has kept us organised, lifted our spirits, and held this school together more times than we can count. We wish her a retirement filled with laughter, relaxation, and absolutely no photocopier issues. Thank you, Mrs Tollhurst—Queen of the Office. You will be deeply missed.

### Farewell to Mrs Woolf

Today we say a fond goodbye to the amazing Mrs Woolf. For over two years, Claire has been a calm, kind, and tireless presence at The Bellbird – supporting children and staff who will miss her dearly. She has been the teaching assistant every school dreams of, always going the extra mile with a smile. Now, she is off on her next great adventure: becoming a mum again! Mrs Woolf, thank you for your warmth, humour and dedication. We will miss you hugely – and cannot wait to meet the baby (name pending!). All our love and best wishes!

### A Huge Thank You – Parent Working Party Success

A heartfelt thank you to all the families, parents – and indeed children – who kindly came into school last Saturday for our second termly Parent Working Party. To say a huge amount was achieved would be an understatement! Virtually all of the fences and equipment behind the Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 classrooms have been repainted – and they now look fantastic. Much of the wooden equipment has also been treated, the skirting boards and architrave in the entrance and corridors have been filled, sanded and undercoated, and the foyer has been freshly re-emulsioned. At the front of the school, damaged wooden fencing has been removed, replaced and painted, and inside the building, a significant amount of waste and clutter has been cleared.

The school is already looking much tidier – and we truly cannot thank those who helped enough for their time, energy and support. The next working party session is planned for late September or early October – we hope to see many of you there!



### **New Assistant Headteacher Appointed for September 2025**

Following last week's interviews, I am delighted to share with you the exciting news that Mrs Lovewell has been appointed to the newly created position of Assistant Headteacher at The Bellbird. This role has been established to further strengthen the capacity of our Senior Leadership Team and to ensure a clear and effective distribution of roles and responsibilities as we continue to grow and move forward as a school. Many of you will already know Mrs Lovewell and will be aware of the wealth of experience she brings from working across both primary and secondary education. Most recently, she has led significant improvements to our Early Years provision and curriculum, demonstrating exceptional dedication and leadership. Mrs Lovewell will be joining Mrs Komodromos (Deputy Headteacher) in commencing their new roles and post Mrs Waddingham's departure (see below) will be combining the SENDCo and Assistant Headteacher roles.

Please join me in congratulating Mrs Lovewell on her new role. I know she will have your full support as she takes on this important position from September.

### **Farewell to Mrs Waddingham**

It is with great warmth and heartfelt gratitude that we prepare to bid farewell to Mrs Frances Waddingham at the end of this academic year. Mrs Waddingham has been a valued and much-loved member of The Bellbird Primary School community for an incredible 13 years. Over the last 6 of these, she has served as our dedicated SENDCo, providing unwavering support, expertise and care to children, families and staff alike. Her deep commitment to inclusive education and the wellbeing of every child has had a lasting impact across the school.

While we are very sad to see her go, we are also immensely proud to share that Mrs Waddingham will be taking up the role of Deputy Headteacher at Isleham Church of England Primary School. It is a lovely coincidence that she will be reuniting with Mr Matthew Brough—our former Interim Headteacher—who has recently secured the substantive Headship there. We are certain that their combined talents and leadership will be an incredible asset to the Isleham community.

Frances will be dearly missed at The Bellbird—for her compassion, her calm wisdom, her sense of humour, and her boundless dedication to making school a better place for everyone. We wish her every success and happiness in this exciting new chapter of her career.

### **Inter-house Korfball Competition**

Our year 4s and 5s recently got to experience a new sport, Korfball, when a visiting coach came to the Bellbird. A big thank you to Miss Eames for organising this. It was a great success and last week our House Captains decided to build on these new found skills and organised and ran a Korfball shooting competition. They did a great job in encouraging the children in KS2 to have a go and kept scores to see who was the most successful team. [Congratulations](#) to Oak house who were the winners earning 30 extra house points for their team. The House Captains are planning on organising some more interhouse competitions soon so watch this space!

### **Fathers' Day Celebrations – Friday 13th June at 2.30pm**

We are very pleased to invite all fathers and father figures to join us for a special Fathers' Day celebration on Friday 13th June at 2.30pm. This is a lovely opportunity for dads, grandfathers, uncles, or another special family member to spend some time in their child/ren's classroom.

During the visit, guests will be able to take part in a craft activity or enjoy looking at books with their child. Light refreshments will be available, and everyone will be offered a biscuit.

To help ensure a smooth end to the school day, we kindly ask all visitors to leave the classrooms at 3.00pm. This will allow teachers to prepare for a calm and orderly dismissal, and fathers can then collect their children from the usual collection points.

We look forward to welcoming many of you into school for this happy occasion.

### **Gardening Club Returns!**

We are delighted to announce that Dr Tim Wreghitt, our very kindly Chair of Governors, will once again be running the school's annual Gardening Club. This wonderful club has proved so important in teaching the children about the joys of gardening and helping them to understand how our food grows. The club will run every Wednesday from 4<sup>th</sup> June – 16<sup>th</sup> July, inclusive, 3.30-4.15pm. (Please note that

for w/c 9<sup>th</sup> June, the club will take place on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup>, NOT on the Wednesday). The Gardening Club is free to attend, with Dr Wreghitt generously donating all of the materials needed. During the club, pupils will have the opportunity to grow – and no doubt sample – a wide variety of vegetables and crops. It promises to be a truly rewarding and hands-on experience for all involved. We look forward to another brilliant season of growing and learning!

#### **Footwear Reminder – Keeping Our Pupils Safe**

As the weather gets warmer, we understand the temptation to choose lighter footwear. However, we kindly ask that parents and carers do not send children to school in Crocs or open-toe sandals.

Although they may seem comfortable, these types of shoes are not suitable for school activities. Open-toe sandals leave feet unprotected, increasing the risk of stubbed or injured toes during play. Crocs, while easy to slip on, do not provide enough support and can easily come off, making them a trip hazard—especially when children are running or playing outdoors.

To help keep everyone safe and active throughout the school day, we ask that all children wear sturdy, closed-toe shoes that stay securely on their feet. Thank you for your continued support in keeping our school a safe place to learn and play.

#### **The Importance of Good Attendance at School**

At The Bellbird Primary School, we are dedicated to supporting every child to reach their full potential—both academically and socially. One of the key factors that contributes to a child's success is regular attendance at school. Children who attend school consistently not only make stronger academic progress, but also develop more secure friendships, build greater self-confidence, and feel a stronger sense of belonging within the school community. While missing the odd day might seem harmless, these absences can quickly add up and create gaps in learning. For instance, a child who misses just one day every two weeks will have lost an entire term's worth of education by the end of their primary school years.

Frequent absence from school can result in:

- Gaps in understanding essential concepts in literacy and numeracy
- Reduced confidence and increased anxiety about catching up
- Challenges in maintaining friendships and feeling part of the class
- Fewer opportunities and reduced outcomes in the long term

We would also like to remind all families that holidays during term time **cannot be authorised**. Such absences significantly disrupt children's learning and undermine the consistency that young pupils need to flourish.

We ask for your continued support in ensuring that your child attends school every day, arrives on time, and is ready to learn. By working together, we can provide all our pupils with the strongest foundation for future success.

If you are experiencing difficulties related to attendance, please speak with Mrs Klimke. We are here to listen, support, and work with you to find positive and constructive solutions.

#### **Cross Country Club – Volunteers Needed!**

The Cross-Country Club, led by Mr. Puxley, runs every Friday from 3:20 to 4:20 pm. We warmly welcome parents and carers to get involved — whether by running with the children or helping with supervision. With your support, we'll be able to take the children on fun and adventurous runs beyond the school grounds. If you're interested in volunteering, please speak to me at the school gate or get in touch with the school office.

#### **Summer Sports Day at The Bellbird – Save the Date!**

Get ready for a day of fun, excitement, and friendly competition! The Bellbird's much-anticipated **Summer Sports Day** is set to take place on **Tuesday, 10th June**, with **Wednesday, 11th June** as our back-up date in case of bad weather. Exact timings for the day, to be announced closer to the date. We warmly invite parents and families to come along and cheer on the children as they take part in a variety of events, showcasing their skills, teamwork, and determination. From sprints to relays, and even some classic fun races, there will be plenty to enjoy. And for those who are feeling brave—there might even be a parents' race! So, dust off your trainers and be ready for a little friendly competition of your own. We look forward to seeing you there for what promises to be a fantastic day of sporting spirit and school community fun.

#### **Join the Friends at Bellbird School (FABs) and make a difference!**

As our school's parent-teacher association, we're a dedicated team of parents and staff committed to organising fundraising events and supporting school activities. Our mission is to unite children, families, and the wider community through exciting events while raising funds for essential resources and learning opportunities. Thanks to our fantastic volunteers, we've enhanced the school library, hosted author visits and theatre performances, funded swimming lessons for Years 2, 4, and 6, and installed a new PA system in the school hall. If you'd like to get involved, leave a message for Mr. Andy Irons at the school office or speak with the School Leadership Team at the gate—we would love to welcome you to the team!

#### **Calling All Parents – We Need Reading Helpers!**

At The Bellbird Primary School, we believe that reading is the key to learning – it opens doors to imagination, knowledge, and confidence. That is why we want every child to develop strong reading skills as early as possible.

But with the demands on teacher time increasing, we need your help to give every child the time and attention they deserve when learning to read.

Could you spare just an hour or two each week to listen to children read?

You do not need any special training – just a love of books and a willingness to support our young learners as they build this essential skill. Whether you can come in weekly or even just occasionally, your time could make a world of difference.

Why become a reading helper?

- Help children grow in confidence and ability
- Make a direct, positive impact in the classroom
- Be part of the school community in a meaningful way

If you are interested or would like more information, please contact [Teacher/Office Name] at [email/phone number], or drop by the school office.

**Together, we can help every child become a confident reader. Thank you!**

### **National College guide What Parents and Educators Need to Know – Safety on the Road**

Staying safe on our roads is not just a skill — it is a lifelong habit. It is crucial to learn key strategies for helping children navigate streets safely and confidently, from practising journeys together to teaching them how to choose the safest crossing points.

We have collaborated with THINK! to offer real-world advice on issues like the dangers of parked vehicles, reversing cars and mobile phone distractions — it is an invaluable tool for parents and educators who want to help young people travel independently without compromising their safety.

### **Key dates for your diary:**

Event	Date
<b>Year 1 Class Assembly</b>	Wednesday 21 <sup>st</sup> May @ 9:15am
<b>Year 6 PGL Residential</b>	Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> – Wednesday 4 <sup>th</sup> Jun
<b>Sports Day</b>	Tuesday 10 <sup>th</sup> or Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> June
<b>Fathers' Day Session</b>	Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> June 2.30-3.00pm
<b>Early Years Trip – South Angle Farm</b>	Thursday 3 <sup>rd</sup> July
<b>Year 2 Class Assembly</b>	Tuesday 8 <sup>th</sup> July @ 9:15am
<b>Y6 Production</b>	Tuesday 8 <sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 9 <sup>th</sup> July - timings TBC.
<b>Y6 Leavers' Assembly</b>	Tuesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> July
<b>Final Day of Summer Term</b>	Tuesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> July
<b>Staff training (inset) – no childcare provided</b>	Wednesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> July

Have a good weekend,

James Puxley, Headteacher.