

Blackford C of E Primary School

Newsletter

October 2023

Dear Families,

As we come to the end of the first half term, I just wanted to give you a flavour of all the learning opportunities your children have had so far. From Forest Schools to Cross Country competitions to phonics sessions for parents, the children have embraced everything we do and they are a credit to our school! My thanks go to all the staff for working so hard to enhance our curriculum - organising sporting events, visits and visitors all takes time and commitment. I wish our staff a well-earned rest at half term!

It has also been a pleasure for me to get to know families and it was fantastic so many parents managed to make parents' evening. Thank you for your continued support and the partnership we have between families and school. We look forward to welcoming you and your children back to school on **Monday 30th October**.

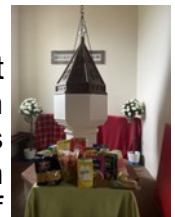
With warmest wishes,

Lindsey Slater

Our Church Family

Harvest Festival

It was wonderful to welcome our families into St John's Church for the recent Harvest Festival. The children sang songs, performed poetry and action songs and shared their thoughts about what Harvest means to those less fortunate. The key message throughout was about 'sharing' what we have with others and showing compassion. The church was laden with the donations of food the children had brought in for Carlisle Foodbank. Our thanks go to Reverend Ian who led the service and gave us all such a warm welcome!



Following the service, Year 6 delivered the bags of donated food to Carlisle Foodbank, who were very grateful to receive your generous donations. Thank you so much!



School Council

Last week we held our first School Council with our newly elected School Councillors. Following an opportunity to share manifestos, the classes elected their councillors.

Our thanks go to everyone put themselves forward for election - you were all brilliant!

Our elected councillors for 2023-24 are Ethan, Kimberley, Georgie, Tom, Franklin, Chloe and Emily. Our school councillors will be wonderful ambassadors of our school and we will keep you updated what they are up to throughout the year!



Class Visits

Forest Schools

The juniors have really enjoyed attending the Forest School sessions at Broomhills Farm. Set in a beautiful forest on the banks of the River Lyne, the children have loved being outdoors and experiencing all the forest has to offer. Y3 & Y4 have been lighting fires, cooking, making crafts, exploring the woods, playing games and making our own geocaches.

Meanwhile Y5 & Y6 have been tasked with creating a second forest school's learning base. We had to deploy our skills of map reading, teamwork and problem-solving to create a safe and working camp area. We lit a campfire, on only our second attempt and had a delicious snack of warmed brioche. We also created some forest art using frames we made using skills such as lashing.

The forest is the perfect setting to develop resilient, confident, independent learners, whilst improving health and wellbeing. And no matter the weather, the children have a fabulous time!



Mrs Combe and Mrs Noble

Year 1 and Year 2 Geography Field Trip

As part of the Geography curriculum and learning about our local area, Y1 & Y2 visited Carlisle. This gave the children the opportunity to put into practice the geography skills they have been learning in school. The class also took the opportunity to visit Carlisle Library and take out membership cards. As a school, we are promoting 'reading for pleasure' and fostering a love of reading with our children.

Miss Cruickshank



Sport

Wheelchair Basketball

At the start of term, Nat from Inclusive Sports came into school and led some wheelchair basketball sessions with the infant and junior children. The children loved the opportunity to experience a new sport and to try a sport where inclusivity is at its core. The children participated really well and got a lot out of the morning. Thanks to Nat and his team.



Panathlon

Six of our children were fortunate to be selected to attend a Ten Pin bowling event at Hollywood Bowl in Carlisle. The children developed many skills which they can now go on to practice and improve over the course of the year. All the children had a great afternoon and were very pleased with their medals and certificates they received. The children were a credit to the school! Well done everyone!



Cross Country

Six junior children represented our school at a cross-country event at the Sheepmount, along with other children from across the city. The majority of our runners had never taken part in an event like this before and we are super proud of them - they were fantastic! They demonstrated great perseverance and determination throughout, well done everyone!



Mrs Combe

Curriculum

Early Years and Key Stage One

The children in EYFS and KS1 have been working very hard in their phonics sessions. We were so proud of how well we are doing that we invited the parents to join us and take part!

For National Poetry Day, we listened to some poems online which were read by different people. As a whole school, we created group poems about the seaside.

For Black History Month, KS1 and EYFS listened to an amazing African story retold by Usifu Jalloh, The Cowfoot Prince. We joined in with the songs he sang with his Djemba drum.

At the start of the year, KS1 were completing work linked to the Great Fire of London. On the 6th of September we watched a puppet show online. The puppets took us back in time to 6th September 1666 as they retold the event!

In RE, EYFS children have been learning about different countries. We listened to stories spoken in French and tried a selection of different foods when we visited France. We tasted food from China, and we found out how to say hello and goodbye in Chinese. We joined in with an Italian dance and made our own pizzas when we visited Italy. We are looking forward to using our imagination to visit other countries!



Phonics with Parents
Mrs Cruickshank



National Poetry Day



Pizza Making

Mini-Police

On Friday 6th October Year 5&6 were visited by two of the PCSO's from Cumbria Constabulary to introduce us to Mini-Police. Each term we will take part in some learning delivered by the PCSO's on Fireworks safety, Road safety and Water safety. We will then deliver this learning to the younger children in school, dressed in our mini-police uniforms, to ensure our school community is aware of ways in which we can keep ourselves safe.

Year 5&6 will also be taking part in a community project aimed to benefit those in and around the area of our school. In previous years we have carried out tree planting and litter picking as our community project, but if there are any ideas from the community on how we could help improve our area, please let us know. Look out for more updates on how our Mini-Police scheme is going throughout the school year.



Mrs Noble

Safeguarding

Safeguarding is of the highest priority in our school, where all staff and governors foster an open and positive culture towards safeguarding. Staff and governors are trained in Safeguarding and Safer Recruitment, with appointed Designated Safeguarding Leads:

Designated Safeguarding Lead:	Mrs Lindsey Slater
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads:	Mrs Sarah Combe; Miss Mel Cruickshank; Mrs Selina Noble; Mrs Rachael Palmer
Safeguarding Governor:	Mrs Dorothea Mackay (Chair of Governors)

Operation Encompass

Blackford CofE School participates in Operation Encompass. This is a national partnership between schools and police forces where early information is shared with a school's Designated Safeguarding Lead if an incident of domestic abuse has occurred. The purpose of sharing this information is so that schools can offer immediate support to children experiencing domestic abuse.



Online Safety Monthly Newsletter

As part of our drive for robust safeguarding, school has subscribed to the Knowsley CLC monthly Online newsletters. The newsletters keep schools and parents up-to-date with information on the latest Apps and online games, along with other information on an ever-changing internet. You will find these newsletters on our website: [Online Safety \(blackford-school.co.uk\)](https://www.blackford-school.co.uk/online-safety)

Parents, Teachers and Friends of Blackford School Association (PTFBA)

Following a very successful coffee morning with our school community, we are very grateful to Kate Coulthard and Natalie Kennedy who have committed to setting up a PTFBA. There are various grants available which would benefit our children, but to qualify for these grants, they must be applied for by a PTA or equivalent. Kate and Natalie have drafted a Constitution and school would now like to invite parents and friends to an AGM to adopt the constitution on **Friday 10th November at 2.50pm**.

Please do come along and support this new initiative. Thank you.

Staff Vacancies

Due to the retirement of our long-serving and dedicated Clerk, the governors of Blackford CofE School are seeking to appoint a Governance Professional (clerk). The role involves overseeing all aspects of governance, ensuring the Governing Board meets its statutory and regulatory requirements. No previous experience is required as there will be a full training package offered. The post requires a commitment of 10-12 hours / term.

For further details and an application form, please visit the school website:

[Vacancies \(blackford-school.co.uk\)](https://www.blackford-school.co.uk/vacancies)

Closing date for applications is Monday 6th November 2023.

Parent Governor Vacancy

The Governing Board currently has a Parent Governor vacancy. The Governing Board forms part of the leadership team of a school and parent governors play a vital role along with the other governors in setting the strategic direction of the school. More information about becoming a governor can be found on the National Governor Association website:

[Interested in becoming a school governor or trustee? | National Governance Association](https://www.nationalgovernors.org.uk/interested-in-becoming-a-school-governor-or-trustee/)

The closing date for letters of nomination is Monday 30th October. For more details please visit the school website: [Governors \(blackford-school.co.uk\)](https://www.blackford-school.co.uk/governors)

Diary Dates

Date	Event / Location	Time
Tuesday 31st October	'Sing Up' workshop at Carlisle Cathedral Years 3, 4, 5 & 6	9.30 - 11.30
Thurs 2nd November	Forest Schools - Y3 & Y4	All day
Friday 3rd November	Tempest Photography	All morning
Monday 5th November	Small Schools 5-a-side (Y5 & Y6) - Harraby 3G	9.30 - 12.30
Thurs 9th November	Forest Schools - Y5 & Y6	All day
Friday 10th November	Nasal Flu Vaccination Year 6 Remembrance Service in Carlisle PTFBA AGM Meeting - school hall	Morning 10am - 1.30am 2.50pm
Friday 17th November	Children In Need	All day
Friday 24th November	Parents' / Families Coffee Morning with Headteacher - all welcome	9am - 10am
Tues 5th December	'Sing Up' concert in Carlisle Cathedral - juniors	6.30pm
Thurs 7th December	'Sing Up' concert in Carlisle Cathedral - juniors	6.30pm
Friday 8th December	Christmas Jumper Day	All day
Wed 13th December	Sports Hall Athletics - Y5 & Y6 Y1&2 / Reception / Nursery Christmas Nativity	9.30am - 12.30pm 9.30am
Thurs 14th December	Theatre Royal visit - Year 1/2/3/4/5 & 6	11am - 6.30pm
Mon 18th December	Christmas Party Day in school	1.30pm - 3.20pm
Tues 19th December	Carol Service in St John's - all welcome	2.30pm

Christmas Holidays	20th December 2023 - 2nd January 2024
February Half Term	12th February 2024 - 16th February 2024
Easter Holidays	29th March 2024 - 15th April 2024
May Bank Holiday	6th May 2024
May Half Term	27th May 2024 - 31st May 2024
Summer Holidays	Monday 15th July 2024 - 4th September 2024

Please note the dates for Statutory Tests 2024:

- KS2 SATS (Y6) - Monday 13th May 2024 - Thursday 16th May 2024
- Year 4 Multiplication Test Check - week commencing 3rd June 2024
- Phonics Screening Test (Y1) - week commencing Monday 10th June 2024