



Principal's Blog

17th April 2018

Hello everyone and welcome back. Today as I write this was day one of the changes to the drop off and pick up. I am hugely grateful to the vast majority of you, who tried to react positively despite some misgivings. As a result, both this morning and this afternoon we had a very calm (although busy) time at the start and end of the day.

I know that taking children to school and picking them up, around other children's needs or working life, can be very stressful. One parent commented that it was generally good if the senior leaders were around on the roadsides rather than standing just at the gate – and that is something I did today and will do from now on with the team. I also know that rather strangely, the bus timetable is geared to 8.20 and 3.30 both ways – which exactly clashes with school entry and exit time (it also clashed with the exit even under the staggered system), so I will be taking this up with Tim Hill, our local councillor next Friday 27th April. After all, the school should be working WITH Beds Borough rather than instead of, to help ease traffic, parking and congestion around the school site. Tim was very much for a shorter pick up time at the end of the day, and from today's experience, everyone was in and out in just over 10 minutes. By 3.45 the layby was clear.

Another concern I have (in addition to agreeing with another parent who posted on Facebook), is that the catchment area for the school is very large – I wonder what plans the local council have, given that more building continues and is planned in the area. This is also something I will ask Tim.

Finally, I have noticed that the crossing (which caused a bit of a queue for a minute) is right on the roundabout. I will speak to Tim about creating another place to cross so it eases this further down the road.

Mr Brandon the caretaker, Mrs Ciantar, Mrs Maples and I will continue to encourage taxis and families with specific large numbers of children, people carriers or extra needs, to use our car park to spare any extra stress.

I have already spoken to a few families and will be outside regularly to allow anyone who wants to, to talk to me.

Today's line up in the playground was wonderful. All the children took the opportunity to chat with each other. The atmosphere was calm and children went into class quickly and smiling. A nice start. I will say that, apart from Early Years parents/carers who will always be able to walk their children in and talk to the teachers, children from the rest of the school will be encouraged to enter the playground independently. Parents who are

worried, can always pop to the front of the school and chat with me, Mrs Ciantar, Mrs Maples and Mrs Polson. We always prefer feedback and then we can try to allay fears, communicate better and work with you to improve things for you where we can.

In the meantime, many good things are happening in school. Sport continues to be our focus and yesterday I watched Y6 playing tennis and rounders on the field. There are more tournaments which will be on the diary below and swimming continues but for Year 4 this term.

We have moderation in Early Years and are likely to do very well – the practice is outstanding and results are predicted to be high again. But most importantly our youngest children are happy, play well and enjoy coming to school. 😊

Our reading and maths meetings continue to support the skills children need to excel – and they love the lessons too. They are snappy, fun to be in, engaging and teachers enjoy teaching them too.

I have some emails from parents who are now willing to meet and begin to schedule some Friends of Elstow events. I would like to meet and plan the Summer Fair, a Quiz night, and cake and ice pop sales at the end of school days. Please let me know if you would be willing to join and help with this. The staff member who will be a liaison as well as me is Mrs Loose and we are both looking forward to rejuvenating the input of parents to help raise money for the school through fun activities for us, and the children.

On Friday next week, Tim Hill the local councillor and the Parking Enforcement team from Beds Borough will be here. Please do talk to them about bus times and safer crossings.

A lovely weekend looms – not long until our children have their SAT's. We will do everything to make sure children are as unstressed as possible for this. Year 6 will be sending out information about breakfast offers in that week and after they are over, you can look forward to some really good trips and topic work in their curriculum to enjoy to the end of term.

Samantha Baxter

Diary Dates

APRIL

Fri 20 th	Falcons class swimming begins Every Friday
Mon 23 rd	Gym taster sessions EY – Y6 PE kits today PM Y4 Dance
Tues 24 th	VOICES Project tour – PSHE Class project SING On Y3 Every Tuesday
Wed 25 th	8.30 – 9.15 BFS Students in to read with Y2 PM Y4 begin Guitar Lessons (Class teaching – instruments provided by school) Every Wednesday

Thur 26 th	Y1 & Y3 Dance PE Kits please today– Gina Carpenter SSF Instructor Fit 4 Fun Y4 PE Kits today Every Thursday
Fri 27 th	Falcons Class swimming KSI Celebration Assembly 8.15 – 9am - Tim Hill and the team from Bedford Borough Parking Enforcement outside school 9am SRE Meeting for Y3 & 4 parents – Big Hall 10:15am SRE Meeting for Y5 parents – Big Hall 10.:45am SRE Meeting for Y6 parents – Big Hall
Mon 30 th	Y4 Dance AM PE Kits please Y4 First class to Synagogue (TBC)
MAY Tues 1	Y3 Sing On music in class Y 4 Second class to Synagogue (TBC).
Wed 2	10am – 12 midday 8 x Y3/4 Pupils Quad Kids Athletics BFS Students to read with Y2 Y4 Guitar lessons continue
Fri 4 th	KS2 Celebration Assembly
Sat 5th MAY	MAYPOLE DANCING ABBEY GREEN
MONDAY 7th MAY BANK HOLIDAY	
Tues 8 th	PE Kits for Y1 – 4 – All Star Cricket coaching on site
Thurs 10 th Oak	10 – 12 pm 30x Y3 and Y4 Multi Skills Sports competition @ Kings
Fri 11 th	9am EY and KSI Celebration assembly 9.30 – 11am EY Teambuilding fun
14th – 17th May – KS2 SAT Tests	
Mon 14 th	9.15 – 10. 15 Y4 Dance PE Kits today please
Tues 15 th	9.30 – 11.30 am Y4 Bikeability
Wed 23 – 25 th	Y5 Residential @ Bromham
Fri 25 th	Y6 and Reception Class Photos

Break for half term – 3.30pm (Multi Skills is still on).