



NEWSLETTER

OCT 2024

SUCCESSFUL 1st HALF-TERM!



It has been a great first half term at Berry Hill and our children have made a terrific start. The children have settled into their new classes superbly and every visitor we have had have been exceptionally impressed by the behaviour and efforts of our wonderful young folk. Our many clubs have been up and running, school trips have already taken place and we have already attended several sporting events and competitions. Next half term is another busy one, with PTFA discos for the children, Christmas productions in EYFS and KS1, Christmas parties in every class and the drama club's trip to watch *Wicked* in the West End.

BUILDING UPDATES

We are really pleased with the progress of our new buildings, which are very close to being completed. We are a few coats of paint and some furniture away from having a music tuition room at the front of school and a new learning room and intervention space at the back of the KS2 building. This will enable us to be able to support more children going forward in a better learning environment. For the many children who have signed up for drum, keyboard, guitar as brass lessons, the new music room in particular should be an amazing resource to practise in.



MISS SARGISON

Many members of our community will be aware that Miss Sargison, our deputy head, has not been at school for the past few weeks. It is with immense sadness that I have to share that she lost her little boy, late in her pregnancy, and has understandably taken her maternity leave with immediate effect. School is missing her a great deal and we fully support her in taking the time she needs.

PARENT GOVERNOR VACANCY



Once we return after half-term, we will start the process of parent governor elections. If this is something that you may be interested in, or if you have any questions about what this involves, please get in touch with us.

CLASS AMBASSADORS

We have been delighted that so many children were nominated by adults in school, to become our very first class ambassadors. This will be a role that we intend to develop over this school year and we have high hopes!





OPAL UPDATES



Thank you to all of our wonderful families who have donated OPAL play equipment. It has ensured that lunchtimes at Berry Hill continue to be

exceptional! Miss Hedges, who leads on OPAL for us is already drafting her next list of things we will try and source and develop – expect to hear from her soon! Could I take this opportunity to specifically say thank you to Jan's family, who have scoured Facebook Marketplace and bought us a fleet of Tiny Tikes cars and wheel toys!

VOLUNTEERS

We have been overjoyed at the quantity and quality of the people who have joined our amazing team of reading volunteers at Berry Hill. We have gone from zero, 18 months ago to fourteen! If you think you might be interested in becoming a reading volunteer and could spare an afternoon a week to help children practise their reading, please get in touch, either on ClassDojo, email, phone or by popping in for a chat.

COFFEE & CAKE PARENTS OPEN INVITE AFTERNOON

I would like to invite parents to a drop-in coffee and cake afternoon at school on Wednesday 27th November, 2:15 – 3:20. It will be an informal chance to share your thoughts and ideas on what's working well, what might not be, and to help us shape ideas for the future in a friendly tea, coffee biscuits and cake-rich environment! I'd be really appreciative if as many parents and carers as possible could pop in and chat with me and members of our Leadership team.



READING REWARDS

We were very fortunate to be donated some M&S Colin the Caterpillar bags, full of goodies, which we decided to give as prizes. To be in with a chance of winning, we decided to include all the children who had practised their reads at least 3 times a week since the start of this year. We hope to have surprise reading rewards throughout the year, so please encourage your child to read to you at least 3 times a week and record this in their diaries. Before any of our older children claim they are too old for this, if their fluency is already amazing, please use this to ask questions to them about the plot, characters or themes – it can really help!

On the subject of practising reading, we are currently replacing almost £400 of Little Wandle reading books a year through them getting damaged at home or having water bottles put in the reading folders, which then leak. Hopefully this situation will improve, but if not we may ask parents to cover the cost of a replacement.



HOUSE TEAMS UP AND RUNNING

The sorting hat at Berry Hill has been busily sorting our children into their new house groups. The houses are named after trees which live on our site: Birch, Cherry, Oak and Sycamore and children of the same families are in the same house. We want to make houses more meaningful this year which means there will be house assemblies, initiatives, competitions as well as a revamped house point shop where children will be able to spend earned house points!



INCREDIBLE HARVEST FESTIVAL



As a school we were overwhelmed by the generosity of our families for our Harvest Festival. We received a lovely letter of appreciation from the Sherwood Forest Food Bank @ St Peter's Church. In the letter to the children, they wrote "People often arrive sad, cold and hungry. But they normally leave much more cheerfully carrying carrier bags full of food. You have given us so much food that we will be able to feed our visitors for 3 weeks". This is a cause I hope to support further in future and I hope you will agree that it's a very worthy one.

NON-UNIFORM DAYS AND THEME DAYS

This year we made the decision to have our usual non-uniform days at the end of each term rather than each half-term. As a result, we will be giving children the opportunity to dress up on:

- Children in Need Day (Friday, November 15th: wear yellow / spots or Pudsey themed),
- Red Nose Day (Friday 21st March: general non-uniform or RND themed)
- and of course on World Book Day (Thursday 6th March: come dressed as a character from children's literature)



A FEW DIARY DATES

- Tues 12th Nov: PTFA Autumn Discos Y1-Y6
- Weds 20th Nov: Drama Club London trip to see Wicked
- Weds 27th Nov: Parents coffee and cake with HT afternoon (2:15)
- Tues 10th 9:30 & Weds 11th 2:00: EYFS Christmas Productions
- Tues 10th 2:00, Weds 11th 9:30 & Thurs 12th 9:30 KS1 Christmas Productions
- Fri 13th Dec: F2 - Y6 Palace Theatre Christmas Panto visit
- Mon 16th Dec: Christmas Dinner Day (& Christmas Jumper Day)
- Thursday 19th Dec: Berry Hill's Annual Southwell Minster Christmas Concert
- Fri 20th Dec: Parents' Christmas crafts / activities open morning



Christmas Party Days: F2: Thurs 19th Dec; Year 1: Tues 17th; Year 2: Weds 18th; Year 3: Tues 17th; Year 4: Weds 18th; Year 5: Thurs 19th; Year 6: Fri 20th