



Belton Update

26th March 2021

We have made it! The Easter holidays! When I think about the past year it seems crazy that we are here again. It's definitely not been the year we had expected but as I reflect on this time last year it is amazing how far we have all come. I am very proud of our entire school community. Have a good rest over the holiday and we look forward to welcoming you all back to school on Monday 12th April.

Covid

Even though national restrictions are currently easing, there has been no significant change in the guidance for schools. Therefore, all the measures we are currently following will continue into next term.

Please continue to inform me over the holidays if your child is unwell and gets a positive PCR test. This is best via WEDUC as I get the message quickly or the office email. Please remember that the lateral flow tests are not to be used on primary aged children. They must have a PCR test.

Please can I reiterate if you have more than one child in school and where you have felt that one is poorly enough to warrant a test ALL your children MUST self-isolate until that test result has come back. You must NOT send siblings in during that period. This is for the safety of us all to minimise the spread.

Sadly, I have made the decision that the Sea Otters residential will not go ahead this year due to Covid but as I have said to Sea Otters parents we will try to do something fun for them. Please pop in to get your deposit back.

Benchmarking letter

Please read the letter about reading sent out by Mrs. Peczek today (attached). This letter originally sent out prior to a previous lockdown but has been updated to reflect our current position. It has lots of useful information on it and your child should come out of school today with some questions to help you when you listen to the children read. Please ask your child's teacher more about it at parents evening.

Parents evening

You will be getting your parents evening times today as they start after Easter. Before your appointment you will receive the short report detailing the basics of how we feel your child is getting on. This is just a frame to help guide conversations.

Guitar Lessons - There are a few spaces available for guitar lessons for students in years 3 - 6. These take place on a Thursday afternoon and are 20 minutes long. The cost is £5 per student per session. A guitar is available to borrow for the lesson if your child would like to give it a try before investing in an instrument. Contact - george@goguitarlessons.co.uk



Easter Egg hunt

The children really enjoyed the Easter Egg hunt today, even though it was a little wet and windy. Thank you to Mrs. Styles and FOBS for sorting it all out, to Tesco and to Mrs. Emerson-Edstrom for their kind donation of the eggs. We really appreciate it.

May Day celebrations

Unfortunately, May Day can't happen again this year, however we plan to do a little video with each bubble learning a dance. Thank you to Mrs. Baxter who has agreed to play the music again.

Another reminder

Please do not use the class email addresses to communicate with teachers. All communication about your child needs to go through the office email. If it is about something you don't want to write down, please email the office and the staff member will ring you back. Homework etc. still can go through the class emails or google classroom.

Also I know it is really tricky (we as staff find this hard too) but unless it is an emergency if you need to talk to the class teacher at drop off or pick up please send an email to the school office rather than talk to them on the playground. It is so hard I know but this is where they have found lots of transmission to take place, as well as between adults waiting for the children to come out. I have also given the staff the same message as we all are guilty of it!

Week two dinners week commencing 12th April

Certificates this week

Tigers

Stars of the week

Hattie for an amazing effort with her reading this week.

Katie for her gaining confidence in reading



Owls

Star of the week - Brooklyn (he's been a wonderful friend)

Maths - Pandora (working on fractions this week)

Mindset Champion - Lyle (enjoying learning and making links in his learning about fractions)

Handwriting - Arlo

Bug Clubber - Nancy

Mathletics - Bronze and silver - Freya



Housepoints -

75

Leland

Rebekah

Kane

Freya

100

Nancy

Lions

Star of week – Annabelle

Handwriting – Peyton

Learning Power - Alfie for his amazing effort in the NFER

Maths - James

Readiwriter and Mathletics - No Certificates - Ivy, Jessica, Maddy, Harvey

TTRS: Well done - No Certificates but well done's - Maddy, Jessica, Noah, Ivy and Thomas

Sea Otters

Star of the week - Lily - for her creative ideas in all that she does.

Mindset Champion - Molly - she lets her imagination 'go' in everything that she does.

Handwriting - Jimmy

Mathematician - Sally - for superb reasoning.

Mathletics - Bronze - Cara

Readiwriter - Bronze - Cara

Times Table Rockstar - none

Bug Clubber - Edie

House Points - 25 - Edie, Alice and Jimmy

50 - Archie, Jole and Lily

Dates for your diary

Parents evenings week beginning 12th April (2 weeks)

Term starts for Summer term 12th April

Class photos 12th May



Dear Parents/ Carers

Since the full return to school, we have been busy benchmarking all the children again to assess their reading ability and looking at the potential impact from lockdown. We have done this to ensure that children are given the correct level reading book. Below you will find some more information on benchmarking and how it looks at Belton. This is something we wanted to do post lockdown as many of the children have missed months of schooling so we can see exactly where they are with their reading and their strengths and weaknesses.

What is benchmarking?

- It is a developmental programme that assesses and places the child on a reading book at an appropriate level for their ability
- It tests children's understanding of what they have read as well as their ability to decode the text
- It is separated into 13 different colours. Within this, children can be separated into finite bands which will provide smaller steps for some readers
- The reading ages it assesses are from 5 years to 12 years

Why is benchmarking being introduced?

- We need a consistent whole school approach to the assessment of reading
- Assessments on the impact of lockdown have shown there is a large number of children who are able to read well but are not comprehending at the same level, particularly in KS2.
- We want a diagnostic system that can be used to group children with similar needs and provide them with feedback on their reading
- We need a system that will provide evidence that can be shared with parents to enable them to further support their children
- We want a system that will show the progress the children make within each level and provide levelled texts that will support and challenge them

What is assessed during benchmarking?



- Retelling of the text
- Reading record knowledge of high frequency words, ability to decode (use phonics), fluency, expression, prediction and self-correction strategies
- Comprehension

How and when will the assessments take place?

- Majority of children across the school have been benchmarked since returning after lockdown.
- Trained staff have assessed the children and made a decision about where to place them on the reading scheme.
- Children will be reassessed when the teacher believes they are ready to move up.
- Teachers will take a holistic approach to decide upon the correct colour book band, using a range of information from teacher assessments to more formal testing.
- Most children will move successfully through the reading scheme. If a child struggles with a particular aspect of comprehension, the teacher will help to address this through the teaching of whole class reading and will also send home question sheets in order that parents can provide targeted support for their child (please see 'Comprehension Questions' booklet attached to your child's reading diary)

How will reading change at Belton?

- Children from Reception to Year 6 will be placed within a colour band and will read the books within this band.
- Children will have access to a range of books and will not have to read every book within that colour band in order to move on.
- Children may be asked to keep a book for longer in order to discuss, retell and comprehend what they have read.
- Everyone has now become familiar with 'Bug Club' online which gives the children the opportunity to read a range of books within the given book band.



- We are currently reviewing our homework policy in light of the pandemic and there will be more of an emphasis on an adult reading and asking questions to the children in KS2, rather than letting them read to themselves,
- **Please note children in KS2 will still be able to keep their current free reads in addition to the banded books**

Issues which might arise during the changeover period

- Some children have moved to a different colour band. As a result, your child may accidentally be given a book that they have already read. Please inform the teacher, who will change it.
- Children might take longer to change between colour bands since it will be reliant on an assessment proving they are ready to move on.
- Children may be on a book band that is lower than you expected. Please talk to the class teacher if you are worried. This will most likely be because of a mismatch between fluency of reading and comprehension skills. The teacher will be working with the child to bridge the gap as well as directing you to which comprehension skills you can help with at home by using the 'Comprehension Questions' sheet attached to the reading diaries.

What evidence is there that Benchmarking is successful?

- High levels of reading attainment show that Benchmarking in conjunction with targeted teaching of guided reading is very effective.
- The system allows us to be very precise in our understanding of each individual child's strengths and weaknesses.

If you have any questions please speak to your child's class teacher in the first instance, then to Mrs Peczek as the school's English Lead.

Yours sincerely

Mrs E Peczek

Miss J Scott

English Lead

Headteacher