

# Batheaston CEVC Primary School

Bulletin, 26 September 2016

---

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am sure you will have heard all about our new play equipment which is now open and very popular! It is a unique installation – truly one of a kind and also fits our lovely setting. Mark (bigwoodplay.com) has cleverly designed the play structure around the wood that was donated to us as well as incorporating ideas from children and staff. Mark and his colleague Mike, as well as Ed with the chain saw, worked hard to complete the play space. We are really grateful to them, and Charlie and Jeremy who sourced the wood – this project wouldn't have been possible without their support and creativity. Thank you too, to FOBS and to all of you for the fundraising success needed to help pay for the equipment.



The grass matting surfacing will soon disappear as the grass grows but it will ensure children can play on the equipment all year (unless particularly wet or icy). To make sure there is challenge in the play, we have included some design that means children must be supervised when they play. ***Please make sure pre-school children are supervised so that they don't climb the equipment without close supervision as it has been designed for primary aged children.***

We are now excited about the next phase of our playground project which means that the children will be able to access the Lapa Area all year too. Thanks to a Big Lottery grant, and FOBS support again, we have designed a Trim Trail with Mark. This will be installed soon and will mean the children can play in the space even if the grass is very wet. The play equipment will be close together so that the children can go from one challenge to another without stepping down. Everyone is very excited about this next phase and hopefully can tell you all about what we are planning to install, including a long wobbly bridge!!

Mark is also designing, with us, a larch decking area for the space behind Cherry Class. If we can manage this project as well, then Y1 children will also be able to play and work outside more easily.

## To make all this possible, we need your help! We need you, your muscles and wheelbarrows

The path to the Lapa area gets boggy and unusable in the wet and winter. We need it to access the Lapa area or the children won't be able to get to the trim trail. We plan to change the path by covering it with 12 different sorts of stones and pebbles. This will provide colour, a sensory experience and will also be laid in metric sections to provide instant measuring opportunities for maths.

If Mike moves all this aggregate from the school gate, to the path, it could take a week and so you can therefore imagine the labour costs. We are asking you to join us, on a Saturday morning, to come and move the stones and pebbles and fill the path sections. It will be done very quickly if there are lots of willing volunteers. We can then spend the saved money to complete our plans. I have a vision of some wonderful seating if we can do it!

We will confirm the actual date when we know. In the meantime, please catch me in the playground if you, or someone else in your family, could theoretically help and then I will know if we can manage the project ourselves.

### Staff news

We hope that all Willow parents already know and now we would like to share the news with all the school that **Jo Knight** (Willow Class teacher) is expecting her first child. The baby is due in February. We are very excited for her and we know that you will be delighted for her (and her partner Ian) and join us in wishing Jo and her family all the very best!

As always with maternity leaves, we plan the teaching arrangements for the children with consistency and a smooth transition as priorities. We can't confirm the start date for Jo's maternity leave but will make sure we keep Y2 parents informed with up to date information. Jenny will continue to teach Willow class on Mondays which I know she is enjoying very much!

You may not have had a chance to meet our new Deputy, **Tom Richmond**. Tom is a very experienced teacher and is enjoying getting to know Oak Class (Y6), all the staff and parents. Oak class had lots of fun in Oxenwood, for their 2 day residential trip and have lots of exciting plans – and lots of hard work – for the year.



**Elle.** We have also said 'bon voyage' to Elle Allen (one of our lovely Teaching Assistants who has worked at our school for many years). Elle and her family have relocated to Cornwall to be near family and her two children are happily settling into the local primary school. We wish them happy times in their new life adventure!

**Caroline.** It is very hard to imagine Batheaston Primary without Caroline's wonderful support, extensive community knowledge and warm welcome! Caroline has been working hard and skilfully for Batheaston children for 26 years. In this time there have been many changes and developments which Caroline has enthusiastically supported and often helped make possible.

However hard it is for us to say goodbye as Caroline leaves in early November, it is such good news that she will be settling into a happy family life in Cornwall. Caroline is retiring to enjoy a still busy life with her husband David, their bouncy dog Mungo and other family members too. We will keep in close touch!

We are very grateful that Julie and Sue continue to run the office with warm efficiency and they will be joined by a new School Business Manager next term. Justina has been appointed to work with us to take on Caroline's myriad roles and responsibilities. Justina has been working in Caroline's role in a Wiltshire school and is looking forward to joining the Batheaston team!

We are also getting very excited about **Sian's** (Sian Stowell, Maple Class teacher) wedding during the half term holiday! We know that you would like to join us in sending our very best wishes and congratulations to Sian and her husband to be, Andrew. We know that they will have a wonderful celebration with family and friends! After half term, Sian will be Sian Grindle.

### **SATS results 2016**

**We are so proud of last year's Y6 children! We are missing them – they were a very special group – and we are sure that their new secondary schools feel very lucky to have them!**

**They were the first cohort to sit the new style Y6 SATs (national and statutory tests that are taken in the May of Y6). You have probably heard, in the media, about all the problems and anxieties about these new, very hard SATs. Results are nationally much lower than previous years. For example, last year, 78% of the country's children achieved national standard in Reading whereas this year, the figure was 66%.**

**Please go to our website if you would like to see the Batheaston results. In summary, our children achieved results higher than the national average in every subject. The progress they made, from Y2 to Y6 was also higher than the national average. This was a remarkable journey as Claire, Jenny and the team were all working in uncharted waters without much information about what would be involved and without past tests to look at. Most importantly, our children all worked hard to achieve their best, with humour, maturity and perseverance. We couldn't be more proud of them!**

**Our thanks to all those parents who have settled outstanding payments recently. Despite reminders, the Governors are concerned that we do still have large amounts owing for items such as trips, clubs and dinners. We would be extremely grateful if families could please keep a close eye on their ParentPay accounts, and settle items/arrears promptly; as you know dinners and PlayRangers should always be paid**

for in advance. A great deal of office time is spent in sending out reminders and checking payments, and there is the facility on ParentPay to view 'previous transactions' if you wish to double-check something. PlayRangers queries can always be addressed direct to [play\\_rangers@batheaston.bathnes.sch.uk](mailto:play_rangers@batheaston.bathnes.sch.uk)

While we always try our best not to cancel a planned activity for the children or deny a child a dinner, this may become unavoidable without your co-operation. Very many thanks indeed.

**Open Book assemblies and singing lessons with Will:** Thanks to members of the congregation for preparing and leading a once fortnightly assembly for our KS1 children and to Will, the church organist, who is teaching singing with Maple and Hazel classes. This is the second year of this successful provision. Thank you to the PCC who have very kindly paid for Will to teach the children. A unique opportunity for our children to be taught singing by an expert, and also to increase their knowledge of songs and hymns.

We have 2 Harvest Assemblies at the church this year:

Apple, Cherry and Willow – **10am Tuesday 18 October**

Elm, Hazel, Maple and Oak – **10am Thursday 20 October**

Everyone is very welcome and details about donations will follow.

**Play Rangers:** Our ever-popular and nurturing after school club has spaces available. Please come into the school office if you would like to register your child.

**Online donations through Parent Pay:** Thank you to all the parents who have donated to a range of school projects by using the Parent Pay donations page. As we start a new year, we would be very grateful if you could check the page and see whether you would like to donate towards our funds for improving the quality and variety of our creative and online curriculum.

Just in case anyone is considering Christmas presents yet, please also remember that, any time you use Amazon, if you go to our website first and log on that way, the school fund benefits as Amazon donates us money.

**Dates:** Dates are frequently updated on our website so please do check. The term dates for the year have been published (and included in the last Bulletin) so that there isn't any confusion when you want to book holidays. We understand that the Easter holiday dates were particularly confusing last year, but all is much more straightforward this school year.

### **Essential need-to-know dates:**

**Thursday, 6<sup>th</sup> October:** Special Lunch Menu! We would like as many children as possible to have one of Yvonne's special cooked lunches on this date, as the higher the number of children, the greater the funding the school receives! So even if your child usually has sandwiches, please consider making a change to a cooked lunch on 6<sup>th</sup> October! Thank you.

**Friday 14 October from 2.30pm to 4pm:** Please join us for a **gardening/autumn sort out** in Mike's Meadow. Julia Butler (Forest School Julia) has kindly agreed to coordinate a team so that we can tidy up after a summer's rather mad growth! We hope that you can join us, choose a job and then collect your child/ren to help. Lots of child-friendly jobs and free refreshments

available! Details nearer the time but please put the date in your diary. Many hands make light work in Mike's Meadow, and every volunteer helps save us money needed to pay for maintenance.

**Friday 21 October and Monday 31 October** are INSET days, either side of the half term holiday so school will also be closed on these 2 days.

**Tuesday 1 November:** Whole School PHOTOS

**Week beginning 7 November:** Parent evenings

**Wednesday 9 November 3.00pm:** Second Hand Uniform Sale

**Thursday 10 November:** Flu immunisations (nasal spray) for Y1, 2 and 3

**Friday 11 November:** Come to school dressed in Mufti if you can donate a filled jar or soft toy (details to follow from FOBS)

**Friday 18 November:** Children in Need – come dressed as your sporting hero/for a favourite sport ready for some sporty action! Donations very welcome. Details to follow

**Saturday 26 November:** Christmas Fair – this wonderful FOBS occasion will feel the start of Christmas! Details to follow.

**7 December:** KS1 Nativity and Christmas Performance in the Church. Apple, Cherry and Willow Classes - 10.30am for the dress rehearsal and 6.30pm for the performance.

**Thursday 8 December:** 10am Whole school Advent Assembly in the Church.

**Monday 12 December:** Maple and Oak Performance. 1.30pm Dress rehearsal and performance at 6.30pm Tuesday 13 December.

The date for the Hazel and Elm class performance has yet to be finalized; details to follow.

You will notice that we have 'split' the lower and upper junior classes. This is a break from tradition (as all the junior children have performed together for many years. It was the whole school before that!). We are keen to try this new plan because we would like to give all the children more time on stage and a chance to perform rather than wait for the 'big' parts in Y2 and Y6.

**Christmas Lunch: Wednesday 14 December**

**End of term 2: Friday 16 December at 3.15pm**

Thank you everyone for your continued support,

Sarah