



Head's Newsletter

Volume 11, Issue number 1
September 2017

Dear Parents, Guardians and Carers

Welcome to the first issue of Volume 11 of the Head's newsletter. I am really pleased with how the new Year 7's have started their first year at BLS and it is nice to see the other students coming back as they move up into the next Year Group. Well done to all those children who have attended clubs over the last few weeks. It can take a bit of courage sometimes to turn up, especially if you do not know anybody, but it's also a great way to make friends.

New Build

We still await a decision on new build. Local Councillors are currently making a decision regarding a pot of potential funding and hopefully the outcome will be a positive one for BLS and other schools in the local area. I will keep you informed of any progress.

School Fund



A huge thank you to all the families that were generous enough to contribute to the School Fund last year. The maths department has been refurbished and we managed to make a little go a long way. The existing storage cupboards which seemed to be the opposite of the TARDIS¹ were ripped out. This means that there is now more room for our children and the teacher can get around a bag filled classroom without having to do some modern ballroom dancing moves. New desks and chairs have been purchased for some rooms with the remaining best recycled. The carpet in the corridor



has been replaced with vinyl and this does seem to bounce a lot more light around and makes the corridor much brighter. We will send a separate note out explaining how you can contribute to the School Fund.

Drama

After two long days, the auditions for this year's school show, 'High School Musical', are complete. This year's performance will be at the Crewe Lyceum and we will let you know how you can buy tickets nearer the time. We are also part of the Shakespeare School festival again which is on 23rd November. I went to it last year and it was great; I was especially moved by a performance by Greenbank Special School. If you get the chance to go, it is worth it.

Drop Off and Picking Up Students

Please, please do not drive onto the school site to drop children off in the mornings or collect at the end of the school day. There are too many buses and pedestrians to do this safely. The exception to this is any children who may have mobility issues. Also, as stated regularly, please can I remind you that no U-turns should be done in the front entrance as this is an accident waiting to happen.

¹ That is, larger on the outside than the inside would suggest. Two post it notes in the cupboard and it was full

Respect

We have been involved with Nantwich Fire station for a number of years now and the new recruits start on 21st September. I wish this year's cohort all the very best and I always enjoy getting the photos of the students all toggled up and ready for action.

Rugby

Rugby at Brine Leas started with a bang on Saturday 9th September with the Year 8 & 9 teams playing away at St Josephs. The Year 9 team won 12-0 and the Year 8 team lost a tight game 15-10. With both fixtures having very close scorelines, it shows how far Rugby has come in the last few years at Brine Leas. A special mention to Chris and Andrew Pemberton who volunteer to help train the students after school every Friday; without them this would not be possible.

Gold Standard

- Congratulations to Isaac Leydon (Year 7) who was recently part of the U13 Boys Athletics Team that took part in the North West Road Relays and became Cheshire champions.
- Well done to Corey Matravers (Year 11) who recently ran the Shrewsbury 10k coming 20th out of 400 runners and 9th in the U35 category.
- Ex-student James Bloomer has recently started his university education at the University of Montevallo, Alabama, after gaining a combined academic and athletic scholarship. Congratulations to James; we wish him a successful academic and tennis career.
- Congratulations go to another ex-student, Cal Ford, who plays rugby for Sale Sharks Academy but has recently been selected for the England U18 training squad.

Changes to the Timings of the Day

Attendance at clubs seems to be strong still, with quite literally over a hundred turning up for some sports practice. Despite some misgivings about the earlier finish, especially linked to primary school finishing, it does seem to be settling down and we are getting used to it. We will revisit it during the course of the year and see if there are real negatives.

Activity Day & Open Day

The first event of our Intake Programme for entry in 2018 is fast approaching. Activity Day is on Saturday 7th October 2017, so if you have a child in Year 5 or 6 then do get in those applications as places do go quickly. Our Open Morning and Evening follows soon after, on Wednesday 11th October 2017. The school will be open to prospective students and parents from 9.15 am until 12.00 noon for tours of the school. In the evening there will be a headteacher address at 6.30 pm which will be repeated at 7.30 pm and the school will be open until 8.30 pm to enable people to look around the different departments and look at samples of work.

Results

It is really such a hard year to see if we have done well or not. I think we have. As the new measures bed in it will become more obvious. It seems likely that, along with virtually every other school in the Local Authority, our Progress 8 will remain in the 'average' zone. Maybe average is the new good but we are working very hard to ensure that all the right pots are filled to give not only the school good headlines, but also to ensure that individual children achieve across a basket of subjects. We are waiting on a number of English Literature re-marks. At A level we gained 51% A*-B grades and 98.4% were A*-E.

Getting in Touch

We welcome and encourage communication with families. When there is a crisis every parent wants an instant response. I do have to point out that we cannot always react to the time scale that some families think is possible.

My teachers teach and my support staff are supporting children; whilst you may receive an acknowledgement, it may not be an answer. In addition, depending upon the situation, we often have to see a number of children which may cause a delay in the response. We will get back to you within a reasonable timeframe.

Good Schools Guide

There was information in the Chronicle over the summer which had us graded very low in some areas. I am disputing the data that this based on as I know that some other schools with very similar data to BLS have received a different grading.

Andrew Cliffe
September 2017

Dates for the Diary

Wednesday 27 th September 2017	-	Year 7 Information Evening
Thursday 28 th September 2017	-	Year 7 Instrumental Evening
Friday 29 th September 2017	-	PSCA Disco
Monday 2 nd October 2017	-	Year 7 and 12 Tutor Evening
Tuesday 3 rd October 2017	-	Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Intake Evening
Thursday 5 th October 2017	-	Academy Awards Evening
Saturday 7 th October 2017	-	Activity Day for Year 5 and 6 Pupils
Monday 9 th October 2017	-	Year 10 Information Evening
Wednesday 11 th October 2017	-	Open Morning and Evening
Friday 13 th October 2017	-	Inset Day (School Closed to Students)
Monday 16 th October 2017	-	Curriculum Enrichment Week Commences (Years 8, 9, 10, 12 & 13)
Monday 16 th – Friday 20 th October 2017	-	Work Experience Commences (Year 11)
Monday 16 th – Friday 20 th October 2017	-	Year 7 Menai Residential Visit
Friday 20 th – Sunday 22 nd October 2017	-	Tattenall Art Residential
Friday 20 th October 2017	-	School Closes for Half Term
Monday 30 th October 2017	-	School Re-opens
Tuesday 7 th November 2017	-	Year 8 Information Evening
Tuesday 14 th November 2017	-	Year 11 Parents' Evening
Monday 14 th November 2017	-	Year 11 Mock Exams Commence (for 2 weeks)
Monday 11 th December 2017	-	Year 13 Mock Exams commence (for 1 week)