

# Newsletter Autumn Term 1

## October 2017

Dear Parents and Carers,

We have had a great start to the new academic year. Our new pupils and staff have settled in – it is as though they have never been anywhere else. The school role is now 225 – the largest Special School in Northamptonshire.

I have enjoyed getting to know each and every one of the new pupils, each of them great characters and happy to be at Billing Brook.

### What's Happening in The School?

Our Achievement Assemblies this week, have celebrated our first month in school and the work on display and presented was stunning. I wish everyone could have experienced the rhymes and riddles created by year 8; the Motte and Bailey models that have been designed in World Around Us and the 6<sup>th</sup> Formers, presenting to us the “Virtual Babies” – Ari and Ted, who are part of their child care course. (Yes the babies do cry and do everything real babies do!) There are too many things to mention here, but our curriculum is exciting and the pupils respond by trying hard and producing wonderful work.



Of course, not all learning takes place in the classroom and our primary pupils have been learning about The Great Fire of London. We were fortunate to have a visit from the local Fire and Rescue Service team. The fire service showed the pupils all the equipment that is held in the fire engine including the hose, the children's favourite part!



The school has also been extremely busy with visits from many of you – whether it was for the open day, which was planned as part of the Roald Dahl celebration or during the recent parent consultation meetings this week and for the new parents, post admissions meetings. A highlight for me during our Roald Dahl celebrations was the assembly presented by our ASD department, where all the Teachers were Oompa-Loompas and the Head of Autism, Nikki Kennedy – Willy Wonka.



I can confidently say that learning at Billing Brook is creative, fun and sometimes a little bit crazy!

Our new School Council members have been appointed and have already been very active in school. They set up a “surgery” during one lunch time and have now presented me with a number of ideas for development. The one, I would really like to agree to is having Cats in school, but I don't really think that will work... maybe a dog or guinea pigs (watch this space).



## Reasons to celebrate: Congratulations to:



Everyone who has been involved in achieving the **Silver School Games Mark Award**. There were only 34 schools in Northamptonshire who have achieved this and Billing Brook is the only special school who has been awarded the Silver – well done to everyone



Everyone who was involved in helping the school achieve the IQM quality mark



**Thank you!** We had great support on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> September for our Macmillan Fundraising day – a great sum of **£228.27** Congratulations to Ms Key who was the winner of “Guess The Height”.

This fundraising was all the more poignant for a number of us, as a dear friend to the school, Maria Landy, our School Improvement Partner, who has been involved with the school for 10 years, lost her battle with cancer the previous Sunday.

## Safety



The new zig zag lines outside the school are working well and I am delighted that the road is clearer for buses and large vehicles

moving through. I do appreciate that when you visit you need to park further away, thank you for your understanding.



## Funding

In my last newsletter, I spoke about our budget cut. I know many of you will have heard the news that the government are introducing a new way of funding schools like ours. Sadly, I don't hold out much hope that this will be good news for us.

I also mentioned that we now have to ask you to financially support some of our school activities. These are Food Technology and Snack. We are asking you to contribute £1.00 a week for Food Tech; Snack £1.00 a week.

Please send the monies into school as soon as you are able to. We will be sending out individual reminders in the future

For those of you who sign up for free school meals, you will be entitled to access our Premium Points scheme, which can be used to subsidise these activities, you will therefore receive 62 pupil premium points instead of a 100.

## School Photographer

The Photographer will be in School on Friday, 20<sup>th</sup> October 2017.



## Online Safety

The pupils across the school this term have been learning about online safety. Part of the course is to find out how to be good digital citizens, how to protect our personal information and what to do if we ever feel unsafe or unsure about something online. We teach them to know how to talk to a trusted adult, take screen shots if needed and not to forward on any messages, videos or images. There are lots of sites which can also help at home if you need any advice including

<http://www.childnet.com/parents-and-carers> and <https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/parents-and-carers>

## Attendance

The one aspect of school life I am most disappointed in this term has been the number of requests for holidays in school term time. This is not acceptable. The law is very clear, as proven in the recent ruling in the Supreme Court, that a holiday is not an exceptional circumstance and all will be unauthorised. Those who do take their children out of school are at risk of being fined by Northamptonshire County Council (NCC). This fine does not come back into the school budget, but goes to NCC. Please consider this when planning ahead – children need to be in school 38 weeks of the year.

As a school we are also being very strict regarding attendance – for everyone. There is a national expectation that children's attendance should be 95%. We understand that children will be unwell sometimes, but it is our duty to raise our concerns with you and challenge the reason for absence. Ms Moulton, my Senior Deputy Headteacher leads on this for me and I know that she receives lots of phone calls if you receive letters. We will always try to help you sort out the reasons for absence, and I have recently been shown a letter where the transport providers had the wrong date for the start of term – so our registers will be corrected. However, we hope your child is fit, healthy and able to come to school every day.

## Flu Jabs



Having mentioned being healthy – you will have a letter regarding the flu jab. If you would like your child to have the jab, please complete the form and send it in to school by Friday 13<sup>th</sup> October 2017. The Flu jabs are going to be given on the 1<sup>st</sup> of November 2017 if you are in agreement.

## Harvest Festival

Our Harvest Festival is next Tuesday in the afternoon. This is a pupil led event, as we cannot accommodate everyone. We would be grateful if you could send in tinned, packet and dried food, as well as fruit for the class Harvest Boxes. These boxes will be given to The Salvation Army for them to distribute to those who are less fortunate than ourselves.



Thank you in advance.



## Sixth Form Centre and Café

Our **Sixth Form centre** is finally going to be handed over to us next week. It is looking amazing and we are very excited that the end is in sight.

Once we have approval from the Buildings Officer we can use the premises, then we shall be arranging for furniture and equipment to be moved across. My thanks to both parents and the Sixth Formers for your understanding in this delay – it is worth the wait. We shall be inviting Sixth Form parents to the new site next term and opening our café towards the end of November. I shall let you know the dates, so you can come and see our new venture.

We are also developing a small preloved section in our retail area. If you have any of the following items in good condition, then please send them into school:

- **Baby Clothes**
- **Childrens Clothes**
- **Books**
- **CD's**
- **DVD's.**

We are **NOT** collecting adult clothes as space is limited or bric a brac.

At the end of this newsletter there are a number of dates for next term – I hope by having these you will be able to support us and come into school often.

Kind regards,



C.M. Grant  
Headteacher





## Billing Brook School Dates Autumn Term 2017

The timings of the school day are:

Drop off: 08:35am – 08:45am

Pick Up: 3:05pm – 3:15pm – lessons do not finish until 3:00pm

Tuesday 10 <sup>th</sup> October	<b>Pupils ONLY</b> Harvest Festival Afternoon 1:30pm – 2:30pm Food donations for local charity
Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> October	School Photographer
23 <sup>rd</sup> October – 27 <sup>th</sup> October	Half Term
Monday 6 <sup>th</sup> November	Parent drop in afternoon 1.30pm – 2.30pm
Friday 10 <sup>th</sup> November	Remembrance Assembly – <b>Pupils only</b> Please purchase Poppies
Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> November	Fundraiser: Spotacular – Children in Need Please wear something spotty! £1 donation
Friday 24 <sup>th</sup> November	Chocolate Mufty Day – your child can wear jeans and casual wear. Please donate at least two chocolate items (which then become chocolate hampers we raffle).  Time 2 Talk (T2T) 10:00am – 11:00am Parent Informal meeting
Wednesday 6 <sup>th</sup> December	Christmas Fayre – 5:00pm – 7:00pm Everyone welcome
Monday 11 <sup>th</sup> December	Key Stage 3 pupils – Cinema Trip Key stage 4 performance 1:15pm
Tuesday 12 <sup>th</sup> December	Key Stage 3 performance 1:15pm
Wednesday 13 <sup>th</sup> December	Primary Performance 1:15pm
Thursday 14 <sup>th</sup> December	ASD Performance – morning and afternoon
Friday 15 <sup>th</sup> December	Vlth Form Christmas – at the new centre
Monday 18 <sup>th</sup> December	Christmas Jumper Day; Christmas Hat day and Christmas Dinner – all pupils (including sandwich eaters are encouraged to have a Christmas lunch) Please send in a large fresh orange for the Christingle service.
Tuesday 19 <sup>th</sup> December	Christingle – 10:00am at the Salvation Army – Everyone is welcome Last day of Term

**School closed until Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2018.**

