



Be happy
Be successful
Be proud
Be Bankfields

Key Dates for next half term:

- 6.12.24 - Christmas Market from 2:00pm.
- 10.12.24 - Reception Nativity.
- 13.12.25 - KS1 Christmas Performance.
- 19.12.24 - KS2 Christmas Performance.
- 19.12.24 - Reindeer Run in aid of Zoe's Place.
- 20.12.24 - A very special visit from Santa...
- 20.12.24 - Break up for the Christmas holidays.



Autumn Term 2024 Newsletter

It's been an incredibly busy start to the school year and we can't believe we have had our first half term already. The children have settled into school and I am so impressed by their commitment to and engagement in their learning. The children are such a pleasure to teach at Bankfields and the ongoing support from parents and carers is invaluable. Everyone has adapted really well to our new school timings with attendance and punctuality improving across school.

OPAL

As a school, we are continuing to search for ways to improve and support our pupils' physical and mental health and wellbeing. Our Thrive, Sunshine Circles, Counselling and Family Support Worker all play a key part in this, but we wanted to really look at how we could improve our break and lunchtimes for all children.

Over the last year, we have invested a lot of our fundraising money in buying new equipment for the children to enjoy, but we still feel that things could be improved further. Therefore, we have decided to invest in OPAL (Outdoor Play and Learning). The OPAL approach is an award-winning program that aims to improve children's playtime through physical activity, socialisation, and creativity. The idea is to broaden the range of activities and opportunities the children have access to at break and lunchtime to ensure that they make the most of their playtime throughout the year. I've included a link below to show how OPAL playtimes have been developed in another school.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-8CGWYM15OE>.

We are going to be sending a separate parent survey which seeks to gather your views about playtime which will help us as we develop our OPAL playtimes. I would be really grateful if you could complete this. Over the next 18 months, we will be developing new areas of play for the children across school and below are just a few examples of the ideas we would like to develop:

STEEL RIVER

ACADEMY TRUST

- A giant sandpit.
- A playground dedicated to wheels and movement (such as scooters, balance bikes and go-karts).
- Activities to develop balance and core strength such as space hoppers and balance boards.
- Small world and creative play (including dressing up clothes and a stage with music) for those children who want to engage in more imaginative play.
- Tree swings and wild flower areas.
- A space dedicated to ball sports such as football, basketball, tag rugby and hockey.

We will continue to send more information as our OPAL playtimes develop over the next 18 months, and hopefully you will see the positive impact for your children.

Retirement

At the end of half term, our lunchtime supervisor, Mrs Larkin retired. Mrs Larkin has worked at Bankfields Primary for over 24 years and we are incredibly grateful to her for the years she has committed to our school. We wish her a long, healthy and happy retirement.

Reception Outdoor Area

We are incredibly excited to announce that we will be redeveloping the Reception outdoor area starting on Monday 25th November. This is something that we have wanted to do for a long time but have never been able to fund through our school budget. Fortunately, we have been granted some funding through the Local Authority in conjunction with Persimmon Homes which will enable this work to go ahead.

Creative Play are going to be working on site over a 2-3 week period to build a creative outdoor space for our youngest children to play and learn in. This will include new zones such as a mud kitchen, music area, a water wall as well as a brand new climbing frame and slide structure with rubber flooring. This will enable us to enhance the children's provision outdoors and we are really looking forward to this work commencing. During these works, Reception children will enter school via the first ramp in the Reception area leading into the cloakroom. Access through the Reception outdoor area will be closed off to all, so parents and carers of children in Year 1 to Year 4 will have to access school via the opposite side of the building. Any parents or carers who require access via the access ramp are able to use the main office entrance.

PSQM

We are pleased to announce that we have been awarded the Primary Science Quality Mark which recognises the high profile science has in our school as well as the high quality of

PQSM continued...

teaching and learning that is delivered across our science curriculum. As a result, this ensures the best outcomes for our pupils in their learning.

Harvest Collection

I'd like to express my thanks to all of our parents and carers who donated groceries for our harvest collection. We were able to support some of our families by donating food hampers to them, and we donated the spare food to our local Salvation Army in Eston. This will ensure that your kind contributions will not only help our school community but the wider community too. We are grateful to the Salvation Army Eston as they always generously support a number of our families with gifts for the children at Christmas time, so it was great to be able to return this kindness and generosity.

Christmas is approaching...

Is it too early to mention Christmas?! The festive season is fast approaching and Mrs Hamilton recently sent out the key dates for this term which includes your children's Christmas performances as well as other dates such as the Christmas Market and other events. Please keep an eye on Parent Mail as we will be sending updates regarding tickets for the Christmas Shows in the coming weeks. If any parents, carers or members of the local community would like to reserve a stall at our Christmas Market, please contact the school office.

Remembrance Services

Our school council will be representing Bankfields Primary School at the Normanby Remembrance Service taking place on Monday 11th November. All of the other children will be taking part in a Remembrance Assembly and observing the two minute's silence at the same time.

Our Head Boys and Girls in Year 6 will also be invited to take part in the annual Remembrance Parade and Service taking place in Eston Square on Sunday 10th November. This is always a wonderful event where so many members of the local community attend to remember the service and sacrifices the Armed Forces make on our behalf. It would be great if you were able to come along to this event too. Fingers crossed that we have lovely weather as we have done over recent years.

This week, the children have been creating beautiful pieces of art work connected to Remembrance and these will be displayed in the local shops around Eston over the next week in preparation for Sunday's Remembrance Service.

