

Dear River Bank parents and carers

We have had a busy and productive term at River Bank since we came back in September. That first day of term seems like such a long time ago! Like many other schools and work places; we have faced a number of challenges this term in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic. We have seen a number of staff and pupils absent; which has had an impact on the day to day running of the school. School staff have worked well as a team to make sure your children have continued to receive their normal lessons and I write today to thank you for your patience and understanding. We have continued with all of our planned extra-curricular activities and trips – making sure your children did not miss out on these experiences. This week, pupils have enjoyed a Christmas pantomime, either at the Grove Theatre, or in school for the Reception children. I was also privileged to watch the Reception children perform their version of 'Whoopsie Daisy Angel'. We were pleased to be able to do this four times in a day so that we could safely manage a parent audience. Our community of staff and families have shown a real resilience this term and we look forward to another busy and exciting term when pupils return on Wednesday January 5th.

Thank you for your generous donations to the Luton Foodbank. This term we have also raised an incredible £590 for Children in Need and £236.62 for the Royal British Legion. Despite the hardships that many families have faced this term – we are so proud that our pupils and families always have the time and thought to consider others who are less fortunate – thank you.

I hope that you all have a wonderful holiday with your families. Best wishes, David Sansom.

Staff Changes

We are sad to say that Mrs Lee (Otter Class) will be leaving us at the end of this term. Mrs Lee has recently moved house and has taken job at a school closer to home. We would like to thank Mrs Lee for her wonderful service to our school and this community and we send her off with our very best wishes. Miss Stimson, who has worked in the class already, will take over the class in January.

Extended Day and Trips

Extended day for years 5 and 6 will resume in the week beginning Monday 17th January. A letter will be sent home when we return regarding additional afterschool clubs with the hope that these will also start in the week beginning Monday 17th January.

Trips and Workshops

Year 5 took part in an ancient Egyptian workshop. The children were taught about the mummification process, the different roles within ancient Egyptian society and even ancient Egyptian dancing. The children made a great effort with their outfits and had a fantastic day.

Year 3 visited a Gurdwara in Milton Keynes, children were able to see the places and objects that are important in Sikhism and get any of their questions answered. We were humbled by the generosity and kindness of people who welcomed us, we were even offered a free drink, snack and fruit.

EYFS have enjoyed a visit to Wardown Park. The children were so excited exploring the changes that happen in autumn, looking at the leaves and even spotting a squirrel burying its food! EYFS children also had a visit from a rather scary visitor – a dinosaur! The classes attended a dinosaur workshop where the children learnt about different types of dinosaurs and even got to hold a fossil.



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Year 6 PE Lessons

Year 6 PE lessons for Hazel, Oak, Ash and Elm Class have been moved to a Monday and Tuesday. Year 6 pupils will need to wear PE kit on these days.

Choir

On Thursday 2nd December, our school choir, the River Bank Rockers, went to Luton Airport to sing festive favourites. The choir sang their hearts out and had fun! Members of the public enjoyed watching and listening, and donated generously to MacMillan Cancer Research.

Sporting Events

A number of our pupils have represented our school at sporting events. Their determination, attitude and behaviour were a credit to their parents and our school. Well done to you all.

Multi-Sports: Sofia, Renis, Yaqub, Aisha, Rafael and Monika.

Sports Hall Athletics: Angelica, Artan, Rahim, Inayah, Mikaeel, Aliza, Bilal, Richard, Baran and Michelle.

Football: Nihad, Zain, Bilal, Sulaiman, Jibran, Yusuf N, Eesa, Jason, Yusuf A and Aahil.

Multi-Sports: Hisham, Mahdi, Shawn, Merlon, Ishtiyag, Muaaz, Maya, Harmanaat, Aleena, Dawud, Amirah and Arafat.

Netball: Liliana, Alijah, Asma, Akilah, Aminah, Aimee, Aleksandra and Alaia.

Mobile Phone use on School Premises

Many schools have a policy that do not allow parents to use their mobile phones while on school premises. However, we are aware that the parents may occasionally have to take emergency calls. We would like to ask that parents and carers do not use phones where possible and avoid taking photographs and receiving or making video calls while on the school site. This will continue to ensure that we safeguard all our pupils and can dismiss children safely at the end of the day.

Pupil Absence

We have seen a large increase in pupils taking time out of school to visit family in other parts of the country or in overseas destinations. We understand that travel restrictions in the last 20 months have made it difficult to connect with families, especially where family members may be unwell. Unfortunately, we are unable to authorise visits like this and extended absences are likely to lead to the local authority issuing fines to parents. These are issued at a cost of £60 per parent, per child. Pupils may also be at risk of losing their place at our school. If you need to remove your children from school for any length of time; please fill in a leave of absence request – these can be given to you at the school office.

Extreme Weather Conditions

Please be reminded that should there be an occasion that we have to close the school due to extreme weather conditions that would make it unsafe for our pupils and staff to attend, notification will be sent by text message to parents; as well as updates on our school website. Although the school will only be closed in extreme circumstances pupils would be expected to attend as normal if we open.

Dates For Your Diary

Thursday 16 th December	- Break up for Christmas
Tuesday 4 th January	- Staff training, school closed to children
Wednesday 5 th January	- Children return to school
Tuesday 18 th January	- Badger Class assembly 08:50

January's value of the month FRIENDSHIP