



THE BATT C.E. SCHOOL



THE BATT CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Corn Street, Witney, Oxon, OX28 6DY

Executive Head: Ms Debbie Seccull
Head of School: Mrs K Harding-Jones

Telephone: 01993 702392
office@thebattschool.org.uk
www.thebattschool.org.uk

Dear Families

Welcome to the summer term. I hope that you all enjoyed a peaceful break over Easter.

Easter

I would like to begin this letter with a heartfelt thank you to staff and children at The Batt and St Mary's Infants for their contribution to our Easter Services which were a wonderful way to end the Spring term. Both services for me captured the reflection and joy that Easter brings, though it was a particular delight to see both communities coming together in our infant Easter Service where Easter bonnets and beautiful singing created a wonderful age-appropriate celebration for our youngest children.

Whole School Vision

Love Everyone, Love the Adventure of Learning

The Batt is an inclusive and nurturing school, guided by Christ's teaching on love through the parable of the Good Samaritan. We enable everyone in our community to flourish by encouraging supportive friendships, respect for self and others and perseverance in all things. This develops a life-long love of learning and commitment to service.

'Love your neighbour, as you love yourself' Luke 10:27

Parent consultation on The Batt School's new vision for school is now complete. Only two issues were raised in this consultation – one which suggested that a greater focus on how the school will create confident learners and another which raised the wording of 'Love Everyone' and whether this might prevent children from realising that some people might pose dangers to children.

In response to the first concern, I would like parents to be aware that The Batt has an intention for our curriculum which complements the whole school vision and states:

Embedded within our curriculum are 4 golden threads through which we approach all learning:

Exploration – children's experience of learning is engaging and immersive whenever possible and involves first hand experiences such as visits and workshops which stimulate their interest

Cooperation – children's learning is collaborative, involving effective relationships with children and adults in school, and they work with others to explore new learning and ideas

Communication – children are given opportunities to articulate their learning effectively in a variety of ways including through discussion, presentation, writing and technology so building life-long communication skills

Innovation – children's learning becomes embedded so that they are confident in applying knowledge and skills independently in a wider range of contexts and independent thought and learning is promoted

We endeavour to ensure that our children understand that education is the key to unlocking a world of success and opportunity, whilst our core Christian values of friendship, respect and perseverance ensure understanding of what it means to be a good human.





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You can read more about [our curriculum](#) on the school website and remind yourself of the vision for both our schools at the end of this bulletin.

In teaching children about 'loving everyone' we are of course drawing on Christ's teaching and will be clear about the meaning of this message in contrast to teaching children how to protect themselves and be safe.

Indeed, the next is now to work to ensure members of our community understand the school vision and how this is lived out in practice.

Early Years Parental Feedback

Many thanks to those parents or reception children at both schools who took the time to give feedback in relation to Early Years provision.

We were delighted to note lovely comments from parents:

"The relationships the staff have with children is really lovely."

"Our child is not just learning the required curriculum but his social and emotional development is always considered and we know he enjoys school."

but are also reviewing notes on what we can do better as we plan provision moving forwards.

You can find full details of the [survey on the school website](#).

Parent Engagement

Consultations and questionnaires are two ways we try and engage with parents and we are always seeking others. Alongside newsletters and our school websites, we are trialing the use of Instagram at The Batt this term as a means of giving parents an insight into what is happening in school during the course of the week.

We have chosen Instagram as the social media platform to use having spoken to other local school who are using very successfully to engage with parents. The account is [thebattschoolwitney](#) if you'd like to follow it.

We will review how this has worked at the end of the summer term and will then consider whether to extend the project further and to include St Mary's Infants.

We are also considering running a series of school/parent forums where we are able to share and discuss school priorities with parents over a cup of tea. Topics we might cover would include curriculum development, Special Educational Needs Provision, The Batt and St Mary's partnership, Homework etc. Please look out for a separate letter asking for parents to express what topics they might be interested in.

Site Work

Site work continues at The Batt, and we are pleased to have secured capital funding via ODST to refurbish the rear link corridor and storage area where the floor is in need of urgent repair. This work





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had been planned for the summer holidays, but we are now hopeful that it will be completed earlier than this.

We are now working on plans to resource the newly refurbished KS1 garden and to redevelop a space within school to create an intervention hub in support of our children with SEND.

The appointment of our new caretaker, Mr Graham Reynolds, who started work just before Easter, also means that we are now able to address ongoing maintenance issues more effectively.

Industrial Action

You will of course be aware of ongoing industrial action by the largest of the Education Unions, the NEU. We have sought to minimize the impact of this on children's education and this has been facilitated up to now by the flexibility of other staff in school. However, in planning for the most recent strike days it hasn't been possible to limit the impact on school to the same extent.

Further details about the action and proposed class closures can be found [here](#).

Curriculum Development

By the end of this half term, we believe that the first stage in our wider curriculum development project at The Batt will be complete.

This has involved us reviewing non-core subjects to ensure that coherently planned and sequenced curriculum planning is in place, supporting children in developing knowledge and skills progressively in a broad range of subjects.

Much of our recent work has focused on the re-development of the history and geography curriculum and these new plans will be in place from September 2023.

We are now working collaboratively across both schools to ensure that infants will receive the same quality of curriculum and provision whichever setting they attend and that all children begin Year 3 with the same agreed core knowledge and skills. As part of this core subject leadership (phonics, English, maths and science) will be consistent across both schools as it has been with phonics and maths this year.

Infant teachers will also collaborate on the focus for wider curriculum learning. However, it should be noted that there is no prescription for lessons or delivery to be identical in both schools – more that children will meet at the beginning of Key Stage 2 with common key learning embedded to support their future learning journey.

Proposals for extension to the School Day at The Batt CE Primary and St Mary's Infant Schools

Current timings of the school day at both schools do not meet DfE requirement of 32.5 hours per week (6.5 hours a day) – expected from September 2023. You can read more information on this [here](#).

In line with this we are currently publishing school opening times on the school website which demonstrate we do not yet meet the expectation of 32.5 compulsory hours per week.

St Mary's





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8.55am – 2.55pm = 6 hours daily (30 hours a week)

The Batt

Infants 8.55am – 3.05pm = 6 hours 10 minutes daily (30 hours 50 minutes a week)

Juniors 8.50 – 3.10pm = 6 hours 20 minutes daily (31 hours 40 minutes)

Following discussion with senior leaders, governors and staff the following changes to the school day are proposed:

St Mary's

Registration 8.45am – 3.15pm (Doors open at 8.35am and 3.10am)

The Batt

Registration 8.40am – 3.10pm (Gates open at 8.30am and 3.05pm)

We are aware that some parents will be dropping off and picking up at both schools and as now staff will be present during drop off and pick up periods to support children who are dropped off before registration or picked up slightly later than the end of the school day.

Should you wish to make comments about these proposals please can you email the relevant school office by **Friday 19th May**, using School Timing Changes as your subject line. These comments will be added to final discussions involving school leaders and governors with the intention of being able to share agreed timings with parents by the end of this half term.

Yours sincerely

Deborah Seccull
Executive Headteacher

