

Birtley House School



Autumn 2017

Welcome Back to the Autumn Term 1

I hope you all had a restful and fun holiday!!!

Thank you so much to everyone for their kind and generous presents to staff before the summer. We had a lovely Indian meal out followed by a trip to 'The Panic Rooms' in Gravesend (which we failed at!), however it was great fun and we thoroughly recommend it.

New Staff Member and Congratulations

Welcome to Mrs McColl who has joined our staff team part time. Mrs McColl has many years' experience working with SEN children and she is already really enjoying her teaching here.

Congratulations to Mrs Hull and Mrs New who have both now qualified as HLTAs (Higher Level Teaching Assistants) with Distinctions. This means that they are both now qualified to teach. Well done!

New Gate Times

The new gate procedure is working well. The carpark is less congested and the children settle quickly and calmly into their classes. Please remember that gates open at 8:45am and close at 8:55am. After this time you must enter via the main office, sign your child in and you will receive a late mark in the new e-registration system.

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Communication

We have always aimed to communicate quickly with parents when concerns/issues arise. On most occasions we respond (even to non-urgent emails and messages) the same day. However, we hope that parents do understand that both Mrs Austin and Mrs Sillitoe also teach as well as all their other numerous responsibilities. Some staff are part time and therefore may not be in school to clarify an issue on the same day as a parent message is received. We still aim to respond to all non-urgent messages within at least two working days of receipt.

We have taken on a new Management Information System and all our registers and admissions are now online. From Spring 2018 we will also be using this system, on a trial period, to communicate with parents. All going well we hope to replace the blue home school link books with this online system as from September 2018. We hope this will be more efficient than writing messages in books that can get lost or misplaced.

New Library

We are so grateful to the wonderful school PTA for the contribution to our school library improvement. Our Harry Potter themed library is already a firm favourite with the children and we have seen their reading motivation improve. Each class has a library slot and this area is so much more inviting and magical than previously. We have also had a very generous donation from the 'Kent Golfing Society' which has allowed us to purchase a new dyslexia friendly scheme of books.



Drum Lessons

We are excited to be able to offer drum lessons for the first time. A lot of children have signed up and we can't wait for the first concert!

Play Therapy

We can now offer Play Therapy again. Please see leaflet on page 4. This was previously a really popular therapy and our lovely play therapy room is feeling rather unloved! 1:1 sessions cost £40. Please let us know if you are interested.

Maths Whizz (www.whizz.com)

Maths Whizz is a really super online interactive maths program which we use in class and can also be used at home as a 1:1 tutoring system to help your child get better in all areas of numeracy and maths. There will be a half hour Maths Whizz demonstration for parents after school on **Thursday 28th September 3:30 – 4pm** in Moles class. After this if you wish to purchase the online subscription (one year) you can do this through school for a cheaper price than through Maths Whizz directly (£125 rather than £149).

Bowles Residential Trip – Tuesday 15th May – Friday 18th May 2018

<https://bowles.rocks/schools-and-colleges/>

We are offering our residential outdoor adventure course again next year to all pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6. This is a brilliant opportunity for pupils to develop physical skills, social communication and build confidence (but mainly to have fun!!) There will be a presentation for parents about the Bowles trip after school on **Thursday 12th October 3:30 – 4:15pm** in Moles class. Pupils are welcome to attend.



New Beginnings Play Therapy

If your child, or a child you know has/is:

- **Quiet and withdrawn**
- **Displaying behavioural issues**
- **ADHD/Autism or any other SEN**
- **Poor concentration skills**
- **Suffered a bereavement**
- **Attachment issues**
- **Going through a family
breakdown/change**

**Play Therapy could help these children
meet their full potential.**

**For more information or an informal
introduction, feel free to contact me.**

**Hannah Man
Certified Play Therapist (PTUK)
T: 07789 116859
newbeginningspt@hotmail.co.uk
www.newbeginningsplaytherapy.co.uk**

Dates for your Diary.....

Friday 29 th September	PTA arranging MacMillan Coffee Afternoon 2.15-3pm
Tuesday 3 rd October	Otters and Squirrels trip to Kent Life
Friday 6 th October	School Shut Staff attending TES SEN Show in London
W/b 16 th October	Parents' Evening – Times TBC – Details to follow
Monday 23rd October – Friday 27th October	Half Term
Thursday 23 rd November	Hedgehogs and Moles Trip to Science Museum in London – Details to follow
Friday 24 th November	Flu Immunisation for Yrs 1-4 – Details to follow
Monday 4 th December (Afternoon)	Xmas Play at West Kingsdown School – 2-3pm – Details to follow
Tuesday 5 th December (Evening)	Xmas Play followed by wine and mince pies at West Kingsdown Hall 6-8pm – Details to follow
Tuesday 12 th December	Christingle Service at St Edmunds Church West Kingsdown 2.30-3pm – Parents Welcome – Details to follow
Thursday 14 th December	Whole school trip to Cinderella at The Orchard Theatre Dartford – 2pm performance – Details to follow
Friday 15th December	End of Term School shuts at 2pm