



# BANWELL PRIMARY SCHOOL

**Belong Believe Achieve**

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27 June 2023

Dear Parents & Carers,

## CLASS AND STAFFING UPDATES FOR SEPTEMBER 2023

As we near the end of this academic year I would like to acknowledge what a successful year it has been at Banwell. We have a highly skilled and dedicated staff team who have an unwavering focus on high quality learning and experiences for all children. We have a fantastic looking school, now that the work at the front has (almost) been completed and we are finally a school within the ELAN (Extend Learning Academies Network) MAT (Multi Academy Trust). All of these things come together to make our school a very special and exciting place to be.

### Classes September 2023

You will be aware that in September 2021 we reduced from seven classes to six due to financial pressures the school was facing along with a reduction in pupil numbers. Whilst in September 2023 we will be seeing an increase in our new reception numbers (17 are due to join us compared to just 9 in September 2022) the financial impact of this won't be seen yet. From September 2023, it is anticipated that we will have 121 pupils on roll across the school. We are therefore now at a stage where we need to reduce from six classes to five. This means that some of our classes will have children from more than one year group in them and so will be a mixed year group class.

As a school we now have lots of experience in planning for and managing mixed year classes as we have done this with YR, Y1 and Y2 for the last two years. Many small village schools have mixed year group classes and I, along with other members of the Banwell team, have direct experience of working in this way. There are many positives which I know the children benefit from. It means that all children are taught in classes that are more equal in size and it also provides an opportunity to mix groups of children up. This often means new friendships are established which ultimately leads to wider circles of friends. As we are a small school our teachers already plan closely together but having mixed age classes only strengthens this collaborative work.

In September we will be continuing to split our Y1 cohort (current reception) but will also be splitting our September Y4 cohort (current Y3). The class structure and staffing will be as follows:



Class	Teacher	Class Name	Classroom	Teaching Assistant
Mixed Reception & Year 1	Mrs Bevan	Ladybirds	Current YR / Y1 classroom	Mrs Gardiner / Mrs Venn
Mixed Year 1 & Year 2	Miss Dockerty	Dragonflies	Current Y1 / Y2 classroom	Mrs Gardiner / Mrs Venn Mr Fuller
Mixed Year 3 & Year 4	Miss Dennett	Butterflies	Current Y3 classroom	Mr Fuller
Mixed Year 4 & Year 5	Mr Davis & Mrs Rogers	Fireflies	Current Y5 classroom	Mrs Hackeson
Year 6	Mr Farmer	Crickets	Current Y6 classroom	

We have named the classes after insects this year to continue our outdoor creatures theme. Having class names helps the children to identify as a group rather than just a year group number.

Where year groups are split - September 2023 Y1 (current YR) and Y4 cohorts (current Y3), parents will receive a separate email today informing them which class their child will be in. Teachers looked at the best way to split their classes using a range of factors when doing this (friendship groups, social and emotional development, academic capability, date of birth...etc).

The reception, Year 1 & Year 2 children will continue to do a lot of learning together, just as they have done successfully for the last two years. This will include all children having access, at times, to the play based provision. Phonics and maths will often be taught in individual year groups with the adults in these classrooms frequently working across all year groups.

Mr Davis, Miss Dennett and Mrs Rogers will work closely next year to plan the learning for Y4 children in both classes. The children will be taught in their own year groups for maths for some of the week. I am looking forward to teaching maths to the Y4 children during this time.

### **Staffing Changes**

As we near the end of the school year I also need to let you know about some staff changes that will be happening.

Mr Jason Nicolaides will be leaving us in July. He has secured a Deputy Headship post and his new school are very lucky to be having him. Whilst he has only been at Banwell for two years he has very quickly become an integral and well liked member of the team. We wish him the best of luck in his new job.



Following 20 years of working at Banwell, Mrs Michelle Lynam has made the decision to leave and start a new chapter in her life. Throughout her time with us she has worked in classrooms with children and in the school office too. She has been an incredibly dedicated member of the team and she will be missed by us all. We wish her well for the future.

After 16 years at Banwell Mrs Jo Arnold will be leaving us in the summer too. She has accepted the position of Community Engagement Worker for Off the Record (a mental health charity supporting young people). We are obviously very sad to be losing Mrs Arnold but know that this role will be an exciting new challenge for her. I am sure you will all join me in wishing her the best of luck. We are now in the process of looking for a new Learning Mentor and will let you know as soon as we have appointed.

Finally, Mrs Bradbury will be stepping down from her role as After School Club Playworker at the end of this school year. Mrs Caroline Davis will take on the role in September and has already begun working with Mrs Bradbury to ensure a smooth transition. Mrs Bradbury will continue in her roles as Breakfast Club Playworker, Learning Support Assistant and Lunchtime Supervisor so we will still see plenty of her.

The children have been informed about all of the information in this letter in their classes today.

As always, if you have any questions please get in touch.

Best wishes,



Claire Pocock  
Headteacher

