



Beechwood Primary School



**WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

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NEWS FROM THE INTERIM EXECUTIVE BOARD (IEB)

Dear Parents/Carers

We hope you all enjoyed the Easter Break and are ready for a busy Summer Term. At the end of last term, in addition to saying goodbye to Mr Davies, who had a really enjoyable party, we also said goodbye to Paula Whitehead and our SENDCo Mrs Abi Reilly, who has taken up a new and exciting opportunity in a specialist school. We would like to take this opportunity to thank them for the hard work whilst at Beechwood and wish them well in the future.

Much of the building programmed for the Easter Break was completed, although the wet weather has delayed some of the work on the roof ventilation units. The new classroom in the Extension 3 has been handed to the school and is being currently used by Year 4 who are settling into their new environment. As the works around the school are being completed the builder will be removing their offices and stores from the site and making good and repairing as they go. Improvements to the toilets near FS have been delayed by the sanitary ware not being available and this work will now be carried out at a later date to be decided but hopefully with limited impact on school life.

In terms of further updates, we have meetings next week after which a fuller picture may become clear and we can then provide a more detailed view to the parents

Beechwood Swimming Pool

Every year, at the start of the summer term, the Beechwood swimming pool is prepared for use. In recent years, school funding has become more challenging, and consequently the swimming pool has suffered from a lack of investment. Each year, the effort and cost required to prepare and maintain the swimming pool increases. The swimming pool is currently in such a poor state that the IEB is currently undertaking a risk assessment to establish whether it can be made safe for the children to use; and at what cost. The inevitable conclusion is that for the swimming pool to have a future, it will need significant investment.

There are several ways in which investment could be achieved.

1. The school could use its annual allocation of capital funding to repair the pool. This would mean prioritising the swimming pool over other alternative uses, such as maintaining and refreshing older parts of the school. However, the capital monies are unlikely to be sufficient as the pool, boilers and changing areas require a considerable amount of work.

2. Parents could be asked to pay a larger weekly sum. At the current rate of £3, use of the swimming pool, costs the school money. Even an increase to £5 or £6 per week would be insufficient to cover the deficit and raise enough additional money for repairs.
3. A fund could be established, or money sought from another source. As the sums involved are significant, the likelihood is that it would take a long time to raise the necessary funds, during which time the condition of the pool would deteriorate further.

There appear to be no easy answers. While undertaking the risk assessment the IEB will gain more information on the likely repair costs, so that we can all be better informed about the scale of the problem. If we are able to safely open the pool this year we will do our best to ensure that this happens. The purpose of this letter is to make parents and carers aware that unless significant funds can be found, this may well be the last year that the Beechwood swimming pool can open safely.

School Clubs

After much debate and thoughtful consideration, we have made the difficult decision to reduce the number of after school clubs that we offer at Beechwood. By comparison with other Wokingham schools Beechwood has run an extraordinary amount of enrichment clubs and we know the value children and parents feel they bring to our school. However, as you are aware, our school is currently placing a very strong emphasis on raising attainment and rates of children's progress.

We are therefore asking teachers to focus on improving educational provision. In order to provide them with the time they need for lesson planning, marking and professional development it has been necessary to reduce their workload in other aspects of school life, including clubs.

To ensure that we strike the right balance we will be asking the children, through the school council, to nominate their favourite clubs, so that we can maintain as many of these as possible. We feel sure your children will continue to benefit from a variety of clubs and we thank you for your continued support of Beechwood.

As soon as we have a revised list of clubs, we will publish these in the next newsletter.

Thank you for your continued support

Beechwood IEB