

### Dear Parents and Carers,

It has been good getting to know many of our new families who have started school for the first time. Also we have been getting to know new members of staff.

### School Priorities for 2019 – 2020

At the last governing body meeting the priorities for Ben Jonson were agreed. These priorities will shape the work of the school for the next year. We look at how well the school did last year and we use this information and data to decide on what we are doing this year. We consult with all the staff members and the governors to finally come up with the key priorities for the year. And here they are...

**The school's core purpose is to ensure all children, groups and individuals, make good progress. In particular, our aim is to ensure that those we deem disadvantaged are able to make progress alongside their peers and any gaps in attainment are diminished. We will do this by:**

**Fostering relationships and independence**

**Building reading power**

**Developing a responsive curriculum**

Thank you to those parents who came to my meeting about the year ahead, where we talked about each of these priorities and how families can be involved.

So here are some of things we are doing for the following priority:

### Fostering relationships and independence

We know that children behave very well at Ben Jonson and that their learning behaviours are developing all the time. Ofsted said this and visitors and guests in the school tell us all the time! Your children do you credit. What we want to support children in becoming more confident in managing their feelings and have the ability to resolve conflicts more successfully by themselves. We know that forming secure relationships with each other and being clear about rights and responsibilities leads to a secure and positive learning environment for all of us. To this end, the school has agreed to a restorative approach to guide our interactions and relationships with each other – staff to staff, staff to children, children to children and children to staff. I shared these principles with the parents at my meeting last week. You will see these principles displayed throughout the school.

### Restorative principles at Ben Jonson



- Relationships matter
- Difference is an asset
- Be more curious than judgemental
- Be more collaborative than competitive
- Be both supportive and challenging
- Be responsible for what's yours
- Enable and allow others to be responsible for what's theirs
- Listen to understand
- Ask more than tell
- If anything isn't clear, ask
- Be kind



Together as a staff we distilled the principles into three words *brave*, *kind* and *curious*.

Year 6 helped us think about how these three words can help us at school. Parents who attended the meeting asked if you could have a copy of these words at home, so I have copied them here.

The Ben Jonson Way— thoughts from Year 6



What Caspian class said about what being brave means		
	<i>brave</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fearless</li><li>• Taking risks</li><li>• Courageous</li><li>• Standing up for yourself</li><li>• Standing up for others</li><li>• Honest</li></ul>
What Arabian class said about what being kind means		
	<i>kind</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Helpful</li><li>• Understanding</li><li>• Good manners</li><li>• Respectful</li><li>• Tolerant</li><li>• Generous</li></ul>
What Persian class said about what being curious means		
	<i>curious</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Perseverance</li><li>• Inquisitive</li><li>• Observing and analysing</li><li>• Questioning</li><li>• Passionate</li><li>• Thoughtful</li></ul>

Each class has made a class charter about these qualities and everyone has signed it to show they are committed to working on them. The classteachers have sent the class charters home to you. Many of you will have made posters with your children about these qualities in the very well attended welcome meetings at the beginning of the term. We are exploring different ways of recognising these qualities in the children. We praise the children in class, in the playground, in the corridors and in assembly when we notice them demonstrating these qualities. We are giving the children bronze, silver and gold commendations when they demonstrate these qualities. I have been giving out headteacher commendations for amazing acts of bravery, kindness and curiosity. Children have been nominated to have lunch at Top Table every Friday. Postcards are being written home to families for acts of bravery, kindness and curiosity. We want to recognise every child's effort to be *brave*, *kind* and *curious* so please patient if we have not recognised your child yet! If you have any thoughts about how we can further recognise these qualities in your children, please let me know.

### The fire alarm

Finally, I wanted to take this opportunity to thank you all for your patience and understanding for when the fire alarm went off at 3.27pm on Wednesday. This was not an easy time to manage a fire drill but you were all so wonderful. When the alarm goes off we are instructed by the fire brigade to treat it as a real fire, even if we know it isn't. As there were so many people in the playground we took the decision to close the school gates so that we could ensure that every child was safe - especially those children who did not have their parents with them. Though this worked in keeping children safe, it did mean that some of you were late for work and appointments. So a huge thank you from the school.

See you all in school on Tuesday, 29 October as the Monday is a training day for staff.

Best wishes,

Monica Forty, Headteacher

Remember the clocks turn back an hour on Sunday, 27 October 2019





# Meet our New Governor

I'm Andrew Georgiou and I've recently become a Governor at Ben Jonson. I currently work as a civil servant at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government on the programme set up after the Grenfell tragedy to ensure that residents in high-rise buildings are safe, and feel safe, now and in the future. Previously, I worked at the Bank of England for six years. I wanted to become a Governor because, having benefitted myself from the opportunities that follow a top class education (at great state schools and then at Cambridge University and the LSE), I wanted to give back to the community by making a contribution to the education of the coming generations.

# Macmillan Coffee Morning

Our Macmillan Coffee Morning for staff is a mouth-watering fundraising event enjoyed by the bakers and tasters of Ben Jonson. This UK wide event, and also the world's biggest coffee morning, raises lots of money to help everyone with cancer to live life as fully as they can. In the spirit of competitiveness we held a 'bake off'. (a baking competition), with staff delighting us with their homemade cakes and sweet treats. Thank you to everyone at Ben Jonson for the delicious and creative efforts and for the generous donations totalling £338.19!

Tahir, our Technical Support, Digital & Social Media Officer won showstopper with his Oreo Gravity Cake and Shahena, Teaching Assistant, won best baker for sharing her Choc Raspberry Cake. A massive thank you to Shaz who hosted and coordinated this amazing event for all our staff.



# Gilwell 2019

Our Year 6 children have just spent an action packed four night residential stay in the beautiful countryside of Gilwell Park. After saying their farewells at school they arrived at Gilwell safely and started their first day making their beds and having lunch before starting their first activity. The rain didn't stop the children's excitement as they climbed walls, swung up high and much more! Dinner was delicious and all allergies were catered for so no child missed out on dessert (very important part of the day!). After a film night, the children went off to their rooms for their first night away.

On the second day the children woke up to a lovely breakfast of cereals to choose from and scrambled eggs on toast. The children had an action packed day with lots of exciting activities. Impressively, in a crate stacking activity some of the Year 6 children were brave enough to ascend 15 crates high while others conquered their fear of heights, reaching the top of the climbing wall. Lunch was amazing as they enjoyed cheese and tuna baguettes followed by delicious cookies and jam doughnuts. After dinner they headed back to the lodges and had an evening filled with quizzes, games and a mug of hot chocolate before bedtime.

On their third day the children completed one activity in the morning and more children had the chance to defy gravity on the 3G swing and others cooked up a storm making pizzas in the forest. On their return to the lodges they had the exciting surprise to find two very special guests: Monica and Muslimah from school. Taking our places around the fire, George and Alex led a selection of classic singalongs (including "Bungalow"! ). Monica ended the experience with a story about the magic of campfires.



Day four activity highlights included bullseye in archery and rock climbing races (where unlucky Alex was beaten by Anisha!). Meanwhile, groups learned orienteering by following maps and gathering clues (despite George briefly leading his group round in circles!).

The children's last day at Gilwell arrived too soon so they packed their belongings and tidied the rooms. After lunch it was time to head back to the school by coach and share their memories with their families. To see more photos of the fun times enjoyed by the pupils and staff, please go to the Blog on the Ben Jonson website



# School Trips

## Year 6 trip at the Ragged School Museum

Our Year 6 children visited this local museum where they enjoyed a Victorian lesson and a session in the Victorian East End Kitchen. The children explored and handled historical artefacts such as a stoneware hot water bottle, and a washing dolly -an implement used to wash clothes in Victorian times.



**Year 3 Trip to the Soanes Centre** To support Year 3's focus on rocks and minerals, the children visited the Soanes Centre where they handled and explored a variety of specimens and learnt about the weathering of materials.



## Year 4 explore the Natural History Museum

Year 4 Ross and Year 4 Sulu spent a day at the Natural History Museum to explore the museum's Volcanoes and Earthquakes Gallery. The children even had opportunity to experience the Earth's tremors in the earthquake simulator! (Unfortunately Caribbean class were unable to visit the museum due to transport disruptions but we hope to plan another trip to the museum later in the academic year.)

# Harvest - food bank collection

To mark harvest this year, once again we asked for donations for the Tower Hamlets Foodbank which provides food to local people who would otherwise go hungry. Thanks to your charitable contributions of dried food, tins of fruit and vegetables, cartons of long life milk and much more, we accumulated 600 items of food to give away! With the help of two members of the school council it was transferred into food crates and loaded into the food-bank van. We really appreciate the kindness of our school community and are thankful for your support.





**Attendance Key:**  
 96% & above   
 95.9% and below

# Attendance 2019-2020

Encouraging regular school attendance is one of the most powerful ways you can prepare your child for success - both in school and in life. When you make school attendance a priority, you help your child improve attainment at school and develop healthy life habits.

The following figures show how attendance percentages equate to actual days missed from school:

- 100% - no days lost
- 97.5% - 1 week lost
- 95% - 2 weeks lost
- 92.5% - 3 weeks lost
- 90% - 4 weeks lost

Even meeting the 96% target means a child has missed 8 days in the year. Let's try to beat our target of 96%!

Try your best to come in on time every day!

**Please make sure you are here at 8.55am to start the day at 9.00am.**

## Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities

We will have a new Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities course starting in January 2020. Please see details below:

- Introduction to Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities, (SFSC), will take place on 16 January 2020
- Next SFSC programme will begin on 23 January 2020
- The course will take place each Thursday between 9.30am-12.30pm.
- The cut-off date for families to join is 6 February 2020
- The course will finish on 7 May 2020
- Celebration & certificate ceremony will take place on 14 May 2020
- The course facilitators will be Dee Dillon and Lee-Ann Smith

Please contact the school office and ask to speak to Dee or Lee-Ann if you are interested in joining the course.

Class	% Attendance
R-Azure	95.3
R-Red	97.1
R-Yellow	94.1
1-Aegean	96.5
1-Flores	95.9
1-Tasman	95.5
2-Adriatic	95.2
2-Ionian	96.1
2-Sargasso	95.9
3-Coral	97.5
3-Java	95.3
3-Torres	96.9
4-Caribbean	97.5
4-Ross	97.2
4-Sulu	97.6
5-Arctic	97.9
5-Baffin	97.0
5-Timor	95.8
6-Arabian	97.2
6-Caspian	96.4
6-Persian	 98.4

## Admissions for Primary Reception September 2020

If your child was born between 1 September 2015 and 31 August 2016 you will need to apply online for your child to start in the Reception class in September 2020. The closing date for applications is 15 January 2020. Please view the Tower Hamlets admissions page for more information: [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/schooladmissions](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/schooladmissions). For families who would like to visit our school we are hosting the following open days:

Wednesday 6 November 2019 at 9.00am

Thursday 5 December 2019 at 9.00am

Thursday 9 January 2020 at 9.00am

# Parents and Carers: events for your diary

Date	Event
Friday 18 October 2019	Last day of half term
Monday 21 October 2019 - Friday 25 October 2019	Half term holiday
Monday 28 October 2019	INSET day 3 - school closed for children
Tuesday 29 October 2019	Children return to school
Wednesday 30 October 2019	Year 4 Caribbean trip to the Soanes Centre
Wednesday 30 October 2019	Year 5 Baffin trip to the Soanes Centre
Thursday 31 October 2019	Year 4 Sulu trip to the Soanes Centre
Thursday 31 October 2019	Parents/ Carers Reception welcome party for all Reception parents/ carers
Friday 01 November 2019	Year 4 Ross trip to the Soanes Centre
Thursday 07 November 2019	Parents/Carers workshop at 9.00am - E-safety ,social media and internet (Jan to lead)
Monday 11 November - Friday 15 November 2019	Anti-Bullying Week
Monday 11 November 2019	Year 5 Arctic trip to the Soanes Centre
Wednesday 13 November 2019	Parents/Carers workshop at 9.00am - Anti-bullying policy and practice at Ben Jonson
Thursday 14 November 2019	Parents/Carers workshop at 9.00am - to discuss mental health
Wednesday 20 November 2019	Parents/Carers workshop at 9.00am- restorative justice and learning behaviours (Charlie and Monica)
Monday 18 November 2019	Test week for Years 1, 4, 6
Monday 25 November 2019	Test week for Years 2, 3, 5
Thursday 28 November 2019	Parents/Carers workshop at 2.00pm - Reception parents/carers look at special books
Monday 09 December 2019	Year 2 Sargasso trip to St Paul's Cathedral
Wednesday 11 December 2019	Year 2 Ionian trip to St Paul's Cathedral
Thursday 12 December 2019	Year 2 Adriatic trip to St Paul's Cathedral
Friday 13 December 2019	Christmas jumper day!
Tuesday 17 December 2019	Reception Christmas performance
Wednesday 18 December 2019	Y4 class trip to Tate Britain
Thursday 19 December 2019	Y4 class trip to Tate Britain
Friday 20 December 2019	Y4 class trip to Tate Britain
Friday 20 December 2019	Christmas parties/ last day of term



**PAY YOUR SCHOOL ONLINE**

### Gilwell 2019 outstanding payment

Thank you to those Year 6 parents who have paid for the Gilwell residential trip— a truly memorable time was had by all. A reminder to parents who have not yet paid in full, please ensure you have made all payments as soon as possible.

### Payment for after school clubs

Payments for after school clubs can be made on ParentPay from Tuesday 23 October. A reminder to parents who have not yet registered for ParentPay please can you do this as soon as possible. Please contact the school office if you need help with registering on ParentPay.

### TERM DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Friday 18 October	Last day of half term
Monday 21 October 2019 - Friday 25 October 2019	Half term holiday
Monday 28 October 2019	Inset day
Tuesday 29 October 2019	Return to School
Friday 20 December 2019	Last day of term
Monday 23 December 2019 - Friday 03 January 2020	Christmas holiday
Monday 06 January 2020	Return to school
Monday 17 February 2020 - Friday 21 February 2020	Half term holiday

### Birthday celebrations in school - update

We can no longer accept a box of Heroes chocolates because they now include a small double decker which contains nuts. We understand that some of you may like to bring in a treat for your child to share with their class, although there is no obligation to do this as everyone’s birthday is celebrated with a song, a game or a story. If you would like to bring in a small treat, these are the items that we can accept:

- **Fresh fruit, including fruit kebabs**
- **small fairy cakes (not iced)**
- **a fun sized chocolate bar which does not contain nuts such as Mars or Milky Way**
- **a small pack of Maltesers or a small box of chocolates which do not contain nuts.**

We do have to consider very carefully the health risks to children who suffer from allergies, our commitment to promoting a healthy diet and also the fact that the school day is already very busy. We are also a **nut-free school** and for these reasons we cannot accept the following items, which will have to be returned to parents if brought to school:

- **party sweets, lollipops or large cakes that require cutting up**
- **chocolates that contain nuts (such as Heroes, Celebrations, Quality Street or Lindor)**



### Ben Jonson Website, Blog and Twitter Accounts



You can access the **website** here - <http://www.benjonson.towerhamlets.sch.uk/>

We have the BJ blog that is very quick to cover aspects of Ben Jonson life. You can access **the blog** here - <https://benjonson.wordpress.com/>

Then of course there is our Ben Jonson twitter presence. Many of us have twitter accounts and we like to tweet all the amazing things your children do! I like the thought of people all over the world knowing how great Ben Jonson is. If you have a twitter account please follow us and help to publicise all the good work that we do. You can access **twitter** here - [https://twitter.com/BenJonsonSchool?ref\\_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwtgr%5Eauthor](https://twitter.com/BenJonsonSchool?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwtgr%5Eauthor)

# Family Welcome Workshops

We are excited to announce that our Family Welcome Workshops went very well. This was a great opportunity for parents and carers to meet the teaching team and work with them on an activity around our new 'Ben Jonson Way': brave, kind and curious. The workshop was a fun and creative activity for families and their children.



## Mental Health and Wellbeing Workshop for parents/carers

delivered by BMHF at Ben Jonson School  
Thursday 14 November 2019  
9am – 11am

- Are you interested in learning about mental health and wellbeing?
- Would you like to know how to maintain good mental wellbeing?
- Would you like to know more about local mental health/wellbeing services?

Please attend our interactive workshop.  
To find out more contact Dee or the school office or email  
[queries@benjonson.towerhamlets.sch.uk](mailto:queries@benjonson.towerhamlets.sch.uk)

## Lunchtime play - school council update

The school council have decided that the money raised at our summer fair should be put to good use in funding new ideas for the KS1 and KS2 playgrounds. The classes have been consulted and several suggestions are being explored including the following:

KS1 Playground:

- Hoppers
- Music area
- Bigger play house

KS2 Playground

- Friendship bus stop
- Instrument area: wind chimes, pan pipes
- Bug hotel /wormery/ mini beast collecting



## LEARNING ABOUT AIR POLLUTION

Science was extra special because we were visited by chemistry undergraduates from University College London. They need our help! The scientists are trying to find out about air quality in London but they do not know our local area. After explaining what air pollution is, they asked us to help them choose locations to measure levels of nitrogen dioxide from. We used maps to locate places where we thought pollution levels may be high and low. We even suggested one in our school playground- in the woodlands area. We chose this place because it is near the canal but also the car park so we thought the results would be interesting.

**What do you predict the results will show? Using your knowledge of our local area do you think the levels of nitrogen dioxide will be high or low?**



# Teaching of Spanish in school

We are excited to announce that Ben Jonson has secured an ERASMUS+ grant to support staff training in Spanish! Sixteen staff members will be attending a language college in Spain to develop their linguistic skills as part of a two year project. The first group of adults are going this half term and the second group are going next year. The grant received for this project will cover all the costs incurred for this unique training opportunity.



Children at Ben Jonson will benefit enormously as all the staff members involved will be teaching children and supporting staff training once back at school.

Andrea has also joined our school from Spain as part of ERASMUS+ project and is currently teaching Spanish across all year groups. Children and staff are all very excited to continue this journey in learning Spanish together as a school!

# The Big Draw - Drawn to life

Our annual 'Big Draw' led by Ash, is enjoyed by all the staff and children at Ben Jonson. This year's focus was drawing from life and as can be seen in the photos, the children reproduced some beautiful images of exotic birds, mammals, reptiles, fish and other exciting creatures. All year groups got involved and the whole assembly hall was a hive of activity and awash with colour.



## Half Term Programme Monday 21 – Thursday 24 October

Monday 21 & Tuesday 22 October | 10am – 3pm | Ages 5yrs+

### Beginners Cycling Taster Sessions

Learn how to cycle in Mile End Park. Bikes and safety equipment provided.

**Session 1** 10am – 12noon Ages 5yrs+

**Session 2** 1pm – 3pm Ages 5yrs+ Mums and children

Tuesday 22 & Wednesday 23 October | 11am – 3pm | Ages 8 – 16yrs

### Archery & Caving Taster Sessions

Come and have a taste of archery and caving at UAB, just two of the many exciting activities we offer residents of LBTH.

**Session 1** Archery 11.30am – 1pm Age 8 – 16yrs

**Session 2** Caving 1.30pm – 3pm Age 8 – 16yrs

#### Please note:

Only 1 session booking per person.

Clothing – long sleeved tops and full length bottoms must be worn.

Wednesday 23 October | 10am – 12noon | Ages 5yrs+

### Family Cycle Ride

Cycle in Mile End Park, Victoria Park and the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. Confident cyclists only. Bikes and safety equipment provided.

Wednesday 23 & Thursday 24 October | 1pm – 3pm | Ages 5yrs+

### Cycling Taster Sessions

Cycling in Mile End Park and Victoria Park. Confident cyclists only. Bikes and safety equipment provided.

Thursday 24 October | 10am – 12noon | Ages 10yrs+

### Women & Girls Cycling

Female only bike ride, confident cyclists only. Bikes and safety equipment provided.

**Locations:** Urban Adventure Base, 150 Burdett Road, Mile End Park, E3 4TJ

**Recommendation:** Children must bring water bottles.

Beginners Cycling Taster Sessions – Parents must stay with children under 8yrs.

To book a place online visit [www.lbthsport.eventbrite.co.uk](http://www.lbthsport.eventbrite.co.uk) or [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/sports](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/sports)

Tower Hamlets council, in partnership with the Tower Hamlets Cycling Club and The Urban Adventure Base, will be running a programme of free Taster Sessions for ages 5+ during the Autumn Half Term. Sessions will run from The Urban Adventure Base, 150 Burdett Road, and need to be pre-booked.

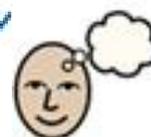
Free Tower Hamlets activities



brave



kind



curious