



January/February 2015 Newsletter

We would all like to wish you a very Happy New Year and we hope you all had a good Christmas. I would like to thank you all for your support during our Christmas activities. All the performances were well attended and the ticket sales and raffle made £309 which we have already spent on new reading books. The Enterprise project in the last week of term was particularly successful with all classes showing a profit and many budding entrepreneurs enjoying making money selling items they have made. The results from the questionnaire are published below.

As a reminder, if there is a threat of snow, keep an ear on Radio Derby, but I will always send out a text letting you know if the school is closed or open. Make sure we have your up-to-date mobile number so we can keep in touch.

New learning themes:

Last term's learning themes resulted in some great learning with Playlist in Y3/4, where I have seen some brilliant stories and amazing silent movies, and Space in Y5/6, which included an interesting visit to the Space Centre in Leicester and children doing independent research on their favourite planets. Well done, everyone!



This term Y3/4 will be following the 'I am warrior' theme where they will be looking at different aspects of Roman life, linking it to Derby's Roman heritage. We are having a 'Roman visit' to our school on 16th January when the children will have the opportunity to look at Roman toys and find out more about Queen Boudica.

In Y5/6 they are following the Alchemy Island theme, which is a science/fantasy based topic where the children do experiments to solve a riddle.

The main reason for all of our topics is to encourage and develop the childrens' reading and writing skills by providing interesting and exciting activities for them to read and write about.

There is a lot more information on our re-vamped website

(www.brackensdalejuniorschool.co.uk) and some topic webs and homework choices will be coming out later this week. Let's Love Learning!



Together we...learn, care, succeed, share

Results of the parent questionnaire:

| Annual Parent Questionnaire - December 2014 | | | | |
|--|---|---------|---------|---------|
| 1 | My child enjoys school | Y - 86% | S - 14% | N - 0% |
| 2 | Brackensdale ER Junior School keeps my child safe | Y - 96% | S - 4% | N - 0% |
| 3 | The school informs me about my child's progress | Y - 85% | S - 12% | N - 3% |
| 4 | I feel welcome when I come to school | Y - 92% | S - 8% | N - 0% |
| 5 | My child is making enough progress at school | Y - 86% | S - 14% | N - 0% |
| 6 | I feel problems are resolved when I come into school | Y - 85% | S - 12% | N - 3% |
| 7 | The school helps me support my child's learning | Y - 92% | S - 7% | N - 1% |
| 8 | My views are taken into consideration in school | Y - 96% | S - 14% | N - 0% |
| 9 | Are you happy with the school's policy on uniform? | Y - 98% | M - 2% | N - 0% |
| 10 | Are you happy with the school's policy on bullying? | Y - 97% | M - 3% | N - 0% |
| 11 | Overall I am happy with my child's experience at Brackensdale | Y - 99% | M - 1% | N - 0% |
| 12 | Would you be interested in becoming part of the parent group - Friends of Brackensdale? (run like the children's School Council as a way of voicing your views) | Y - 4% | | N - 96% |
| 13 | Would you be willing to help in school during the school day? | Y - 37% | | N - 63% |
| Please circle below to show where you would like to help: | | | | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reading <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Helping in the library <input type="checkbox"/> Art & Craft <input type="checkbox"/> Computers <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> General help in the classroom | | | | |
| 14 | There have been quite a few changes to our curriculum since September. Would you like to attend a Curriculum Afternoon? | Y - 58% | | N - 42% |
| Please circle below the areas you would like us to demonstrate: | | | | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Maths <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reading & Writing <input type="checkbox"/> Our new topics <input type="checkbox"/> Other | | | | |
| 15 | Would you be interested in participating in any social/ fund raising events? | Y - 41% | S - 4% | N - 55% |
| Please circle below the events you would be interested in: | | | | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Family disco <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Car boot sale <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bike ride-out <input type="checkbox"/> Picnic <input type="checkbox"/> Fun-run <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | | | | |

Thank you for all the responses (73) - each response = approx. 1.5%. I am very pleased with the positive nature of the responses. We are making a list of all the offers of help and will contact them. You could also just come into reception and we can sort something out face-to-face. We always welcome help with our readers. I will arrange a maths evening later in this Spring term and a bike ride-out for the Summer term and I will work with the FOB to try and organise a family disco and/or a car boot sale. We always appreciate input from parents and carers.

Links with parents:

The Friends of Brackensdale (FOB) group is going from strength to strength, with a growing membership.



The next **Friends of Brackensdale (F.O.B)** meeting is on Tuesday 13th January 2:15 - 3:15. They will be discussing the Valentines disco and events for 2015. Please feel free to drop in - all ideas are welcome.

Remember, we have a regular **Coffee Morning** every **Monday** from 9:15 - 10:30 in the school hall. Please come along for a drink, biscuit and a chat. We are happy for you to bring any pre-school children with you.

Parent's evenings:

We are having parent's evenings earlier than usual this term so that we can discuss the progress your child made last term. Also, we are having mentor meetings with the children over the next few weeks and we can feedback their achievements and areas of development for this term. The dates are Tuesday 27th and Thursday 29th January, both 3:30pm - 6:00pm. If you cannot make either of these slots, we will try to arrange alternative times as we would like to see all parents/carers if possible.

Attendance:

Last term we are pleased to say our attendance remains above our target of 96%. Mrs Johnson's class won the competition for best attending class and will have an extra Golden Time. Jacob Cybulski won the 100%er draw for the **Kindle Fire HD** - **congratulations!** Help us keep up the good attendance this term too - a mystery prize for this term's draw.

INSET day:

The next INSET day is Monday 16th February (the first day after half-term). The Infant school is also closed on this day and we hope this helps with your family organization.

Healthy snacks:

The School Council have asked me to remind everyone that the children all agreed to only have healthy snacks at break times. This means: plain biscuits, fruit, cheese or health bars. Chocolate, crisps, cakes, pastries and pepperami bars are not allowed. Any non-healthy food will be taken away until home time. We want to encourage good eating habits from an early age. Thank you for your support.



Governing body news:

The governors felt they would like to have a regular section on the newsletters to update you on their work.

We have recently restructured the governing body with several new members. We have carried out an in-depth audit of our skills and knowledge to ensure all members are fully aware of the strengths and areas of development in our school. We also carry out work scrutiny where we look at the children's books; learning walks where we observe the whole learning environment and see the children being taught in the classes and we talk to the children to find out what they have been learning and what improvements they would like to see. In addition we have two sub-committees: a Standards committee where we question Mr Hall about the progress data and the School Development Plan; a Resources committee where we monitor the budget, personnel and future building plans. We are now working on a Governor page for the website to keep everyone informed of our work. If you have any questions for the Governing body, please contact Don Parker (Chair of governors) via the school office.

Bedtimes:



We have noticed that there are quite a few children who look very sleepy since the Christmas holiday. It is really important to get back into a good bedtime routine so the children are ready to learn. Remind them that children are like flowers and grow (up and cleverer) in beds ☺.



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Key dates for the year

If we have to make any changes, we will try to give you as much notice as possible. Stick it on your fridge etc.

| | <u>Key Diary dates for 2015</u> |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Mon 5 th Jan | Spring term begins (5 weeks) |
| Tues 27 th Jan | Parent Evening 1 |
| Thurs 29 th Jan | Parent Evening 2 |
| Wed 4 th Feb | Valentines Disco 3:30 - 5:00 pm |
| Fri 6 th Feb | Break for ½ term |
| Mon 16 th Feb | INSET 3 |
| Tues 17 th Feb | Back to school (6 weeks) |
| Mon 16 th Mar | Spring Assessment week |
| Fri 27 th Mar | Easter Service 2:00pm Y3/4 + Break for Easter holidays |
| Mon 13 th Apr | Summer term begins (7 weeks) |
| Mon 4 th May | Bank holiday |
| Mon 11 th May | SAT week |
| Fri 22 nd May | Break for ½ term |
| Mon 1 st June | INSET 4 |
| Tues 2nd June | Back to school (7 weeks 3 days) |
| Mon 15 th June | End of year assessment week |
| Thurs 2 nd July | Summer Fair |
| Fri 3rd July | INSET 5 |
| Tues 7 th July | Sports morning |
| Fri 10 th July | Reports to parents |
| Thurs 16 th July | Open afternoon – 1:00 – 5:00 (celebration of the year) |
| Wed 22 nd July | Leavers Assembly 1:30pm followed by Y6 leavers party |
| Thurs 23 rd July | Final Awards Assembly + Break for Summer returning on Mon 7th September |

If you lose the newsletter, this and previous newsletters are also on the school website.

David Hall – Headteacher