



February/March 2017 Newsletter

Welcome back to the 2nd half of the Spring term. We have 7 weeks leading up to Easter and we are looking forward to lighter, longer days and seeing the spring flowers to keep us cheerful.

Our learning themes:

Last term's learning themes of **Romans** and **Space** really caught the children's interest. This was reflected in the work they did in class, but also in the amount of homework that was brought in. It is wonderful to see the children carrying on their learning at home. Some parents seem concerned that they are 'helping' their child with their homework. I really encourage this 'help' as the children get a massive boost from working with adults on a project. Well done and keep it up! ☺



This term Y3/4 will be following the '**Mighty metals**' theme where they will be exploring the scientific world of forces and magnetism, metals and materials. They will be thinking like an engineer, a scientist and inventor. They will be reading *The Iron Man* by Ted Hughes for inspiration. 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.

There is more information on our website

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



The next **Friends of Brackensdale (F.O.B)** meeting is on **Wednesday 1st March 2:30 - 3:15**. They will be discussing the **Easter competitions**, events for 2017 and other school issues. The Valentines disco was a real success. We had a target of £245 for a

new set of books for high ability readers who are put off by long novels. I am pleased to say **£335** was raised and the books have been bought, stamped and are already in use - Thank you all very much!! ☺ 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.

Strike action:

The ongoing strike action is a headache for all schools. Our staff are working hard and being flexible to avoid as much disruption as possible. We try to keep parents informed, especially when we have to close some of our classes, but please assume that the school is open as usual unless we tell you otherwise. We will endeavor to send out a text and/or letter, but this can be tricky when decisions have been made during a school holiday. Whilst we have been able to keep the classes open for most of the time, intervention activities run by TAs outside the classes have been hit and we haven't been able to provide some of the support we had planned for in some children's MEPs.

We are open as usual for the week beginning 27th February.

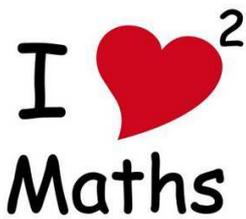
Parent's meetings:

A big **THANK YOU** to all the parents who came to the parent's meetings at the beginning of February. The vast majority of parents were able to talk to their child's teacher about their progress and generally get a

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

picture of how they are doing in school. These are important meetings for us and it shows school and home working together for the benefit of our children.

Maths meeting for parents:



Feedback from the parent questionnaire raised a request for a meeting to explain the way we teach maths in our school. So, we have planned a meeting for parents and their children on **Tuesday 4th April from 3:30 – 4:30pm**. This will be a FUN opportunity to see the methods we use and ask questions alongside your child. There have been quite a few changes lately and we hope the meeting will help you support your child's learning in maths. A letter with more information will be sent out next month, but try to keep the date free.

Attendance:

Attendance is still a key issue for us. There were a lot of absences last term due to some nasty bugs going around. It is important for the children to be in school as much as possible, especially Year 6 who only have 9 school weeks before SATs. The 'Attendance race' was won by Mr. Tee's class last term - earning them an extra Golden Time. The 100% for the term will be announced just before Easter with prizes for all 100%ers and a special prize for one lucky, excellent attender.

School lunches:

The governors had a meeting with the school council this term to ask them for some feedback from the children about the school lunches. The children reported that there have been significant improvements in the meals. This is good to hear as our aim is to demonstrate that the children and parents receive a better experience and service. Thank you for working with us! ☺



Key dates for the year:

I have attached a list of the key dates for this year to allow you to plan the year ahead. If we have to any changes, we will try to give you as much notice as possible. We have matched our INSET days with Infants.

Mon 20 th Feb	Back to school (7 weeks)
Tues 4th Apr	Maths meeting for parents 3:30 – 4:30pm
Fri 7th Apr	Easter Service 10:00am Y5/6 + Break for Easter holidays
Mon 24 th Apr	Summer term begins (5 weeks minus Bank Holiday Monday)
Mon 1st May	Bank holiday
Mon 8 th May	SAT week
Wed 24th May	Parents evening 1 3:30 – 6:00
Thurs 25th May	Parents evening 2 3:30 – 6:00
Fri 26th May	Break for ½ term
Mon 5th June	Back to school (7 weeks 3 days) – INSET (Assessment & TA training)
Tues 6th June	Book week – to link with Derby Book Festival
Mon 12 th June	End of year assessment week (inc Y6 writing)
Tues 4 th July	Transition day (Welcome Assembly for Y2s 9:15 & New parents mtg 3:30pm)
Thurs 6 th July	Summer Fair
Mon 10 th July	Reports to parents
Tues 11 th July	Sports morning am
Wed 12 th July	Marathon am
Mon 17 th July	Awards assembly – Swimming + Star of the term
Wed 19 th July	Open evening/exhibition
Thurs 20 th July	Family Bike ride
Fri 21 st July	Final awards assembly - 100%ers for term & year, Star of the year
Mon 24 th July	Leavers Performance 1:30pm followed by Y6 leavers party
Tues 25 th July	End of Year Assembly + Break for Summer returning on Wed 6th Sept
Wed 26th July	INSET (preparation for 2017.18)



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