

NOVEMBER



November/December 2015 Newsletter

This term is always very busy with all the activities we do in the lead up to Christmas - please check the dates at the end of the newsletter to check when these are happening. After a very mild start to autumn, the weather is now getting colder. Can I remind you that the children need to have coats to make sure we can get out on the playground as often as possible.

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.

This term's learning themes:



This term Y3/4 will be following the Scrumdiddlyumptious theme where they will be looking at food and healthy eating.

In Y5/6 they are following the Victorian theme, particularly looking at life as a child in Victorian times with a visit to the Black Country Museum.

There is a lot more information on our website

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



Links with parents:

The Friends of Brackensdale (FOB) group continues its valuable support for the school. They held a very successful Macmillan Coffee Morning raising £265 and involving all the children and many parents. They have planned the next school disco on Thursday 5th November, which will have food and sweets on sale and a real DJ and disco lights - should be great fun. This year the FOB are hoping to raise enough for a security fence leading from the Brackensdale Avenue entrance to keep all our children safe.



The next **Friends of Brackensdale (F.O.B)** meeting is on Wednesday 18th November 2:30 - 3:15. They will be discussing Anti-bullying week and Christmas events as well as other issues to help support our school. Please feel free to drop in - all ideas are

welcome and I like the ideas for spending FOB money to come from the parents.

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.

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

INSET day:

The next INSET day is Friday 4th December. Although we always try to take the same days as the Infant school we have not managed to do this for this INSET. All our following INSET days will match and apologies for any inconvenience this may cause.

Governors:



The names and details of our governing body are now on our website. We now have Iain Bater as our Chair of Governors with Don Parker taking up the role of Vice-Chair. I would like to thank Don for his support as Chair over many years and I am pleased that he is not leaving the governing body yet.

The Standards sub-committee met just before the half-term break to look at the progress of the children last year. They are pleased to report that the children made 'good' or 'outstanding' progress, from their own starting points, in all year groups in all subjects. We will continue to focus on the basic skills, especially reading and writing. We will be holding an open coffee morning to share strategies to help reluctant readers at home later this term - there are some tips on this website <http://www.whatever-it-takes.org.uk/primary-dvd> but more details will follow. We also are using our new curriculum to give the children interesting opportunities to write as often as possible, encouraging them to re-draft to get the best possible final piece (ask them about Austin's butterfly). We are very pleased that the government and OFSTED now recognise 'good' progress as a sign of a 'good' school.

Non-uniform days:

We are having 2 non-uniform days this term: The first is on Friday 13th November to raise money for Children in Need, with the optional theme of wearing your ears for Pudsey - £1 a suggested donation, thanks. The second is on the last Friday of term (18th December) when we would like everyone to wear a Christmas Jumper for Save the Children - again any donation will be gratefully received by the charity.



Dukes Barn residential:

Just before half-term 40 Y5/6 children went to Dukes Barn Activity Centre and spent two days doing a variety of outdoor activities in the Peak District. All the children were very brave and positive, enjoying the whole experience. I would like to thank the staff (ours & theirs) for looking after them so well. We will be planning more outward bound activities later in the school year as they seem to build character.

Christmas performances:



Y3/4 will be performing 'Children of the world' on Wed 9th December at 1:30pm and Thurs 10th December at 6:00pm.

Y5/6 will be performing their Christmas play on Wed 9th December at 6:00pm and Thurs 10th December at 1:30pm.

Tickets will go on sale from Monday 30th November - more details closer to the event.

Keeping everyone safe:

We have had a couple of incidents where parents have approached our children to try and resolve a problem. These have all been based on the best intentions, but this isn't the most effective way of resolving issues as it can be seen as quite threatening by the child and also puts the adult in a vulnerable position. We have found it to be far more successful if we are used as the contact point. We are happy to help with any issue whether that is something that has happened in school or outside of school - as all these issues often affect the child in school.

Keeping everyone safe (cont):

A reminder that pedestrians should not walk through the car park as it is an unnecessary danger when vehicles are coming and going all day. We have invested school funds in an electronic gate with a buzzer and a camera linked to reception on the Walthamstow Drive gate. This gate should be used as the pedestrian access at ALL times. Cutting across the carpark only saves a few metres but is very risky. Please help us to keep everyone safe.

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.



Key Diary dates for 2015-2016

Mon 2 nd Nov	Back to school (7 weeks)
Thurs 5 th Nov	Sparkle Disco 3:30 – 5:00 pm
Fri 13 th Nov	Children in Need day
Tues 24th Nov	Sleeping Beauty performance in school – no charge
Wed 2 nd Dec	Senior Citizen's Christmas Meal in the hall
Fri 4th Dec	INSET day – school closed for training
Wed 9 th & Thurs 10 th Dec	Christmas Performances (9 th Y3/4 aft & Y5/6 eve; 10 th Y5/6 aft & Y3/4 eve)
Wed 16 th Dec	Christmas Enterprise (XED) sale afternoon
Thurs 17 th Dec	Christmas service at St Barnabas/Christmas Movie Morning (weather dependent) & Party afternoon
Fri 18 th Dec	Carols around the tree (11am) & Christmas Jumper Day (for Save the Children) + Break for Christmas holidays
Mon 4 th Jan	Spring term begins (6 weeks)
Thur 11 th Feb	Valentines Disco 3:30 - 5:00 pm
Fri 12 th Feb	Break for ½ term
Mon 22 nd Feb	Back to school (4 weeks 4 days)
Tues 2nd Mar	Parents evening 1 3:30 – 6:00
Thurs 4th Mar	Parents evening 2 3:30 – 6:00
Thurs 24th Mar	Easter Service 10:00am Y5/6 + Break for Easter holidays
Mon 11 th Apr	Summer term begins (7 weeks)
Mon 2 nd May	Bank holiday
Mon 9 th May	SAT week
Mon 23 rd May	Art week
Wed 25th May	Parents evening 1 3:30 – 6:00
Thurs 26th May	Parents evening 2 3:30 – 6:00
Fri 27th May	Break for ½ term
Mon 6th June	Back to school (7 wks) – Book week – link with Derby Book Festival
Mon 27th June	INSET – joint with Hardwick & Allenton Primary Schools
Tues 5 th July	Transition day (Welcome Assembly for Y2s 9:15 & New parents mtg 3:30pm)
Thurs 7 th July	Summer Fair
Fri 8 th July	Reports to parents
Tues 12 th July	Sports morning am
Wed 13 th July	Marathon am
Mon 18 th July	Final Awards assembly – Swimming, 100%ers & Star of the term
Thurs 21 st July	Leavers Performance 1:30pm followed by Y6 leavers party
Fri 22nd July	End of Year Assembly + Break for Summer

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

David Hall – Headteacher