



November/December 2016 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.

New learning themes:

Last term's new learning themes were a great success with Predators in Y3/4, where I have seen some excellent work on all different kinds of predators great and small, and ID in Y5/6, which ended in a 'real' crime scene with the children being Crime Scene Investigators. The key to the success was the work the staff put in to make them interesting and the massive effort the children put in to show their best work, both in school and at home - some really good homework was completed. Well done!



This term Y3/4 will be following the 'Playlist' theme where they will be looking at poetry and song lyrics; sound and instruments; dance and music. I know they have been asked to find their favourite song and bring it in on mp3 or CD.

In Y5/6 they are following the 'Frozen Kingdom' theme, researching facts and figures of climate, temperature, habitats and eco-systems. They will be imagining being part of an Antarctic rescue team and looking at some

famous explorers. There is a lot more information on our re-vamped website (www.brackensdalejuniorschool.co.uk). Let's Love Learning!



School lunches:



Since the beginning of November, we have taken charge of providing our own lunches. This gives us far more control and allows us to respond to feedback from the children and parents. We have kept the price of meals at £2.15 for the moment, but will be looking to see if we can reduce the price without reducing the quality. We have a new School Catering Manager who has developed a new menus with the aim for them to be both appetising and healthy. We will be giving parents the opportunity to come and try the meals and we will also use the dining hall as a resource to promote healthy eating. If your child doesn't have a school lunch, give it a try and give us some feedback - positive &/or constructive. We are committed to giving the children the best service possible.

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 £100 and involving many of the children and parents. They also raised £400 through the school Sparkler's disco - Well done!

The next meeting will be on **Wednesday 23rd November 2:15 - 3:00pm** to discuss Christmas activities for the children.

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.

Harvest thanks:

Many thanks for your wonderful harvest contributions - I knew you wouldn't let me down ☺. We had letters of gratitude from the community and from The Hope Centre.

INSET day:

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

The next INSET day is Wednesday 4th January 2017. This the same day as the Infant School's next INSET day.

Non-uniform days:

We are having two non-uniform days this term: The first is on **Friday 18th November** to raise money for Children in Need (50p a suggested donation, thanks). The second is on Tuesday 20th 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.



Pine Lakes residential:

Before half-term 40 Y5/6 children went to the Pine Lakes Activity Centre and spent two days doing a variety of outdoor activities. The weather was a bit unkind, but 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.

Free experiences:

We have been able to give the children the opportunity to go to the cinema for free this term. Also, the children will watch a performance of Peter Pan on Wednesday 23rd November. We have used money raised to give the children these enrichment activities.

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 make any changes, we will try to give you as much notice as possible. We have matched our INSET days with the Infants.



Stick it on your fridge etc.

Fri 18th Nov

Wed 23rd Nov

Mon 5th

Tues 6th Dec

Thur 8th Dec

Wed 14th & Thurs 15th Dec

Mon 19th Dec

Tues 20th Dec

Wed 4th Jan

Thurs 5th Jan

Wed 1st Feb

Thurs 2nd Feb

Thur 9th Feb

Fri 10th Feb

Mon 20th Feb

Fri 7th Apr

Mon 24th Apr

Mon 1st May

Mon 8th May

Wed 24th May

Thurs 25th May

Fri 26th May

Mon 6th June

Tues 7th June

Mon 12th June

Tues 4th July

Thurs 6th July

Mon 10th July

Tues 11th July

Wed 12th July

Mon 17th July

Wed 19th July

Thurs 20th July

Fri 21st July

Mon 24th July

Tues 25th July

Wed 26th July

Children in Need day

Peter Pan performance in school (no charge to children)

Christmas Enterprise Day (XED) week begins

Senior Citizen's Christmas Meal in the hall

XED sale afternoon 2:00 – 4:00pm

Christmas Performances (14th Y3/4 aft & Y5/6 eve; 15th Y5/6 aft & Y3/4 eve)

Y2, Y3 & Y4 Carols at St Francis Church (parents welcome) + Party afternoon

Carols around the tree (10:45am) & Christmas Jumper Day (for Save the Children) +

Break for Christmas holidays

Spring term begins (5 weeks 3 days) INSET – assessment analysis

Children start back - Mentor meetings begin

Parents evening 1 3:30 – 6:00

Parents evening 2 3:30 – 6:00

Valentines Disco 3:30 - 5:00 pm

Break for ½ term

Back to school (7 weeks)

Easter Service 10:00am Y5/6 + Break for Easter holidays

Summer term begins (5 weeks minus Bank Holiday Monday)

Bank holiday

SAT week

Parents evening 1 3:30 – 6:00

Parents evening 2 3:30 – 6:00

Break for ½ term

Back to school (7 weeks 3 days) – INSET (Assessment & TA training)

Book week – to link with Derby Book Festival

End of year assessment week (inc Y6 writing)

Transition day (Welcome Assembly for Y2s 9:15 & New parents mtg 3:30pm)

Summer Fair

Reports to parents

Sports morning am

Marathon am

Awards assembly – Swimming + Star of the term

Open evening/exhibition

Family Bike ride

Final awards assembly - 100%ers for term & year, Star of the year

Leavers Performance 1:30pm followed by Y6 leavers party

End of Year Assembly + **Break for Summer returning on Wed 6th Sept**

INSET (preparation for 2017.18)