

Brackenwood Junior School

Learning for Life

Headteacher: Mr. C. Holmes MMUS.PGCE.NPQH



November 2020

Autumn Newsletter (Second Half Term)

Welcome to our second newsletter of the school year. I remain extremely impressed with how the children continue to deal with the challenges of COVID-19, and it is such a pity that this continues to restrict dramatically the range of trips, visits and events we can provide for them this half-term. Nevertheless, there is still plenty of news to bring you, so please read on.

Staffing Updates

I am pleased to welcome three new members of staff to our team until the end of this academic year. Erin O'Hanlon has joined our teaching staff for three days each week, while Cathy Lockett and Cheryl Robinson have joined our team of teaching assistants.

Children in Need

On Friday 13th November, we would like to pull out all the 'spots' and support BBC Children in Need. We are excited and proud to be joining with many others around the UK to participate in fundraising for such an important charity. Children are welcome to come to school wearing pyjamas and/or spotty clothing (not forgetting a coat for break times). They can also wear Children in Need merchandise if they wish to. Donations of £1 or a value of your choosing are welcome but they are optional. In school, children will be supporting Joe Wicks in crossing his virtual finish line after completing 24 hours of PE as part of 'Five to Thrive'. Please have a look on Google Classrooms for more information on Five to Thrive. We will also be completing other Children in Need activities throughout the week.

Christmas Toy Appeal

Usually, at this time of year, we welcome donations for the Christmas Shoe Box Appeal. However, as many local families have been affected by the current situation, we have decided to support a local charity instead this year. Therefore, we will be inviting children to bring in toy donations to support Charles Thompson Mission with their Christmas Toy Appeal. More specific details about the donations will be sent out via ParentMail.

School Dinners

I recently wrote to you to explain that we would no longer be serving hot school dinners at lunchtime, due to the logistical challenges of keeping bubbles apart in the canteen at lunchtime. However, as a result of parental feedback, I am pleased to be able to inform you that these will be reinstated from Monday 9th November. A hot dinner choice will be added to the list of options that children can order each morning, and these will be delivered to classrooms at their allotted time. The daily hot dinner choices are listed below:

Week One	Week Two
Monday: Bolognese Pasta Bake Tuesday: Tuna or Cheese Jacket Potato and Mixed Salad Wednesday: Warm Panini and Mixed Salad Thursday: Hot dogs Friday: Chicken Goujons and Chips	Monday: Pizza Tuesday: Warm panini with mixed salad Wednesday: Bean, Cheese or Ham Jacket potato and mixed salad Thursday: Chicken or Beef burger Friday: Fish and chips

Parent Consultations

Many of you will already have received phone calls from your child's class teacher to discuss their progress. These will be continuing throughout next week. If you have not already done so, please ensure you have an appointment time booked, so that you do not miss out!

School Clubs

Sadly, DFE guidance issued to schools within the last 48 hours stipulates that before and after school extra-curricular activities should not take place during national lockdown. Therefore, there will be no lunchtime or after school clubs from Monday 9th November onwards until further notice. We will of course be offering full refunds to parents for the sessions missed. There is no need to contact the school office about this.

Charley's Childcare

As you are aware, the impact of COVID 19 has been felt by Future Stars, who have been unable to continue providing before and after school childcare since half term. As a result, Charlotte Atherton, a former Future Stars employee, is seeking to set up Charley's Childcare, which will hopefully be operational in the very near future. If you require before and after school care for your child, please look out for further information on its way very soon.

Google Classrooms

It is great to see the vast majority of pupils signed up with and using Google Classrooms, and this has certainly been put to good use over the last few weeks. A very small number of children and families, however, have still not signed up. If you are struggling to access Google Classrooms, please contact the school office as soon as possible.

Flu Vaccinations

All children will receive, with parental consent, their flu vaccinations this half term. These will take place on Thursday 26th November.

Anti-Bullying Week

Anti-Bullying Week takes place this half term, beginning on Monday 16th November. The theme this year is *United Against Bullying*. The week will begin with *Odd Socks Day* to raise awareness, and children will take part in a variety of anti-bullying activities and class assemblies throughout the week. In a recent pupil survey, 88% of children told us that the school had strategies in place to deal with bullying. If you have any concerns about your child being the victim of bullying, please inform your class teacher immediately

Whole School Attendance

Our attendance target for every child is 96%, and I will be writing to parents of all children whose attendance level falls below this level at the start of next week. Our figure for whole school attendance is currently 96.2%. Attendance figures do not include any sessions where pupils have been required to self-isolate. Thank you for helping us to keep this above 96% by ensuring your children are in school whenever possible, and for keeping requests for authorised absence at an all-time low!

Nut Allergies

Please could parents note that we have a small number of children in school with nut allergies. We would like to ensure that no foods containing nuts (including Nutella) are ever on the premises and this extends to children's packed-lunches and any additional snacks that they bring in. Cooperation from parents on this matter would be very much appreciated.

Pupil Questionnaire Feedback

We ran a whole school pupil questionnaire just before half-term. The results of this survey are presented below.

	All or Most of the Time	Some of the Time	Never / Almost Never
I enjoy coming to this school	87%	9%	3%
I feel safe when I am at this school	91%	9%	1%
The behaviour of other pupils in my lessons is good	78%	20%	2%
The behaviour of other pupils around school is good	80%	17%	3%
I enjoy learning at this school	94%	4%	2%
	Every or Most Lessons	Some Lessons	Very few lessons / No lessons
Teachers help me to do my best	90%	8%	2%
My teacher gives me work that challenges me	75%	18%	6%
	Strongly Agree or Agree	Don't Know	Disagree / Strongly Disagree
Teachers listen to what I have to say in lessons	93%	6%	1%
There is an adult at this school I can talk to if something is worrying me	84%	13%	2%
This school encourages me to exercise and eat healthily	91%	8%	1%
This school encourages me to look after my emotional and mental health	89%	9%	2%
This school has strategies in place to deal with bullying	88%	11%	2%
I take part in school activities outside lessons	74%	7%	19%
This school encourages me to be independent and to take on responsibilities	91%	7%	2%
This school encourages me to respect people from other backgrounds and to treat everyone equally.	97%	3%	1%

Forthcoming Diary Dates

Sadly, our list of forthcoming diary dates is once again very short, but here are the dates you may wish to be aware of for this half-term:

Friday 13th November: Children in Need (where pyjamas / spotty socks)

Monday 16th November: Start of Anti-Bullying Week (wear odd socks)

Thursday 26th November: Flu Vaccinations

END