



The Bramptons Primary School

Newsletter – October 2011.

Dear Parents

Let me start by saying how good it is to be back in school at last and thank you to everyone for the concern that has been expressed. The four weeks seemed to drag on forever so it is good to be back and seeing the children again.

While I was away all sorts of great things have been happening around school. Classes 2 and 3 enjoyed a great day out at The British Museum – an event which I think has proved to be a great basis for their work on the Ancient Greeks in class.

A few weeks ago the NSPCC, a charity we often support, came into school and spoke to the children. Once again there was a wonderful response from everyone meaning that we were able to collect £400 to support their work.

We had another collection as part of our Harvest multi-day and on that occasion we managed to raise....

One of the things that I am most proud of as Head Teacher of The Bramptons is the empathy our children show when they hear about the people who these charities support and the way in which everyone joins together to raise amounts of money which many much bigger schools would be pleased with.

Building Work

At last, after three years of waiting, we have a building project! It is such a relief to see work in progress and ideas beginning to become reality. Phase 1 of the project is almost complete – we now have new lighting in the hall which has also been completely redecorated. The new library is taking shape as is the new staff room. When these rooms are handed over we will look at what new furniture and fittings are required to make them fully functional.



The work is going a head to schedule and the contractor is hoping to be finished just before the Christmas break. A large amount of work is going to be done over the half term holiday including most of the work on the front entrance and the bulk of the overhead work that might be more dangerous with children on site.

I am grateful to the Parish Council for opening up the field to create more parking space during the building work. I would encourage parents to make use of this – it is much safer for our children and local residents if the amount of street parking is kept to a minimum.

On another note, Nourish have confirmed their intention of building our POD kitchen early in the new year with the hope of providing a hot meal option for children very soon after that.

Favourite Books

Part of the development will be to increase the number of books in our library. To help this I thought it might be an idea for our library to contain books that we have all enjoyed in the past, so when we get back after half term I will be asking children, parents, staff, Governors and anyone else who wants to contribute to let us know what is or was their favourite children's book – we will then try and get as many of these into our library as we can.

Parents Evening

This evening you should also have received a copy of your parents evening appointment. On the slip there is a request not to bring children to the appointment if at all possible. I would not normally make such a request but as you can appreciate the building work has restricted the amount of space available to us. The contractor has agreed to clean the hall up enough to allow parents to walk through it to access the different classrooms

but it will still be a building site that is out of bounds to all children. If you do need to bring your children they will need to sit quietly in the entrance hall while they are waiting. Mrs Quick has kindly agreed to change her hours so that she will be around but it will be parents' responsibility to make sure that their children stay out of the hall and away from any equipment that might be visible.

As Science Club will be having its final session on Monday, Mrs Kirkwood and I will be holding some of Class 3's appointments in the staff room.

Clubs

Due to a combination of my absence and the building work we have been even more restricted with our provision of clubs than usual. However I hope that we can resolve this after the holiday – we have contacted Hotshots and I hope that they will be able to restart basketball in the very near future. I have also spoken to the company who are providing Thursday afternoon games for Classes 2 and 3 – they would be keen to put on a multi-skills sports club after school and will be holding taster sessions soon. This would be paid for by parents as per foot ball and basket ball.

If this club can be successfully established I will look to see if I can start a new club of a non-sports nature on a different evening of the week. More details will follow.

Healthy Eating

I am pleased to report that the improvement in children's lunches seems to have been sustained and that overall our children are now eating a better balance of food across the school day. I know that there was some confusion in the first week but I hope that this has now settled down and that parents are comfortable with the arrangements. If there are any further problems then please let me know as soon as possible.

Open Day

Next Tuesday we are hosting our Open Day for parents of children looking for a Reception place next year. Posters have gone up in

most of our potential feeder schools but there is nothing like word of mouth to get people to come along. So if you know of anybody with a child who should be joining Reception next year, please let them know that they can turn up any time on Tuesday and we will be pleased to show them around – even with all the scaffolding etc in place.

Mr Hartley

I am pleased to welcome Mr Hartley to school. He is a PGCE student who will be working in Class 3 during the three weeks after we get back from the holiday. He has already spent a few days in school and has made quite an impact with many of the children.

Parent Governor

Towards the end of last year Mrs Howarth had to reluctantly step down from being a Parent Governor as her circumstances had changed in a way that prevented her from carrying out this important role. We are therefore once again on the hunt for a new parent Governor.

Letters and nomination forms will go out in November but in the meantime I would encourage parents to consider whether they have the skills and time to take on this role which is so vital in enabling the school to function effectively.

E mail

A couple of years ago I asked parents if they would prefer to receive at least some communications by e mail rather than by letter. At the time very few parents wanted to go down this route but I have become aware that there might now be more interest in this method of communication. I would therefore ask you to fill out the slip below and return it to school indicating your preference.

Next week the children will finish school as normal at 3.15pm for the week's holiday. Please remember that Monday 31st October is a training day.

Children return on Tuesday 1st November.

Parents Survey – Lunch Times and Homework

Parents will remember that at the end of last term I sent out a simple questionnaire about how we were performing as a school. I was greatly encouraged by the number of positive messages that came back and it is pleasing to know that so many of you feel that your children are both happy and progressing well.

However two issues came up as being of concern to a significant number of parents and we have now spent some time considering what needs to be done to improve these areas of school.

The main concern was connected to various aspects of lunch time. In most schools lunch time is one of the most challenging parts of the day and The Bramptons is no exception to this. We have looked carefully at this issues parents have raised and feel that a large part of the issue is down to communication and time. I am therefore proposing to make a few changes to lunchtime in order to improve this experience for the children.

- Introduction of a Report Book system – this will take the form of a book in which our lunchtime supervisors will record incidents and details of any poor behaviour. This will enable teachers to know about and follow up problems sooner rather than later. Any child who is entered in the book for poor behaviour more than once during a week will expected to explain themselves to me or one of the other teachers – they will then be appropriately sanctioned. (Serious poor behaviour will continue to be dealt with immediately).***
- Increased supervision – to facilitate arrangements at lunchtime, I am going to take a higher profile role during lunch time. Whenever possible I will look to eat my (healthy) lunch alongside the children and then spend at least part of lunch time on the playground. This should provide an extra pair of eyes and ears for dealing with problems as they arise.***
- Lunchtime monitors – we have always asked our older children to help clear up in the hall after lunch and we are going to enhance this role so that both our lunch time supervisors can be freed up to be outside for as much of lunch as possible.***
- I am also going to ask the School Council to consider strategies such as Buddy Benches, Peer Mentoring and Worry Boxes to see whether they think any of these might work at The Bramptons.***

The other area of concern to some parents was homework. Now that I have returned to school I will seek to address this with staff and formulate a new homework policy which will then be shared with parents.

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E mail communication

Where it is possible, I would like to receive letters from school by e mail and give my permission for my e mail address to be stored on the school's distribution list.

Name:

E mail address:

Signature: