

10 January 2020

Dear Parents,

If I haven't had the chance to speak to you directly Happy New Year! I trust you had a wonderful Christmas break and are ready for all that 2020 will bring.

Leadership

First of all congratulations go to Malyon who were the Term 2 winners. Their reward involved marshmallows and pasta always fun when it involves children from all year groups! House Assemblies will take place for the other houses and will be run by our House and Sports Captains who have been working hard all week to prepare. House assemblies offer great leadership opportunities and the children always undertake this task with great enthusiasm. This week they are covering themes such as 'New Beginnings', The 'Gruffalo' and 'Friendship'.

Curriculum

Experiences this term include: 'Medium, Spicy, Hot' for Year 1/2 who are learning all about India and will be undertaking Behangra dancing next week! Year 3/4 are studying the Romans and have taken on the role of a variety of characters such as Boudicca, who was married to Prasutagus, ruler of the Iceni people of East Anglia, a fierce Celt! Year 5/6 are diving deep into geography with their 'Lion and Albert' experience which provides an opportunity to study a contrasting region of the UK comparing the topography of the North-West to Kent.

We have continued to make regular visits to Westbank Nursing Home where activities such as pumpkin carving, poppy wreath making and parachute games have taken place. Just before Christmas the school choir visited singing a small sample of some of the songs they will be singing at the O2 in a few weeks and finished off with some carols.

Our aim is to provide as much information as possible to our parents so alongside termly newsletters and Medium Term Plans we are going to start sending home 'Knowledge Organisers.' These will document key concepts, vocabulary and images relevant to the curriculum areas studied in each experience. We would like you to look at these with your child; they provide many opportunities to reinforce new ideas and to help your child to talk to you about their learning. Each Knowledge Organiser includes definitions of key terms and words showing you the new knowledge we expect pupils to retain after an experience. They are the perfect way to ensure that a shrug of the shoulders is not the only response a parent is likely to receive after the "What did you do at school today?" question; you can now discuss new learning in detail.

Attendance and Punctuality

The school is open for 190 days a year leaving 175 non-school days every year. There is nearly half the year for family holidays, medical appointments such as the dentist, spending time with friends and family and celebrating special occasions. 100% - 95% attendance gives the best chance of success and gets your child off to a flying start. 85% - 90% attendance makes it harder to progress and students have less chance of success. 80% and below is not fair on your child if it is absence that could be avoided. Attendance below 95% without a valid reason is closely monitored and parents will be informed that unless there is improvement the school will ask the Local Authority to issue you with a Penalty Notice. The governors have tried to avoid this route for many years and up until last year our attendance has been above the national average, this is no longer the case.

Please ensure your children are on time for school, book medical appointments out of school hours when possible and plan holidays in the 175 non-school days. Celebrate special times after school, at weekends and in those 175 days. Arriving late can be just as damaging, your child misses the beginning of the lesson which means they don't know what to do and the teacher has to interrupt what they are teaching to ensure your child has caught up. It disturbs the class and is often embarrassing for your child if they have to walk into a class that is well underway with their work.

We promise to provide the best education we can for your child but we can't do this if they are not here. We completely understand when there are genuine reasons for absence and at times lateness but together let's see if we can get our attendance and punctuality back above national where it should be.

If you are unsure whether to bring your child into school contact the school office who will advise, they also have a 'Should my child go to school today?' leaflet that may be helpful.

Thank You

A huge thank you for your generous donations throughout Term 2. £328.69 was raised from the KS1 Christmas Play and will be sent to Demelza House, £71 was raised at the Y5/6 Carol Service and will be sent to Shelter and £226.47 was raised for Joe's Jumper Day organised by one of our Y5/6 pupils. All worthy causes who will be extremely grateful for the donations.

Handwriting and Presentation

This year we are focussing on spelling, punctuation and grammar and this includes the children's handwriting and presentation. Traditionally Pen Licences have been given out in Year 3 or Year 4 and if by the end of Year 4 they hadn't received a licence they were allowed to write in pen anyway. This didn't seem fair for those children who had worked really hard on this area and also didn't reflect the progress made throughout the year. We now have a new system with four levels and I am pleased to say that I have already handed out several 'Exemplar Level' awards but it would be wonderful to present some more. We want our children to be proud of what they have produced so do encourage this high standard at home and if you are unsure of our cursive writing style please ask your child's teacher.



*Certificate of Progress
for handwriting at
Most Improved Level*

This certificate acknowledges that the bearer has persevered with handwriting practise and has made considerable progress in using BGPS cursive handwriting script.



*Certificate of Permanship
for handwriting at
Exemplar Level*

This certificate is for consistently correct use of BGPS cursive handwriting script and allows the bearer to purchase a pen to be used when writing in their Learning Experience book.



*Certificate of Achievement
for handwriting at
Leadership Level*

This certificate allows the bearer to represent the class by handwriting signs for display boards within the classroom as directed by the class teacher.



*Certificate of Excellence
for handwriting at
Ambassador Level*

This certificate allows the bearer to represent the school by handwriting signs for display boards around the school building as directed by subject leaders.

Recognition

I want to finish this first newsletter of 2020 with a story about a wonderful young lady at our school. Brodie, who is already a successful House Captain, decided it was time to do something about the litter in the local area. Instead of just complaining about it she took action and over many months has drummed up an army of volunteers who undertake a litter pick not just as a one off but every month. Last week she received a well-deserved award from the Borough Green Parish Council something she should be very proud of.



Bash the Trash is every first Sunday of the month 10.30 - 12pm

We continue to have a huge number of volunteers but we always need more. If you would be interested in helping out in any way at the school we would love to hear from you, perhaps there are grandparents or local residents that you know would like to get involved but don't know how please let them know. Contact the school office at school.office@bgpschool.kent.sch.uk. Or just pop in.

Kind regards,

Mrs K Sandberg

Headteacher, Borough Green Primary