



BYERS GREEN PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

THURSDAY 15 SEPTEMBER 2016

Dear Parents,

On behalf of everyone at our school, I would like to say a special welcome to all children and parents at the start of this new academic year. I hope everyone is looking forward to the busy term ahead.

Please note the following points:

NEW STAFF

I would like to extend a warm welcome to Miss Shields, our new PE and School Sports Apprentice. She will be working across the school to support the delivery of PE lessons, assisting with the provision of structured sports activities at playtimes and lunchtimes and helping with afterschool clubs.

PRINCE BISHOPS COMMUNITY BANK

We will continue to take deposits for savings accounts on a Thursday. Anyone wishing to start a savings account for themselves or their children please speak to Mrs Blenkiron for further information.

BOOK CLUB – STARTING FRIDAY 16 SEPTEMBER

The weekly book club is open to all children. Parents who want to accompany their child/children to help them choose a suitable book should come into school at 3pm. Savings cards are available – any amount of money from as little as 20p per week can be saved to pay for a book.

EUROPEAN DAY OF LANGUAGES – MONDAY 26 SEPTEMBER

To celebrate this event we will be having a 'Spanish afternoon'. Each class will take part in a carousel of Spanish-related activities during the afternoon session.

HARVEST FESTIVAL – THURSDAY 29 SEPTEMBER

This will start at 9.15am. Parents, family and friends are very welcome to join the children for our assembly. For our harvest collection this year we would like to support the Spennymoor distribution point of the County Durham Foodbank. We would appreciate donations of in date, non-perishable food items (please see the attached list for further information).

COFFEE AFTERNOON – FRIDAY 21 OCTOBER

Our first coffee afternoon of this year will commence at the usual time of 1.15pm. We would be grateful for the donation of any raffle prizes and cakes, biscuits etc. for the refreshment stall. The book club will run throughout the afternoon. Parents, family and friends are welcome to take their child/children home with them after this event.

SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPHER – MONDAY 31 OCTOBER

The photographer will be in school on the above date. Family groups with pre-school children will be photographed from 8.30am. Parents will be given a ticket on arrival and photographs will be taken on a 'first come, first served' basis. Further details will follow nearer the time.

CLOTHING COLLECTION – WEDNESDAY 2 NOVEMBER

We are again taking part in this fundraising event and a special bag will be sent home with your child shortly. If you need more bags, strong black bin liners can be used. Please read the instructions on the pack and return the bags to school before 9am on Wednesday 2 November.

CHRISTMAS PANTOMIME - WEDNESDAY 14 DECEMBER

The whole school will be visiting the Gala Theatre to see the annual pantomime on the above date. The price per child will be £13.50. This will include the ticket, transport and a drink. Due to the large amount of tickets reserved the theatre asks that we pay for them in advance. We would be grateful if the money could be paid into school as soon as possible. Please contact Mrs Blenkiron if you would like to arrange a payment card – we are happy to receive instalments.

PARENT-TEACHER MEETINGS

We will be organising specific sessions after half term for parents to meet formally with their child's class teacher for a progress update. Further details will follow nearer the time. However, in the meantime, if you have any concerns about your child, please do not hesitate to request an appointment to see the class teacher.

ONLINE SAFETY – POKEMON GO

Please see the recent advice regarding Pokemon Go from the UK Safer Internet Centre by accessing the following link: <http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/news/pokemon-go-gaming-gone-mobile>.

ATTENDANCE

Our overall average attendance last year was 95.9%. While this may seem high, it is likely that it will be below the national average (yet to be released) which in 2014-2015 was 96.0%. Our school figure of 95.9% equates to each child missing, on average, almost 8 school days over the year. Good attendance is vital if children are to make good progress with their learning. It is therefore very important to ensure that all unnecessary absences are eliminated.

I would like to remind everyone that as of 1 September 2013 the DfE amended the regulations relating to attendance for all schools. References to family holidays and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days were removed and it was made clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Local Authority is able to issue penalty notices (fines) to parents who fail to ensure their children's regular attendance at school. A leave of absence form must be completed for all planned absences. If you have any questions about your child's attendance please just ask.

HALF-TERM HOLIDAY

School will close for the half-term holiday on **Friday 21 October 2016 at 3.15pm**. We return on **Monday 31 October 2016**.

Mr W. Kirtley (Headteacher)