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18th February 2022

Dear Parents/Carers,

What a wintery day to end our half term! The children were all very hopeful this morning that the snow would last until they all got home and that they could start their holidays with a bit of sledging. We, on the other hand, had hoped it melted and the sun comes out for next week. We hope you all thoroughly enjoy the holidays whatever the weather and manage some family time together. Don’t forget that there are many holidays clubs on around the area. Use this link to explore what is on  [www.durham.gov.uk/FunAndFood](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.durham.gov.uk%2FFunAndFood&data=04%7C01%7Cj.bromley200%40kingstreet.durham.sch.uk%7C10536449006c4b63140808d9f21cf39d%7C45dfff5283644d73bf3a8f98bdf10d87%7C0%7C0%7C637807028829718004%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=BDo3wE3Rvj5wrkbxS32Tse6pAnGIiGJzUOo1cQfL8pA%3D&reserved=0). All activities are free and are offered through Voluntary and Community Sector partners and schools who will be operating in a Covid secure way.

In addition to this, there are also opportunities to sign up to Durham University Holiday Camp who are running sport and activity camps from Monday 21st to Friday 25th February at their state of the art Sports and Wellbeing Park. The camps are available to all 5-11 year olds and can be booked on a day to day basis. Costs are £15 per day (09.30am-4.30pm) with a small charge for wraparound care from 08.30am and until 5.30pm each day.

Click the link here to see a short video about what happens at the Holiday Camps.

[https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=you+tube+durham+university+holiday+camps&docid=608029024122065778&mid=11E62CA1B8DC0CD280A911E62CA1B8DC0CD280A9&view=detail&FORM=VIRE](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.bing.com%2Fvideos%2Fsearch%3Fq%3Dyou%2Btube%2Bdurham%2Buniversity%2Bholiday%2Bcamps%26docid%3D608029024122065778%26mid%3D11E62CA1B8DC0CD280A911E62CA1B8DC0CD280A9%26view%3Ddetail%26FORM%3DVIRE&data=04%7C01%7Cj.bromley200%40kingstreet.durham.sch.uk%7C87ea921f6a3146a8715c08d9e48f97f1%7C45dfff5283644d73bf3a8f98bdf10d87%7C0%7C0%7C637792127649783387%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=OqeLtZgfE7cfXBRWCokvqN8vMsOLYUYdPcao7WRTEYo%3D&reserved=0)

To book a place for your child, please click here.

 [https://www.dur.ac.uk/conference.booking/details/?id=1805](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.dur.ac.uk%2Fconference.booking%2Fdetails%2F%3Fid%3D1805&data=04%7C01%7Cj.bromley200%40kingstreet.durham.sch.uk%7C87ea921f6a3146a8715c08d9e48f97f1%7C45dfff5283644d73bf3a8f98bdf10d87%7C0%7C0%7C637792127649783387%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=FHZo3gUx9vjCCMw2Us5Uq3D2%2FgL%2Fr8tOoxp5UQrDZO4%3D&reserved=0)

Please also remember that due to an allocated Bank Holiday for the Queen’s Jubilee on Monday 28th February, our half term is extended and we do not return to school until Tuesday 1st March.

Events for the diary

We would like to give you advance notice of the following dates:

World book day

You may have noticed the shops beginning to fill up with costumes for World book day which will be celebrated on Thursday 3rd March. As always, we will be encouraging children to dress up as a character from a book but we do encourage families to be creative and create their own outfits to save the added costs to already tight budgets. Some of the best costumes we have seen have been home made, with cardboard boxes becoming Thomas The Tank Engine and old sheets becoming the cape of a Disney princess. In school the children will be spending the whole week (Tuesday 1st March – Friday 4th March) engaging in reading activities, book reviews, writing questions to ask authors and sharing their favourite books with each other. As part of the week, we will be encouraging children to discuss their favourite books over time and seeing if they can remember books from when they were very young. We would encourage you to not only help your child remember these books but to also talk to them about your own favourite books and which of these are still classics today. Please look out for the book voucher in your child’s school bag, that was sent home this week, it gives money off a book or there are a selection of books that the token can get for free. Drake’s bookshop also host a ‘book club’ for those children who cannot get enough of reading and they host interactive sessions with authors. If you use this link, you can see what is available. It is another brilliant way to engage your child in reading. <https://www.drakethebookshop.co.uk/sample-page/>

Movie night

We are hoping to be able to offer our children a movie night on Thursday 26th May. We have held these before and they always prove really popular. The events are held after school and children usually have a choice of 3 movies to chose from and are served with a snack and a drink. Please add this to your diary and more information will follow.

Queen’s Jubilee Street party

On Friday 27th May (last day of half term) we will be hosting a street party to celebrate the Queen’s Jubilee. The event will be held from 11am-2pm and families will be able to book a time slot that best suits themselves. Parents will collect their children from school and they can share a High Tea together on the yard surrounded by bunting and music. More information will follow.

Half term

Friday 27th May – Monday 6th June. Please note that the 6th is a planned training day for staff and the school will be closed. School reopens Tuesday 7th June.

Dress down day

Friday 17th June. Bring a donation of any bottle (eg bubble bath, juice, alcohol) as a donation to our summer fair.

Key Stage 1 Sports Day (Afternoon session)

Wednesday June 22nd will be our first KS1 sports Day since the pandemic. For the majority of our children they have not yet experienced a Sports Day and they will be incredibly excited and we would love to see you there.

Key Stage 2 Sports Day (Afternoon session)

Thursday 23rd June will be our KS2 Sports Day. This is always a competitive event (for the participating parents too!) and we hope you can join us. Don’t forget your trainers for the Parents’ race.

Dress down day

Friday 1st July. Bring a donation of any chocolate item for our summer fair.

Summer Fair

Thursday 14th July. We will be hosting a summer fair with lots of stalls and fun activities. We would love to see you come along and help raise funds for the school. It is a lovely afternoon, with the bottle and chocolate tombola always being very popular. More details will follow.

Staffing

At the end of the first week back, Miss Lloyd will leave us to start her maternity leave and we know that she is already excited about the arrival of her second child at the end of March. Miss Chazot will be covering the Y5 class until the end of the school year when Miss Lloyd returns. The Y5 children have already had the pleasure of meeting Miss Chazot and I know she has plenty of things planned to keep them busy over the rest of the term. In Nursery, Miss Kathryn Brown will take the place of Nursery teacher and we also have a new member of staff joining to team as a teaching assistant in Nursery. Her name is Miss Katie Jones and she is an experienced EYFS practitioner who currently works in another Durham school. Miss Jones will join us on Monday 14th March and I am sure you will join me in welcoming her to the school team.

School Developments

Our Ofsted report was published a month ago and we have been implementing some approaches to help us work towards the Areas For Improvement. The report identifies aspects that require improvement and leaders and Governors have identified actions to be taken. The Inspector had requested that a more robust phonics assessment was implemented to ensure that phonics teaching was closely directed to the sounds that children know and need to learn. Therefore, using the Bug Club Scheme that was already in place we have added more detail to the assessment process to ensure that there is an in depth picture of every child and their stage of development. We will continue to implement the Bug Club phonics scheme as this is an approved government scheme and, being new to us in September, it needs time to be embedded.

With regards to the curriculum developments, all curriculum plans have been evaluated and further detail added to include information from the Early Years so progression across the whole school is clear. The sequence of learning is clearly indicated so that all staff, regardless of subject or year group, can see previous learning and ensure that this is built upon year after year.

We continue to work with the Local Authority and Independent Advisors to ensure that all developments meet the neds of the school.

We have also spoken to children this week about school developments, post Covid, and children are very keen to restart after school clubs and to continue the developments we have started in the yard. They would also like to restart school visits as soon as possible. We are now working on making all of these things happen over the remainder of the year so watch this space.

Social media and photos

It has been brought to our attention that some families are posting photos on their private Facebook page that they have taken from our website or social media platforms. Please do not take copies of any photos that we use on any of our platforms and reuse them on private or public forums. As a school, we have permission to use these photos but this consent does not pass onto other parents. Thank you.

Family support

Earlier this week we sent an information letter to parents on where they can seek support for job applications, financial advice and Foodbank services. This information is also available on our Facebook Page. The sessions are held at Trinity Methodist Church, Rosa Street, Spennymoor between 10am-12pm. In addition to this, if you do require additional support please speak to us in confidence, we may be able to offer support ourselves or can signpost you to other services.

EYFS resources

Can I please ask that during inclement weather, families do not use the undercover sandpit in the Early Years as cover from the weather? We have had an issue this week where it has been used for shelter and the hinges have been broken. When items of equipment are broken, it always affects the children who then are unable to access the equipment. This includes playground equipment such as bouncy hoppers and hoops.

We hope you have a wonderful half term and we will see you all on Tuesday 1st March for another half term of fun and learning.

Yours Sincerely

Joanne Bromley

Headteacher