



Brunton First Newsletter

October

2021



Our First Half Term

I can't quite believe we are already into October and approaching our first half term holiday of the year! We have had so much to celebrate already and be grateful for.



How Are You?

World Smile Day was such a lovely day in school and we had such positive comments from you. It really proved that smiling is infectious!

As it was World Mental Health Day on Sunday, I'd like to take a moment to reach out to anyone who feels they need support. As a community it is important that we keep looking out for one another, asking each other how we are and listening to the answer. My door is always open.

Curriculum and Coffee Communication

It was reassuring to see that so many of the curriculum and coffee videos were viewed on our YouTube channel and that so many of you left very positive comments. It was also reassuring to see that you had taken up the offer of asking questions and leaving comments. Staff will continue to respond to these comments and have come up with other ideas in which we can ensure we continue to improve our communication with you.



Celebrations

I must take a moment to comment on your children. I have been so impressed at how well they have settled back to school this term, working so hard, redeveloping friendships and building new relationships with their peers and teachers. We do not underestimate the impact of the past 19 months on your children and we know there are still challenges ahead. I've had lots of visits to my office from children with their amazing work and it is wonderful to see the pride they have in what they are achieving. It is a pleasure to visit their classes each Friday to celebrate their achievements and give out our Golden Assembly certificates.

We are very proud of our own Mrs Fletcher who has just qualified for the European and also the World Championships in Standard/Olympic distance Triathlon, Mrs Fletcher's competitions were postponed due to COVID but will be competing in Abu Dhabi next year. We will be following her with pride and cheering her on!



October
Black History Month

10th October
World Mental Health Day

Wednesday 13th October
Booking opens for Parent Consultations

19th and 20th October
Photographer in school

19th and 20th October
Parent Consultations online

Thursday 21st October
World Singing Day

Friday 22nd October
Show Racism the Red Card Day
School closes for half term holiday

Monday 1st November
Teacher training Day
School closed to children

Tuesday 2nd November
School opens to all children



Karen's Top Table

Each week Karen, our Leader of Lunchtime Supervision, chooses children to sit on the 'Top Table'. Karen and the other lunchtime staff chose children who have tried their best during the week to show good manners in the lunch hall to sit on the Top Table. Here children are waited on as if they were royalty! This is becoming really popular on a Friday and is encouraging good manners and a positive lunchtime.

Governors in Actions

We pleased that our School Governors are able to come into school once again and work alongside us to improve our school. They have carried out their first Governor Learning Walk looking at our provision for PSHE. They will communicate their findings to you so please watch out for their report. You can find their details and roles on our website.



Our Community



I am really pleased to welcome Reverend Gerard Rundell and his young family to our community. He will be around the school and wider community and is looking forward to meeting you. It has been lovely to join forces with Snakes and Ladders and St Aidan's for our food collections and we are grateful to the team at St Aidan's for picking up our donations.

I have also met Georgina Stares (virtually) this week, we are working with the community to improve road safety around school and the local community. There are a number of events during half term you and your children can get involved in. We are looking at ways of getting classes involved in this project over the coming months.

On Wednesday 27th October between 1000 and 1600, the Great Park Community Centre car park will be hosting a free event, focused on safe winter walking and cycling. There'll be free cycle servicing from Halfords (places are limited and must be booked in advance), tips on staying safe as the nights draw in and the weather turns, free give-aways of safety accessories and you can pick up a Halfords discount voucher (offering 10% off in-store).

There's also an opportunity for children to help design some new road signs to promote reduced traffic speeds around school. We'll be sending home entry forms attached to this newsletter. If your child would like to take part, either return their completed entry to the office by Tuesday 2nd November or hand it in at the event on the 27th October.

More information on the event can be found at www.newcastlegreatpark.com/latest-news



Current COVID Challenges



We continue to be challenged by the pandemic but we are refusing to let it beat us. As you may know, Year 3 have been particularly affected by COVID infections over the last two weeks. Some children have tested positive when asymptomatic. We have had a rise in infections which has had a direct impact on how Year 3 are operating in school with reduced movement around classrooms, the temporary cancelling of clubs and music tuition and having their lunch in the classroom. This is obviously a big challenge to a lot of children, especially for those who did not attend school during the lockdowns and have therefore had no experience of these safety measures before.

However, the staff are doing an excellent job at keeping their spirits up and keeping the children and themselves as safe as possible. Mrs Powell will not thank me for saying this but she has gone above and beyond to ensure that her class stays open and that she is there every moment of the day for her children. We are very lucky to have such a dedicated teacher. Mrs Appleby has become Year 3's lunchtime delivery service, taking the children's lunch orders to the class and bringing a her infectious smile to them and the staff each day! We do hope that these measures will be eased for Year 3 in a week or so but this is highly dependent on the number of infections in the year group.

We hope that other year groups manage to maintain the low number of infections we have seen over the half term. However, I cannot stress enough the importance of keeping your child off school if they are showing any of the following symptoms:

- Headache
- Tummy pain
- Sickness
- Feeling under the weather
- Cough
- Temperature
- Loss of taste or smell

We will ask you to collect your child if they arrive in school with these symptoms. Your child will be cared for away from the rest of the class until they are picked up so it is important that you have a contingency to be able to collect your child quickly should we call you. We know how challenging this is particularly when you are working, our staff are facing the same challenges.

Please remember 'Hands, space, face' if you need to talk to a member of staff on the yard or in the main entrance please wear a face mask unless you are exempt and keep your distance to ensure we all stay as safe as possible.

Please visit <https://www.beatcovidne.co.uk/> for more information about the North East's fight against COVID

SeeSaw

Can I politely remind you that SeeSaw is not to be used as a means of communication between yourselves and the staff. It is only used to send homework and work for isolating children, work will not be sent home when children off with any other illnesses or on holiday. Please be aware that staff will not reply to any posts via SeeSaw for any other reason. If you need to communicate with staff please see them on the door or request a meeting/phone call via the school office.

Safety

The car park at the front of the school continues to be very busy especially when the weather gets colder and wet. I understand how frustrating it is as there are so few places. Whenever possible, we would appreciate it if you could consider walking to school. As the Park and Ride is currently being used as a Testing Centre, I know this has added even more strain on parking around the school. Please take care and ensure all children are with an adult when walking through the car park and outside of school. Please remind your children to walk rather than cycle or scoot in the car park. We have a very limited number of parking spaces for our disabled families, if you are eligible to park in one of these bays and they are full, you may park directly outside of the school hall. **Please ensure the space outside of the hall is solely reserved for blue badge holders.** We may politely ask you to move on if you park here without a blue badge. For all other families, if you have days when you can walk to school it will help towards alleviating the lack of spaces.



Housekeeping

- The **gates** are open at 8:30 and **classroom doors open at 8:40** (including reception), The **gates** are then closed at **9am** to allow for outdoor lessons to begin. Please ensure you have vacated the grounds **before** 9am as some parents have found themselves locked in! Any child arriving at 9am or later should be taken straight to the main office where they will be signed in.
- The climbing frame remains closed until we can find a company able to make the repairs as it is currently unsafe. Please do not allow your children to climb on it before or after school.
- If your child needs medication in school, please ensure you take it to the school office it should not be handed over on the door. If your child has an appointment that cannot be attended after school hours please ensure you inform the office.
- Each year we send home our data collection sheets to check we have your child's details correct. If you haven't done this, please do so urgently.
- If you have different people picking up your children the office staff must be told and they will get a message to the classroom staff. If you do not inform us, then we won't let your child go with another adult.

Looking Ahead

Don't forget
parents
evening!

The staff are looking forward to catching up with you during Parent Consultations, please remember to book your slot when the booking system opens this week. If you have any issues booking please let us know as soon as possible. Just remind you that your meeting will automatically cut off after 10 minutes, this is beyond our control. It is advisable to log in a few minutes before your meeting is about to start. In the summer some parents rang into the office when they couldn't connect but unfortunately there is nothing we can do so

it is really important you check your device is able to run the meeting before trying to log in. Your child will bring home a couple of pieces of work in the next week or so to share with you that they are proud of, we hope that this will help in you knowing more about what they are doing in class.

Vacancy

We have a vacancy in our Lunchtime Supervision staff team. If anyone is interested, please send in a note of interest to the school office for my attention. You may know someone who is interested in the job so please pass these details on.



And Finally!

With the first half term fast approaching, I'd like to thank you all for your continued support. It really feels like our school is moving forward into a new chapter!

Warmest wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bev Armstrong".

Mrs Bev Armstrong

Acting Headteacher