



Newsletter April 2015

Easter is now upon us and we are looking forward to the longer (and hopefully warmer!) days after the Easter holiday.

We have some exciting topic work next term, our whole school topic is 'Amazing Animals' when we will be looking at changes and growth (Foundation Stage) and animal habitats in the second half of the term. Before that we will be finding out about different materials and changes, including looking at buildings in Class 1. Our history topics are The Romans and The Vikings, so we are busy planning some visits!

Parent Survey

Thank you so much to everyone who completed our parent survey. We had a return of 50% representing 55% of pupils in our school. The results are attached to this letter. You will see that one area suggested for improvement is communication. We have monthly newsletters, our school website and Facebook. We are also now emailing parents information. If you have any suggestions on how we can further improve communication then please do let us know. If you have questions or queries and are unable to come into school, we are always contactable by phone or email and will endeavour to get back to you promptly.

Transport to events and activities



We have previously subsidised the cost of transport to visits and events from our school budget, with parents making voluntary contributions on some occasions. Our Governing Body and the Committee of our PTA have asked that as this is an area that amounts to a significant amount of our expenditure that we now ask parents for contributions whenever we are using transport. After Easter, in the new financial year, whenever we go out of school, we will let parents know the full cost of the transport and also give a suggested voluntary contribution they could make. We appreciate that if you have two children in school this can become quite costly and stress that no child would be unable to attend an event for this reason. Please contact us if you are in any way concerned.

Holidays in term time.

We are coming up to the time of year when our children will be involved in either SATs (Standardised Assessments) or in school assessments. It is really important to try and avoid taking your child out of school for holidays at any time but particularly at this time of year. May is the key month for our Year 2 children (SATs) and June is the key month for our Year 1 children (Phonics Screening). Our Key Stage 2 and Foundation Stage children will be taking part in assessments during these months, and it is difficult for them to 'catch up' if they miss time in the Summer Term.



Red Nose Day 2015!

We raised a fantastic £135.50 for Comic Relief.
Thank you to everyone who donated.

PE in the summer term

Our first swimming lesson at Willowburn will be on Monday 13th April, our first day back after the holidays, so please remember those swimming kits! The weekly voluntary contribution is £3.50 which covers the cost of the lesson and a contribution towards the transport costs.



Tennis will begin on Thursday 16th April with Grant Watson from Alnwick Tennis Club.



Library Van

The library van will be visiting on 21st April and the 5th and 19th May next half term.

Lambing at Brandon

A big 'thank you' to the Shell Family, they again welcomed us for a very informative visit to see the lambing at Brandon. We were lucky enough to see a lamb being born again this year!



School lunches



We have really enjoyed our school lunches from Pottergate and were so disappointed to hear they were no longer able to provide lunches for us. We have had a temporary supplier for the last couple of weeks of this term while we are in discussion with Glendale Middle School kitchen. We have every reason to believe that an arrangement can be in place early next term, when Glendale will supply nutritious and enjoyable meals for our children. We will let you know the outcome of the discussions and assure you that lunches will be provided for our children from the beginning of the summer term.



Sun hats and sun cream

Can we please ask that all parents supply a **sunhat** and **sun cream** for their child, to stay in school, from the beginning of the summer term? Both items need to be clearly named. We like to be out and about whenever possible and need our children to be protected from the sun. For our younger children, please let us know if you give permission for a member of staff to help your child apply sun cream.



Dates for your diary!

Monday 13th April - school reopens at 9am and first swimming lesson at Willowburn

Thursday 16th April - tennis lessons begin

Wednesday 22nd April - Friday 24th April - Key Stage 2 at Ford Castle

Friday 22nd May - school closes for half term

Friday 19th June - Fathers' Day sharing assembly, we would love to see as many Dad's as possible!

Friday 17th July - school closes at 2.15pm for the end of the school year

We are sure there will be many more dates to add after the Easter holiday!

The Branton First School team

Find us at www.branton.northumberland.sch.uk and on Facebook