

Preston Grange Primary School

Newsletter -September 17th 2013



School Improvement Partner Summer report

Every term, a School Improvement Officer from the Local Authority visits all schools in the Local Authority to review the progress and standards in schools. These are a few comments from our July report:

'The school has a core set of values at its heart. These include respectfulness, good manners and thoughtfulness and are continually reinforced through whole-school assemblies and the excellent modelling of positive behaviours by staff.'

In writing ...'teacher assessments show that 33% of pupils reached the higher level 5 in Writing and one pupil (3%) performed exceptionally well to reach level 6. This represents improvement of 15% on last year's level 5 results and is the first time a pupil at the school has achieved level 6. All pupils made the expected two levels of progress from their Key Stage 1 assessments in Year 2; 27% of pupils exceeded this and made three whole levels of progress. This compares favourably with the national average..'

'...the exceptionally positive climate for learning...'

'The school continues to improve with visible impact from the initiatives undertaken across the year. Higher levels of pupil achievement, a more consistent quality of teaching that is never less than good, and a strengthened leadership team across the school ensures that there is a very strong capacity to improve further...'

PE days

For information, here are the days of the week each class has PE lessons this year, and when the children will require their PE kit in school:

Reception- Wednesday, Thursday

Year 1 - Tuesday, Friday

Year 2 - Monday, Thursday

Year 3 - Tuesday, Thursday

Year 4 - Tuesday, Wednesday

Year 5 - Tuesday (swimming), Wednesday

Year 6 - Monday, Wednesday

Results from Summer assessments

We are delighted with how well our children performed in recent assessments and tests at Year 1 (phonics) and Year 6 end of Key Stage 2 tests in the Summer term. The Year 1 phonics pass rate nationally was 57% (2012), the Local Authority pass rate was 72.9%, whilst our school pass rate was significantly higher at 85%.

In Year 6, the national expected level for children to achieve at the end of Key Stage 2 is a Level 4. This year 3.3% of our Year 6 class achieved a Level 6 in Writing, 3.3% achieved a Level 6 in Spelling, Punctuation & Grammar and 6.7% children achieved Level 6 in Maths. These are the first level 6's our school has ever achieved, and we are proud of this achievement.

Hit the Surf !

Last week our Year 5 and 6 children spent a morning down at Tynemouth Longsands, with the RNLI lifeguards. The aim of the day was to teach the children beach and water safety. The children in Year 5 had a very windy day, but nothing stopped their enthusiasm for the activities, which saw them surf boarding, rescuing their friend in the sea and learning about keeping safe in the sea. Year 6 had better weather for the morning and also had a fantastic morning with the lifeguards. Here are some photos from the day:



Leave of absence requests

Following the first newsletter of the term I said that I would clarify the position as to leave of absence during term time for children. The government has made changes to the 2006 regulations in the Education Pupil Registration Regulations 2013 Act. These amendments, came into force on 1 September 2013.

Up until September 1st 2013, the regulations allowed headteachers to grant leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday during term time in "special circumstances" of up to ten school days leave per year. Headteachers could also grant extended leave for more than ten school days in exceptional circumstances.

However the recent amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave, as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. As a result of the amendments, our 'holiday request form' will be re-named 'leave of absence request' and there will be slight changes to the form. Term time holiday will be authorised only under exceptional circumstances.

Some of you may be aware, that some schools within our pyramid, have not been authorising family term time holidays for some time. As Head I have tried to be fair, used my discretion and in some cases have authorised up to ten days authorised holiday in a year. Unfortunately I now have to revise leave of absence requests in line with National and Local practice. When a form is submitted now, I am only able to authorise the holiday if there are 'exceptional circumstances'. Any leave of absence which is not authorised will

be coded as 'unauthorised holiday' on the register. I am aware that the cost of family holidays is far higher during the school holidays, I also appreciate that parents can't always get school holidays off work. I am however expected to apply the new regulations, although I will still use my discretion within the scope I am allowed. Thank you for your support with this matter, if you have any concerns or worries please come and talk to me.

Cycling in school grounds

This week there was an accident due to a child cycling in the school grounds. We ask all children and parents not to ride bikes until they reach the school gates. We would be grateful for all bikes to be pushed on the path, not grass, so that there are no further accidents. Thank you for your support with this matter.

CCTV

We are always looking to improve the security on our school site for the safety of our children and staff, and I am pleased to inform you that this week we are having CCTV fitted throughout the whole school site.

Scholastic books

You will have recently received a copy of the Scholastic Book Club magazine. This is issued every half term with a great selection of books to order at reduced prices. Your orders help the school as we get 20% of the order to spend on books for school. All orders must be handed into the school office by Friday 27th September. Cheques should be made payable to Preston Grange Primary School.

Jeans for genes

Jeans for Genes raises money for children with genetic disorders. Jeans for Genes Day is an annual fundraising event and takes place this week on **Friday 20th September 2013**. It raises money and provides funding for the care and support of children with genetic disorders through their grant programme. This Friday, we ask that children still wear their school polo shirt and sweatshirt, but they come into school wearing their jeans for the day, and make a suggested £1 donation for the charity. Many thanks for your support.

Admissions for September 2014

The admissions process has started for children who require a place in Reception for September 2014. If you wish to apply for a place in our Reception class for next year, please apply online by logging onto the Council website at: www.northtyneside.gov.uk/schooladmission and complete the online application form. The deadline for submitting your application for September's Reception intake is **Wednesday 15th January 2014**. Thank you.

Parents evenings

This half term we will be holding parents evenings at the following dates and times:
Monday 14th October and Wednesday 16th October.

An appointment slip will be sent out separately which needs to be returned to your child's class teacher **before Friday 11th October**, thank you.

Macmillan coffee morning

On Friday 27th September we will be holding a coffee morning for in aid of Macmillan, more information to follow from the Friends of Preston Grange. The coffee morning will be in the school hall. We would be grateful for any donations of cakes for the coffee morning, and ask that any cakes are sent into school on the morning of Friday 27th. Many thanks.

Ipads in school

Last term the Friends of Preston Grange helped us to buy a set of 16 ipads for use in the curriculum. Each class have timetabled use of the ipads to support teaching and learning. This week Year 1 were using them in pairs while they were out on a listening walk:



Reception class

We are delighted that we have our new starters in full time this week. They managed school lunch and going out to play at lunchtime, with the help of our older children. They have quickly settled as a class and are we are really enjoying getting to know our new children.

We will be holding a meeting for Reception parents, to introduce how reading and phonics are taught in our school, and to introduce Read Write Inc, a whole school approach to reading that we use. Mrs Blackett (Literacy Leader) and Mrs Gibson will be sending a letter to Reception parents shortly.

Advanced Notice

On October 17th, the two main Teacher Unions are proposing a day of industrial action. At this point in time I am unsure as to how this will affect our school. I would like to make parents aware of this date and I will keep parents up to date as I receive further information.

Great North Run

Mrs Udberg last Sunday ran in the Great North Run, and completed the course in a very respectable time ! She was raising money for children with cancer. Should anyone wish to make a donation to Mrs Udberg's sponsor money, please see Mrs Boyd or Mrs Royle in the school office before the end of this week. Many thanks.

Fruit in school

Children in Reception, Year 1 and 2 receive a piece of fruit in school each day. We would like to remind parents that although children in Key stage 2 do not have fruit provided, we still encourage children from Year 3 to 6 to bring in a piece of fruit into school each day from home, and a drink of water.



Steel pans

This year our new Year 5's are having steel pan lessons from Holly Cannon, a visiting music teacher. Lessons are on Tuesday mornings, and already the children are doing extremely well and sound tuneful !

After school clubs

This half term we have a great range of after school clubs available for children. We would like to remind parents that if children are taking part in an after school club, we ask that all children, regardless of year group, are collected by parents from clubs at 4.30pm. This term the nights are drawing in, and we therefore ask that they are collected from school. Thank you for your support in this matter.

Young leaders

Mrs Udberg has been working with some of our Year 6 children since the Summer term in year 5, to develop their role as young leaders in sport. As well as developing their leadership and coaching skills, the children are timetabled to support some of our after school clubs and lunchtime activities. This is an excellent opportunity for the children to develop leadership and coaching skills in sport, and also gives the children a greater sense of responsibility.

Newsletters

Every fortnight there is a school newsletter sent out on a Tuesday. For the immediate future these will be sent out as paper copies, as the school office are currently updating parent e-mail addresses into new classes on the system. We would be grateful if you could complete the form below if your child has just started Reception or if your e-mail address or mobile phone number has recently changed. Thank you.

Tracey Taylor, Headteacher, September 17th 2013

Parent contact details - September 2013

My child has just started Reception. My e-mail address is _____

I have changed my e-mail address recently and my updated e-mail address is:

Parent name _____

Child's name _____

Child's class _____

I have recently changed my mobile phone number to

Signed _____