



Brunton First Newsletter

October

2023



Happy Half Term!

I can't quite believe we have come to the end of the first half term of the academic year. It has been wonderful getting to know our new families and welcoming new staff to our team.

It has been lovely seeing you all at parent consultations over the last couple of weeks and hearing such lovely positive comments you have made.

Christmas!



We are so excited for Christmas already! I am delighted to share our dates for Nativity plays and Christmas parties. Please see the end of the newsletter for dates; each year group will give you more details of their plans for the festive season.

We are inviting all of our children for a free Christmas lunch on Thursday 7th December, Sam is already counting the sprouts!

Celebrations

We have another wedding coming up this half term holiday! Miss Beston and her partner are getting married on Saturday. We all wish them both the best of luck for a long and happy life together.



Middle School Applications

If your child is in Year 4 you should have received a guide about applying for middle school. The leaflet has important information on the application process. You must apply **online by 31st October**. Please ensure you add your second and third choice, if you aren't allocated your first choice you may be given a school elsewhere in the city. The middle schools will soon publish information to help you make your choice.

Our Chosen Charities



Thank you for helping us to support Feeding Families, you have made some generous donations already and our donation boxes are still in place in the foyer. You can find guidance on what the charity needs most by following this link [Food-list-2022-PDF-rotated-1.pdf \(feedingfamilies.org.uk\)](https://www.feedingfamilies.org.uk/food-list-2022-PDF-rotated-1.pdf)

You also donated so generously to the plea for 'Winter Coats Appeal' that were collected at the Community Centre. The team send their thanks to you for your kindness.

We will be supporting Children in Need as usual this year through our Enterprise Week. Mr Horsfall has sent you a letter describing how we will be raising money for the charity this year.



Our Gosforth Schools' Trust chosen charity is 'Daft as a Brush', we have supported the local charity for a number of years who specialise in transporting cancer patients to and from hospital for their Chemotherapy and / or Radiotherapy treatment, free of charge. I am sure you will have seen their distinctive mini buses around the North East.



Monday 6th November
School reopens

Monday 31st October
Middle School applications close

Monday 13th to Friday 17th November
Enterprise Week

Thursday 7th December
Save the Children Christmas Jumper Day and Christmas Dinner

Friday 22nd December
School closes for Christmas holidays at the end of the day

Monday 8th January 2023
School reopens

Support for Families

We know that many of us are now feeling the impact of the current financial climate. If your family is in need of support please contact us as we may be able to help. One of the ways in which families can be supported is by accessing free school meals. It is well known that children in reception and key stage 1 already access Universal Free School Meals but by making an application via the link below, families may be entitled to other support.

[Apply for free school meals](#) [Apply for free school meals](#) | [Newcastle City Council](#)

We have been really pleased to see lots of our families using our Preloved Uniform Shop and have appreciated the steady stream of uniform coming in to replenish the shop. Please come in for a browse if you need anything and remember it is just a donation in exchange.

Uniform Policy

We have recently updated a number of school policies including our Uniform Policy. I would like to ask that you check the policy carefully especially with reference to jewellery and hair colours.

Safeguarding Policy

We have also updated our Safeguarding policy. There are a few points to bring to your attention including how we carry out filtering and monitoring. In order to keep children and staff safe online we use a programme called Senso.cloud this alerts myself and Mrs Appleby to any safeguarding concerns on any device in school linked to the internet or our server. We also use Surfprotect as a filtering system. You can see details of this in our policy and how it fits into our safeguarding procedures.

You will also find details of our Safeguarding Team including our Designated Link Governor Cristina Wigg. If ever you have concerns about a child, please feel free to ask for a member of the team and let the office staff know it is a safeguarding concern.

The School Day

Please ensure your child is in school to start learning at 8:45am. The gates are open at 8:30 and classroom doors open at 8:40, register opens at 8:45am. There are quite a number of children arriving after this time and losing out on valuable learning. If your child does not arrive to school until 9am they are losing an hour and 15 minutes of learning over one week alone. The gates close at 9am.

Safety

Now the darker mornings, evenings and changes in weather is upon us, I am asking you to consider if you really need to access our school car park. I am sad to report that we have had to involve the police yet again when the car park is not used with care. Please follow these rules:

- Ensure you use the one-way system
- Do not double park or block people in spaces
- Only families with blue badges are permitted to park in the disabled bays or alongside the hall
- Please do not park if you are not in a bay
- Waiting is not permitted if you are not in a bay
- Do not park on the yellow lines around school
- Do not park on pavements outside of school.
- Do not park in the staff car park

It is advisable whenever possible to park in the town centre away from the streets around school. I have had to report several incidents of verbal abuse and people refusing to follow requests to move. I have taken this up with our governors and have requested the support of the Local Authority on our options.

Attendance

We have a new policy for attendance on the website that I hope you will take a look at. It is really important that your child attends school unless they are unwell. In your parent consultations, the class teacher will have given you a summary of your child's attendance. If they have fallen below 96% their attendance will be monitored and I may follow this up with a letter if the attendance does not improve. If however, your child's attendance falls below 90% they then become a greater concern and classed as persistently absent. Any attendance below 50% is a very serious concern. The Local Authority monitor attendance and visit school each term to discuss specific cases and sometimes meet with parents or a letter maybe issued on behalf of the Local Authority. You will see that the policy is more robust and sets out the potential outcomes of children being persistently absent or taking holidays in term time.



Just to confirm, requests for holidays will be denied and children will be given an unauthorised absence for every session they miss. There is a total of 10 sessions in any normal week. There are very few exceptional circumstances that allow Headteachers to authorise absences.

If your child is going to be off, please leave a message on the absence line each day that they are absent. If we do not hear from you when the register closes, we will attempt to contact you for a reason for absence. This is part of our duty in safeguarding children. If we cannot reach you by telephone, we will continue down the contact list you have given us until we can reach someone.

Gosforth Schools' Trust and Newcastle City Council are committed to raising attendance.

And Finally!

Thank you as always for your support. Have a safe and happy half term and we look forward to seeing you on 6th November.

Warmest Wishes



Mrs Bev Armstrong, Headteacher



Christmas Calendar

Date	Activity – no cost to parents
4.12.23	Chris Bostock – small hall Cat and Dog – Reception - 9:15-10 Year 1 – 11-11:45 Winter Tales – Year 3 – 1:15 - 2:15
5.12.23	Chris Bostock – small hall Cat and Dog – Year 2 - 9:15-10 Winter Tales – Year 4 – 10:45 – 11:45
7.12.23	Christmas Jumper and Dinner day for all children and staff
14.12.23	St. Aidan's Christmas Crafts day in small hall

Date	Christmas Performances
12.12.23	Year 2 Christmas Play 9:30 am or 6 pm
13.12.23	Year 3 Christmas Play 9:30 am or 6 pm
15.12.23	Reception Nativity 9:30 am or 2 pm
18.12.23	1JG Christmas story – St. Aidans' 2:15pm
19.12.23	1HW Christmas story – St. Aidans' 2:15pm
20.12.23	1AH Christmas story – St. Aidans' 2:15pm
20.12.23	Year 4 Christmas Play 9:30 am or 6 pm

Date	Christmas parties
18.12.23	Year 2
20.12.23	Year 3
21.12.23	Year 4
21.12.23	Year 1
21.12.23	Reception