

Welcome Back to Bedlington Station Primary School

A warm welcome back to all our children and parents as we begin the academic year 2015-16. I hope you have had a wonderful summer with family and friends and are returning to school refreshed, energised and ready to learn. The staff here have been working hard through the summer to ensure that all the classrooms are ready and the school looks in wonderful condition, ready for your return. It was lovely to see you all on the yard this morning and I can't wait for the new year to begin. We have lots of exciting things in store for this year so please make sure that you read our newsletter, "The Station Voice" when it comes home every Thursday so that you keep up to date. For your information, an updated copy is always placed in the noticeboard on the main yard and on our website. We welcome one or two new children to our lovely school and I hope that they, together with all the children in their new classes, settle in quickly and have a happy start to the new term.

Please remember that if you have any queries or concerns about anything at all, or just want to tell us of something that you think is a real success, please don't hesitate to speak to me or a member of staff. I welcome any constructive views and will do what I can to act on them.

Have a wonderful autumn term.

Attendance

A reminder that we do expect children to attend school on time every day unless they are unwell. If they have a cough or cold, or the odd sneeze please send them in to school and rest assured that if they become more unwell through the day we will contact you to let you know or ask you to come and collect your child. Bedlington Station Primary takes attendance very seriously and if your child misses significant amounts of school over the year they will not be able to progress as well as they might. Of course, if your child is unwell or sick, we would not expect your child to be in school until they are recovered.

I am introducing 2 new initiatives to support our aim to have as many children in school every day as possible. Firstly, any child who has 100% attendance for the whole school year with no lateness, will be rewarded with a very special treat at the end of the year. This might be a trip to the cinema to watch the latest film or a lunch out at a restaurant, for example. Secondly, the class with the best attendance over the year will receive a whole class reward just before the summer break. This will be chosen in consultation with the winning class and will be age-appropriate but could, for example, be an afternoon at Bounce or ten pin bowling.

I know you will join me in recognising the importance of good attendance in school and I thank you for your continuing support. For your information the school gates are open from 07:55 to allow Breakfast Club access. The school doors open at 08:45 to allow children in and close at 08:55. At that time the school gates are also locked. If you arrive after 08:55 you will need to access the school via the Office. At the end of the day the gates are opened at around 14:55 for the children coming out at 15:00 and locked at around 15:15 unless there is an afterschool activity.

School Uniform, Footwear & Jewellery

I am very keen that children should wear full school uniform every day whilst they are on our premises. I believe that to wear a uniform helps to foster pride in one's appearance and a real sense of belonging to an organisation and community. When I look around our school, both in the yard and when we have whole school assemblies, it is wonderful to see that most children are in uniform but from this term, I would really like to have everyone wearing it, every single day. My belief is that a uniform should be helpful to parents and carers so that they don't have to try and clothe their child in a different outfit every day, it should be not overly fussy or difficult to obtain and should also be good value for money and durable.

Just as a reminder, our standard uniform is as follows:

Purple sweatshirt or cardigan, white polo shirt, grey or black trousers or skirt, pinafore etc.

Footwear

Shoes should preferably be black or of a neutral colour and appropriate for wearing around school so that the children can move around safely and with some protection from everyday bumps and knocks that are part of school life. I occasionally see sandals, shoes with straps and open toed shoes around school which I do not believe are appropriate or safe for the children to wear during the day. If it is felt that a child is wearing footwear that is not safe for walking around school, we will make a pair of black plimsolls available for them to wear during the day and return their shoes to you at the end of the day.

Jewellery

Just a reminder also that jewellery should not be worn at Bedlington Station Primary School. This includes any earrings or studs which are a potential hazard at playtimes or during PE and they should be removed before entering school premises. Watches are permitted and to be encouraged, particularly in Key Stage 2, as a way to become familiar with time.

I realise that the subject of uniform can be an emotive one, provoking strong feelings occasionally. Can I please ask that you speak to me if you have any worries or concerns about uniform? It may be that you have difficulty getting your child to wear uniform in an already busy morning, even though it is what you want? Or it may be that the cost of a new uniform is prohibitive? Whatever the issue I am sure it can be resolved so please let me know and let's try to get everyone in school uniform every day this academic year.

Can I say a huge thank you already, as in our first whole school assembly that I have just taken, almost everyone was in school uniform. Thank you!

School Meals

We are all ready to continue to provide the very best menus for the children so that they are able to have a choice of hot, nutritious meals every day. I would encourage any children who have not yet tried our new menus to try them out for a week and see what you think. As always, any constructive feedback is most welcome. We will be re-launching our *Pudding of the Week* which has proved extremely popular, and will be revamping our menus shortly for our winter choices.

I believe we offer exceptional value with our school meals at £2.00 per day. If your child is in Year 2 or below, you will be able to access the Universal Free School Meals initiative which means that you do not have to pay for school meals. Similarly, if you qualify for Free School Meals, they will be provided free of charge. Can I respectfully remind those parents who do want their child to have a school meal and who are not in receipt of Free School Meals, that we require payment for them preferably in a sealed envelope and ideally in advance. I am sure you will understand that school cannot afford to subsidise meals on this basis – it just takes away valuable resources from other important areas of the school. I am informed that there are still some monies owing for meals taken in the last academic year and I would be very grateful if these amounts could be settled as a matter of urgency. Please be advised that we will be unable to continue to provide school meals in the future when payment has not been received. Your child would need to be provided with a packed lunch. Again, if you are experiencing any difficulties or have any worries, please contact the School Office or me directly and we will do our very best to help.

Cycling Tour of Britain - Northumberland September 9th & 10th 2015

This is just to let you know that the county is hosting this event, the UK's largest professional cycle race, on Wednesday 9 and Thursday 10 September. Bedlington Station Primary has been allocated an area designated as a "safe place to stand" to watch the race go through Bedlington on September 9th. Unfortunately, we are not able to accommodate all pupils due to the popularity of the event and the size of the area we have been allocated. We have, however, arranged for our Year 3 and Year 6 pupils to attend and a separate letter will be coming home to parents of those year groups with some additional information.

Please be aware that some road closures have been announced to accommodate the Tour. Full details of the Northumberland routes, road closures and parking options can be found at www.nlandtob.com but I thought it might be helpful to have a note here of the closure that is specific to Bedlington.

Guidepost/Bedlington

Arrival time 14:55

The race will follow through the towns from the north in the direction of Hartford Bridge via Guidepost and Bedlington on the A1068. The race will leave Bedlington via Hartford Road continuing on to the A1068 bearing left at Hartford Bridge towards Cramlington.