

# Newsletter - May 2015

## FREE SCHOOL MEALS

Three times a year, the school provides a census return to the Department for Education which is used to define the amount of funding Ballifield receives.



A huge part of this now rests on the amount of children entitled to free school meals so we really want to urge parents who think they may be entitled to claim to do so, even if their child prefers to bring a packed lunch or is already receiving a free dinner as they are in Reception, Year 1 or 2.

We also appreciate that many parent's financial circumstances may have changed recently in this financial climate and may not realise they are eligible for free meals.

You can apply online at Sheffield.gov.uk. All applications are treated in the strictest confidence. Children receiving free meals are **NEVER** identified at registration or any time in class.

## BREAKFAST CLUB

Children should not arrive for breakfast club before 8am. Please remind children they **MUST** purchase a breakfast as we have noticed some children sitting at the tables without eating anything.

## PTA SUMMER FAYRE

This year's Summer Fayre will take place on Sunday 5th July 2015 between 11am and 1 pm.



As always, anyone with some spare time is invited to join us in the planning and running of the event on Monday Evenings from 6.30pm.

## BICYCLES

Can we please remind parents and carers that cycles are left in the bike shed at the owner's risk. School cannot accept responsibility for bicycles.



Parents and carers should provide a sturdy lock and we would recommend that appropriate insurance is arranged for high value items.

**Ballifield will close for the half term break on Thursday 21st May at 3.15pm. (Friday is a staff training day)**

**We re-open to children on Monday 1st June.**

## EDUCATIONAL VISITS (not 'trips')

We are proud of the range of visits offered to our pupils to bring the curriculum alive and make learning real and memorable. Obviously this relies on your parental contributions with subsidies from school.



Given the pressures of the current financial climate please be assured that any shortfalls are met by school and **not** passed on to other parents by raising the cost. Obviously, if contributions fall below a sensible limit then the visit will be unviable and so be cancelled.

## WARM WEATHER

As the better weather is now here, could we please remind children to bring a named plastic drinks bottle which can then be refilled during the day.



Children can get very thirsty and due to hygiene issues it is not possible for school to provide plastic cups.

On really sunny days we also advise parents apply sunscreen before children come to school and provide a sunhat.

## MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER...

A really busy half term is nearly behind us. Y6s have completed their SATs tests and assessments using the new STAT system are continuing in other year groups. Next term will be just as busy as we start transition activities throughout the school.

The KS2 playground equipment is proving to be a great success and worth every penny of the £38,000 cost. The welcome contribution from the PTA was a great help towards the safety surface.

School has enjoyed significant improvements over recent years. Since 2009 we have increased Teaching Assistant support by 60% and doubled the spend on curriculum resources in the same period. This is a result of sound financial management by senior leaders and governors.

We are currently finalising our staffing structure for the next school year. I know you appreciate early notification of your child's new teacher. Hopefully we will have these details ready for you when we return from the half term break.

Thank you for your continued support.

*Sheila Haigh*