



## Parents/Carers Newsletter - Christmas 2013

Christmas is nearly upon us and at Brent Knoll the pupils and staff are in full festive mode! Over the last couple of weeks there have been many special trips and events for people to be involved in. It has been great to see so many parents at school. There was an excellent turn out at the recent parents evening which is always an important opportunity to discuss children's progress. There have also been several special events and at the time of going to press we are hoping to see many of you at the primary Christmas performance. There are so many things for us to look forward to in the coming months and next year promises to be a very exciting one.

### Work starts on the new Brent Knoll School!



Work has finally begun on the new Brent Knoll School building at our new site in Perry Rise. The demolition contractors DMC have now finished the demolition of the old school buildings on the site and the area has been flattened ready to start building. The building contractors Lakehouse are looking forward to working with the school to produce a state of the art school building which will be a specialist setting for children and young people with autism and speech, language and communication difficulties.

DMC have also made a very generous gesture by donating £2000 to the school fund. Managing Director Steve Dempsey said "I know it's a small gift but if everyone did it not just for the money but for what you guys do as a job, the world I am sure would be a better place". We will be putting

the donation towards some outdoor play equipment for the new building.

### Brent Knoll says goodbye (and hello!)

We are sorry to announce the retirement of Derek Bainbridge, Deputy Head, at Christmas. Derek has given over 25 years service to Brent Knoll and has led the secondary department for many of those. As a school leader he has provided huge stability, organisational ability and has always had an incredibly positive influence on the pupils. Derek's retirement will leave a big gap in the Brent Knoll team but we would like to wish him a very long and happy retirement.

Every cloud has a silver lining though as we are delighted to announce that Andy Taylor has been appointed as Deputy Head from January 2014. Andy has been Assistant Head for the last two years and this very well deserved appointment will see him take charge of the secondary department and provide whole school strategic leadership on ICT. Andy's promotion has created an opportunity for a new Assistant Head and Paul Shaw will be joining the leadership team in January. Paul comes with a wealth of leadership experience and will be an excellent addition to the team.

We are also saying goodbye to two further teachers with Jo Bainbridge and Hartash Dale leaving Brent Knoll this Christmas. Jo has been instrumental in taking the technology provision forward and has proved an excellent form tutor. Hartash has filled key roles in her time at Brent Knoll but is now taking a break from teaching and we wish her well.

## Multicultural Event

As part of the school celebration of Black History Month a multicultural event was held at the school and was very well attended by parents and governors. The event involved a fashion show, cultural performances by the pupils and a range of multicultural foods again cooked by pupils from



Brent Knoll. The event was supported by the Kiwanis charity who have been involved in several school projects over the last three years. Olivia Sandy, President of Kiwanis London South East acted as MC and introduced the many acts and performances which reflected the rich diversity of our children and staff. It is hoped that this event will become an annual feature of the Brent Knoll calendar and grow and develop year on year.

## Brent Knoll ipad bid success!

A group of Brent Knoll pupils were at the Civic Suite recently to put forward their bid to purchase 10 ipads for the school. The bid which is aimed at supporting Out of School Hours Learning activities and short breaks was successful and we are looking forward to taking delivery of the ipads in the new year.

The development of the use of technology is a key feature of the new school building and we are very excited about the new opportunities for learning that will be created.

## Residential School Journeys

This term has been a very busy one for residential school journeys with three separate groups enjoying activities organised by school staff. Year 11 spent a week at Sayers Croft in Surrey recently while Year 10 enjoyed the facilities and activities

## Important Spring Term dates

The school opens for the Spring Term on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2014

The half term holiday will be from Monday 17<sup>th</sup> February to Friday 21<sup>st</sup> February.

Parents Evening is on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> March and Achievements Assembly is on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> April at 10am.

The school will close for the Easter holiday at 1.00 pm that day.

at Macaroni Woods in Wiltshire. Most recently Year 7 spent four days at the Margaret Macmillan Outdoor Education Centre run by one of our Cooperative Trust partners Widehorizons. We firmly believe in the value of these residential experiences and the importance of learning taking place outside of the classroom as well as in it.



The Brent Knoll and Watergate Co-operative Trust has continued to grow and develop. We have been delighted with the relationship with our Trust partners and the opportunities that they have presented for our children. This term saw the introduction of a new Cooperative Trust partner with the Ravensbourne Project joining the Trust. Ravensbourne provide out of school activities for many children with special educational needs and learning disabilities in Lewisham and are looking to develop respite care provision.

We are also very keen to increase the membership of the Cooperative which now stands at 190. Membership forms are available from the school and on the website. So if you have not yet become a member please join! Once we have 200 members we will be setting up the Parents Forum which will give parents a real say in the running of the Trust.



A very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you all!