

Brent Knoll School Newsletter December 2018

Seasonal greetings and welcome to the Autumn term newsletter. The Autumn term is always a long term for staff and pupils alike moving us from the memories of a long, hot summer through the changing season to the dark run into the Christmas break when light is scarce and the weather cold.



School Improvement

It has been a productive term and there is much to report upon and celebrate. As always there is a huge emphasis on teaching and learning and we have started to use a new system to track the personal development of our pupils. The 'Personal Development Tracker' is designed to provide an analysis of developments that pupil make in relation to social communication, social interaction, self-care and keeping safe, emotional understanding and self-awareness, sensory processing and independence and organisation. It was launched in September and I have no doubt that it will provide information for parents and carers along with other professionals involved with our young people which will inform about strengths and targeted areas for future development. It was great that so many parents turned up to take part in the information sharing event that was put on to support its introduction.

We continue to work towards our priorities in the School Improvement Plan and have been involving our middle leaders much more in the process of monitoring Teaching and Learning which is a role that they have really got their teeth into and we will soon be able to gauge the impact of their actions on pupil progress. We have revised our policy relating to the way that feedback is given to pupils and the ways that we record evidence of the progress that they are making. We have done this in a bid to better reflect what is meaningful for our learners and helps them to understand the steps that they need to take to improve their outcomes.

Learning Support Assistants are one of our most valuable resources and we have harmonised their contracts starting from September to ensure that we have safe levels of supervision before and after school and vitally in the break and lunch times as well. I thank LSA's for their cooperation in adjusting to these revised working hours and I will be looking at ways that we can develop our provision across the school day utilising the great skill and expertise that they offer to the school and our young people.

As you may be aware we have 'Autism Accreditation' status which is a benchmark affirming the quality of our setting in the context of provision for pupils with Autism and they will be carrying out a review of the school in January. We will also be taking part in a peer to peer review process organised through our affiliation with 'Challenge Partners'. A small team of reviewers will visit the school over three days in February to experience the schools operation and to offer advice about areas that we may want to develop. This is a supportive and reciprocal arrangement and I will be carrying out a review of a Special School in Kent during March. We will also be due a Local Authority visit in the Spring Term and all of these help us to shape ourselves to fulfill our ambition of becoming an outstanding provider for young people with SEND.

Safeguarding

'See it, hear it, report it'.

All staff attended a session of continuing professional development on the first day back in the Autumn Term where updates to a key Safeguarding document called '[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)' were considered. We are always mindful of our responsibilities as professionals working with children of our responsibilities in keeping them safe within school but also equipping to be aware of their safety and wellbeing in the community as well. We have procedures for ensuring that adults are aware of how to support pupils in this regard and all are aware of the process that they should follow if faced with any concerns about our young people.

All staff also received 'Team Teach' professional development which is the methodology that we use which includes both training in de-escalation skills and physical interventions, known as 'positive handling strategies'. Where there is evidence that any physical intervention may be necessary parents or carers will be invited to take part in drawing up and agreeing a positive handling plan for their child.

Parent and Carers Forum

Parent Forum has been renamed following a suggestion at one of our recent meetings where it was felt that Carers should be referenced in the title of the group and so is now called 'Parent and Carer's Forum'. We have held a number of events this year and I would encourage you all to keep up to date with information about forthcoming events. Events this term have included a workshop on e-safety and keeping children safe online, Information about our new Personal Development Tracker, and a presentation from our Speech and Language Therapist and Occupational Therapist Service. We are also looking forward to welcoming some of our Parents and Carers this week who will be acting as Santa's little helpers when he visits the school to distribute presents to our younger pupils. Knowing how busy Santa is at this time of the year the helpers have also organised getting presents and wrapping them!! A huge thank you for your continued support and for further information please contact: brentknollparents@gmail.com

As always there has been plenty going on this term including:

- Primary Harvest festival
- Secondary music concert
- Sacconi Quartet – Performed for pupils
- London Symphony Orchestra come into school to work with students in Years 9 and 11
- Turning of the Year -Primary students from Brent Knoll School took part in a borough wide singing festival singing songs with other students from neighbouring primary schools
- Dulwich Picture Gallery – Art curriculum trips
- Cycle Confidence – Teaching cycling competency to pupils
- Children in need – Fundraising day
- Pupil Forum – first gathering of our elected student council
- Sydenham Gardens are now a community link with pupils from across phases visiting weekly to take part in outdoor learning activities



- Jade Chandler from year 11 stood as a candidate for Young Mayor. She produced a manifesto and gave a really good account of herself at an event here and at other schools in the Borough. She attended the award ceremony at the Civic Suite and both she and her family enjoyed the event greatly. Jade's experience meant that she developed relationships with peers from mainstream settings and it was extremely heartening to see the support that this group of young people gave to one another and is testament to the strength of community here in Lewisham.

Jade Chandler

Hello, my name is Jade Chandler and I am 15 years old. I would like to be the young mayor of Lewisham to make it a better and safer place for the young and old people to live in.

I go to Brent Knoll School and I am extremely excited to go to college next year. For the last 10 months, I have been taking part in the DofE Award. I really enjoy the volunteering as I get to work with young people and put something back into the community.

If I was your mayor I would create extra youth clubs that are open after school. This would help young people to stay safe, socialise and enrich their lives. Secondly, I would like to set up a centre where young people help the elderly with their shopping and help find shelter for homeless people. Schools can help participate in this. We could also coordinate with the local food banks to help the homeless and the elderly receive their food. Lastly, I would create a day in summer for street parties in Lewisham. This will bring communities together and give people a chance to get to know each other. We could provide entertainment and laughter, as laughs are free. I will always try my best for our borough.



- Matthew Bishop, a former student who left in 2016, moved on to Bromley College and we had the very exciting news that he was voted the 'Bromley College student of the year' at an awards ceremony for LSEC (London South East Colleges). This was a massive achievement for him and for his family and we know that he will continue to flourish as he continues his journey beyond Brent Knoll.



- Another former student – Abby-Jo Wawrzewski from last year's year 11 undertook an amazing challenge in being chosen as one of the six Rickshaw Challenge riders for BBC Children in Need this year. Abby-Jo raised money for a charity that is very close to her heart – Teens Unite. This charity do great work in supporting young people with cancer and helped Abby-Jo a lot when she was unwell. Everyone at Brent Knoll was extremely proud watching Abby-Jo and the other five riders cycling from France to Manchester in time for the Children in Need television event.



Can I take this opportunity to thank you for all the support that has been shown to me this year, it has been greatly appreciated. I am looking forward to working to achieve the very best outcomes for the pupils at the school so that they can

'Be the best that they can be'

Have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! Stay safe, relax and enjoy!!

Andy Taylor

Acting Headteacher

And finally...

Season's Greetings to all parents & carers and the school community,

This term seems to have passed rather quickly, it doesn't seem that long ago we were all coming back in September after the summer holidays and settling back into school life.

As always, there has been much happening behind the scenes with the governors this term. As well as our regular visits to observe Teaching & Learning in all classrooms, which in our opinion, remains at a high standard, some of our governors have been keeping up to date with our compliance requirements by attending various training courses offered by the local authority and other governance organisations. We consistently remain aware of our statutory obligations and commitment to Brent Knoll School and recognise there is always something to learn in our ever changing educational environment.

As well as attending the popular Speech & Language & Occupational Therapists presentation, we have taken a keen interest in the new Personal Development Tracker launched in September also attending the schools presentation in early October. We believe this is a fantastic tool to help provide a more in depth picture of our pupils personal and social skills and how it will help shape and inform teaching and learning for each individual student in the future. We will be following the development of the tracker over the coming year and would like to thank the school for all their hard work with this project.

There has also been a focus this term on the Brent Knoll & Watergate Co-operative Trust which aims to improve outcomes and enrich the lives both inside and outside school of our pupils and all SEND children. We are currently working on holiday programmes for 2019 and will keep you updated when the next programme is available for you to register your interest.

We now have a governors email address - governingbody@brentknollschool.co.uk. We welcome any opportunity to connect with all parents & carers including students and staff, so please get in touch if you wish to discuss anything. Please be assured your email will be received by the Governing Body but please allow 3 working days for a response.

As always, the Governors would like to thank Andy our Head Teacher, Senior Leaders, Teachers, LSA's and all other staff for their hard work through 2018, collectively they have made this a very successful year for Brent Knoll and we look forward to supporting the school in continuing these efforts to make 2019 even better.

We wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Regards

Brent Knoll Governors