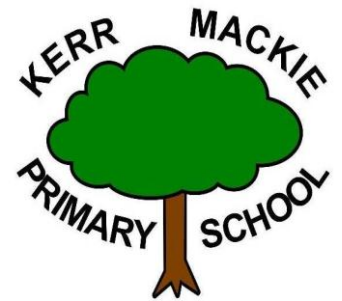


KERR MACKIE PRIMARY SCHOOL

20th September 2013



Dear Parent/Carer,

The new school year has got off to a great start. Our Nursery and Reception children have settled in well and are enjoying the vibrant learning environment. I have visited both Nursery and Reception and have observed children singing number rhymes, telling the story of Handa's Surprise and creating tunnels and castles in the giant sand pit outside. Our new staff are also settling in and I would like to thank parents for the warm welcome you have given them.

Our exciting history projects which have now started throughout the rest of the school have really engaged the children, from the Great Fire of London, Vikings, the Egyptians, the Ancient Greeks to World War 2. Already, many year groups have been on a trip, or had a visitor. Please read the children's recounts below and more will soon be placed on our school website.

CURRICULUM

YEAR 2

"On Wednesday 18th September, Year 2 had a London's burning day. We dressed up as people in 1666. We did lots of activities like baking buns, making tuzzy wuzzys and making swurly wurly paintings in fire colours like yellow, orange and red. We made houses out of paper and we also made signs for Pudding Lane. Finally we cut and put pictures of the fire in order. We had so much fun!" written by Anna Bacon and Aden Hashmi in Spruce class.

YEAR 6 TRIP

Last Thursday, Year 6 was lucky enough to visit Eden Camp, a World War Two museum in North Yorkshire. There are many huts that cover the main aspects of the war, including wartime Britain, The Blitz, Aircraft and Dig for Victory. We all had a brilliant time and learnt lots of information about the impact of war- and the weather was lovely!
Year 6.

YEAR 3 VIKING DAY

"On Wednesday, Year 3 had 2 Vikings coming in to tell us what life was like in the Viking times. They told us about weapons, fashion, toys and games and lots more. In the afternoon we got to play with the toys and games and tell and act out stories about Vikings. After that, we got to ask the Vikings questions. We had a fantastic day and learnt lots." Written by Ellie Keeble, Rowan

WHAT'S NEW THIS YEAR

SOUNDCHECK

We have been very fortunate to have been selected, alongside eight other schools, to take part in a pilot project. Sound check is a two-year project funded by the Department of Education. It aims to support children who will be in Year 2 and 3 in September 2013 in reaching the level required by the Phonic Screening Check. The project will provide additional support in phonics and reading skills for all children who take part through a 20 week intervention programme starting at the end of September.

Twenty children, selected at random, will be lucky enough to receive two sessions a week with a specialist literacy skills teacher, as well as reading support sessions on the other days of the week by trained volunteers.

The school will be able to access new resources and teaching methods that can be learnt from and used to support our own pupils.

We look forward to sharing our success with you later in the year!

PORTACABIN

The school has hired a portacabin to provide additional space, particularly for after school clubs, group work and a quieter dining space for the younger children who have packed lunches. I am sure we will find the additional space invaluable.

AFTER SCHOOL CARE

Our new after school care provision from 3.30-5.45pm is proving to be very popular. A wide range of activities are available including baking, sports, games, construction and storybooks. If you would like to know more about the provision please contact the school.

NEWSLETTER

TRAINING DAY

Last Friday all the teachers and many of the school's teaching assistants attended with staff from the Roundhay Primary Campus, Roundhay St John's and Gledhow, led by Pie Corbett who is well-known for his books on teaching creative writing, as well as many other educational books. He provides training nationally and works as a poet and storyteller in schools. Pie is very much in demand and we were very pleased to have been able to secure this training. The strategy the four schools will be implementing following the training is called Talk4writing, which Mrs Watson, in Reception has already been delivering to great success. We will begin to put examples on our website for you in the future as the strategy becomes more embedded across school.

INFORMATION

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Please note that the harvest festival has been changed to Friday 4th October. Further details will be sent nearer the time.

GARDENING GROUPS

These groups were a great success last year but URGENT HELP IS NEEDED to tidy up the beds. If any adult has got a spare hour or two to help harvest and weed our raised beds with Mrs Hutchinson (ex-parent helper) on Tuesday 24th September and Tuesday 1st October from 1pm it would be most appreciated. Please bring your own tools – trowels/spades and we'll provide refreshments.

PASTORAL TEAM

During your child's time at Kerr Mackie they will have the opportunity to attend some of our emotional and wellbeing intervention group sessions with the pastoral team. These groups help children to raise their self-esteem and confidence and give them strategies to build on and cope with lifelong skills which will enhance their learning.

MUSIC LESSONS IN SCHOOL

We would like to remind you that music lessons are available for children in Years 3-6. If your child is interested in taking guitar lessons then please email sofia@soundgeneration.co.uk for further information. Guitar lessons take place on a Friday morning. We also provide brass lessons and would ask that you contact info@mfsf.org.uk for further information on these. Brass lessons take place in school on a Thursday morning. We will be arranging demonstrations in school for the children and will provide further details as soon as dates are confirmed.

MORRISONS VOUCHERS

Once again we are collecting Morrisons Let's Grow vouchers. The vouchers are given out at the tills and can be redeemed against seeds, tools etc which the children can use in our gardening area. Please hand in any vouchers you collect to the school office. Thank you for your support.

DATA COLLECTION SHEETS

You should have by now received your child's data collection sheet. Please check that all the information is correct, make any necessary amendments and return them to the office as soon as possible. It is vital that we hold correct information in case of an emergency. If you have not already done so, please return the photograph and trip consent forms. Reminders were sent last week to those parents who had not returned theirs. If you need a duplicate of your child's data collection sheet please speak to a member of the office staff.

ROUNDHAY HIGH SCHOOL

Roundhay High School will be holding their Open Morning for Year 5 and 6 parents and children on Saturday 5th October from 9.30am to 12.30pm. There will be a Headteacher's address throughout the morning in the main hall.

ATTENDANCE

The attendance for the period 3rd September to 13th September for the classes is as follows:

Elm	79%	Rowan	96.7%
Willow	76.9%	Cedar	98.1%
Oak	95.3%	Lime	95%
Sycamore	99.4%	Larch	97.6%
Maple	95.2%	Lilac	92%
Spruce	95.8%	Holly	99.6%
Alder	98.5%	Cherry	87.7%

Please note that the Reception classes' attendance is low at this stage due to the children being on a staggered start. Our target for attendance is 95%. Please help us to achieve this throughout the year. All parents will have received a letter detailing the new legislation implemented by DFE.

PSA

PSA Meeting – Tuesday 24th September at 3.30pm

We are holding our first meeting of the new term on Tuesday 24th September at 3:30pm (please meet by the office). As well as welcoming back familiar faces, we would also love to meet some new parents/carers (not only from Reception but from across all year groups) so please do come along to share ideas and get involved. Everyone is always welcome. PSA meetings are very informal and we try to keep them as brief as possible! However, if you are unable to make it to meetings or would prefer to get involved in other ways, then any time you can offer to help plan and /or volunteer at events is always greatly appreciated. Besides raising valuable funds for school projects, PSA events offer an opportunity to enhance your child's school life here at Kerr Mackie and, primarily, to meet people and have fun!! Please check out the PSA section of the school website for more information.

Forthcoming Events

The next PSA events to be held this term are:

Hallowe'en Disco (Years 4-6) - Friday 18th October

Film Night (Years 1-3) - Friday 8th November

Winter Fair - Friday 6th December

Further details of these exciting events will follow shortly.

Teatowels

Over the next few weeks, all children in Key Stages 1 and 2 will be asked to draw their self-portraits to be reproduced on Kerr Mackie teatowels, which will be going on sale after half term. These are sure to be fantastic keepsakes of your child's artwork and friendship groups and will make wonderful gifts for friends and family at Christmas. We hope you will support this lovely fundraising opportunity. Many thanks to Camilla Hawkes, Howard Bottomley, Jacqui Joicey and Staff for co-ordinating this project.

Match Funding

There are hundreds of organisations in the UK offering their employees the chance to boost their fundraising efforts by "matching" the money they raise for their chosen charity (in this case, Kerr Mackie Primary School Parent and Staff Association, Registered Charity No. 1060424!). Some organisations match fund on a pound-for-pound basis, others may stipulate what they are prepared to give.

The PSA would like to explore this fantastic and easy way of raising additional funds for our school. As a first step, please check whether your employer operates a match giving scheme and, if they do, please do let us know - it will cost you nothing!

There is no definitive list of match funders but some examples of companies that participate in this scheme can be found online at MoneySavingExpert.com and include Asda, Barclays, Debenhams, HSBC, Marks & Spencer, Sainsbury's, Stagecoach, Tesco....the list goes on. With our Winter Fair (one of the biggest events in the school calendar) on the horizon, now is an ideal opportunity to maximise our fundraising efforts.

Rachel Wilson,
PSA Chair.