

park life

Buckingham Park Church of England Primary School Newsletter

Welcome back!

Now that we have turned back the clocks, we must prepare for the shorter, darker days of winter - going to work or school, and returning home in darkness.

Many festivals at this time of year are linked to light and dark – Halloween, Hannukah, Diwali, Bonfire Night and Christmas are all examples. Light is one of the most important images used by all religions to explain how they begin to understand creation and our relationship with God.

For Christians, Jesus is the Light of the World. He said, "I am the light for the world! Follow me, and you won't be walking in the dark. You will have the light that gives life." (John 8 v 12)



Lighting candles, bringing light to a room, is a way of marking a special occasion. We use candles on birthdays, in church services, and at Christmas. We light a candle at the beginning of each of our school Worship Times because these are special times for the school.

During the course of this term, our curriculum focus will be festivals – Christmas will, of course, be a big part of that but we will also learn about, and from, the way in which the festivals of other faiths are celebrated.

Best wishes,

Nick Waldron

Remembrance



During this week, we'll be talking to the children about Remembrance Sunday.

We have poppies available in school. The Poppy Appeal is organised by The Royal British Legion and it raised money for servicemen and women who are still alive but whose lives have been changed by war. Each year, volunteers sell these poppies all over Britain.

We encourage you to talk to your children about The Poppy Appeal, and to wear a poppy in return for a donation to the appeal. They will be available each morning as you come in to school.

Coats, hats, scarves and gloves

Now that the weather is colder and wetter, can I take this opportunity to remind everyone that children should come to school equipped for the cold weather. Every child must have a coat each day, and gloves, hats and scarves might be useful too! We will continue to use our outdoor spaces whenever we can. **Please ensure that all clothing, including gloves, hats and scarves are named.**



Go Pyjamas for Children in Need!



We will be joining with thousands of schools, businesses, groups and individuals this year as we raise money for the BBC Children in Need appeal. For those of you who watch Blue Peter, you'll know that the team are encouraging us to 'Go Pyjamas!'. Simply wear your pyjamas, nighty, dressing gown, slippers and come to school with a donation of at least £1 for the charity.

The appeal night is November 16th, but Green Class are visiting an outdoor museum on that day (and pyjamas might be a bit chilly!) so we'll be having our special day on **Friday 23rd November**.

Please note that school will continue as normal on that day – so please wear warm clothes under your pyjamas, or leggings under your nighty, and remember a coat and proper shoes or trainers!

Emergency School Closure Procedure

As the very cold weather draws in, and the threat of early snow, it is timely for me to inform you of our procedure for closing the school in the event of severe weather conditions, a loss of essential services (power, water or heating), insufficient staff numbers or another significant happening.



Firstly, it is important to say that we will always endeavour to keep our school open if it is safe to do so. If the decision to close a school is made, this decision is taken by the Headteacher in consultation with the school's Governing Body Chair and the Senior Area Advisor. These decisions are not taken lightly and are often made following a recommendation from the Local Authority or as a result of warnings from the police, transport authorities or met office.

In the event of school closure we will notify parents through the Bucks County Council Website. The Headteacher is the only person with the authority to list the school closure on this secure site so, if our school is listed as closed, we are closed – there is no need to ring the school.

The local radio stations (Mix 96 and Three Counties Radio) will also be informed if we are closed for any reason. We'll also try to get an update posted to our school website.

Please do not ring the school. Always check the Bucks County Council website first. The volume of incoming calls can make it difficult for us to contact our staff or emergency services if every parent tries to call in.

www.buckscc.gov.uk **Always check this website first and follow the links to education, schools, and school closures.**



Payments for School Meals using ParentPay[®]

ParentPay enables us to receive secure payments online for anything for dinner money. In the future, we will be able to extend the system to include payments for school trips, music lessons and after school clubs.

Each parent has been allocated a secure online account, activated using a unique activation username and password. A letter has been sent home this evening containing your account information, and how to set up your account for payments. If you already have a ParentPay account, you can add your child to your main account.



Payments using ParentPay will start next week – from Monday 12th November.

If you have any difficulty setting up your account, please let us know.

Parent Teacher Association



A PTA is a very good way to bring together parents, teachers and others to raise money, to support the school and make a difference for the children. It provides an opportunity for everyone to work together towards our school vision, mission and aims. A PTA will be open to all parents and teachers, even if they only have a small amount of time available to get involved.

Although PTAs are often formed to fundraise for the benefit of the pupils at the school, we see such an organisation as having a much wider role:

- Providing an opportunity for parents to be more involved in school life.
- Running social events for parents and children; providing an opportunity for people to meet and get to know each other and have fun – building community
- providing support for school trips and outings and other special events

Initially, we want to set up an informal steering group to move forward the process of starting a PTA. The steering group will need to think about the following:

- the type of association and its name e.g. PTA, PA, Friends
- the first open/ general meeting of the intended membership
- adopting a constitution
- registering as a charity
- criminal record checks for PTA committee members and volunteers

If any parent would be interested in being part of the steering group to establish a PTA, please come along to our first meeting on Monday 12th November at 9.30am. It would be helpful if you could email me (head@buckinghampark.bucks.sch.uk) if you are coming to the meeting.

If you are unable to come along to the meeting, don't worry. There will be plenty more opportunities to get involved once the PTA are established.

www.buckinghampark.bucks.sch.uk

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Christmas at Buckingham Park School

We are putting together our plans for the Christmas period.

Monday 3rd December, is our special **Advent Day**. The children will be busy with Christmas Crafts and activities in order to decorate the school ready for the Christmas period.

A **Christmas Post Box** will open on Monday 3rd December with a last delivery on Thursday, 20th December. All cards intended for pupils or staff at the school should be distributed in this way. All cards should be addressed with first name, surname and class – otherwise we cannot deliver them. The post box is in the main corridor.



This year, we will be holding two **Christmas Nativity Performances**. These will take place on Monday 17th December at 2pm, and Tuesday 18th December at 9.30am (please note the change from our original dates because we now have an evening event on 19th December – see below). Entrance is by ticket only and is initially limited to two tickets per family as we have limited space in our hall. Once the opportunity for families to purchase their ticket allocation has passed, we will put our tickets on general sale. Ticket details will be sent home later in the term. Tickets will cost £2, which will help us to offset the cost of costumes, props and equipment for the performances. All children will be involved in both performances.

On Wednesday 19th January, we invite you to '**Glow! Carols by Glowstick**'. This is a community event for Buckingham Park which will take place in Jubilee Square from 6pm. Please invite your friends, family and neighbours to this Christmas celebration of carols and readings – it's for everyone. More details to follow,

Our **Party Afternoon** will be held on Thursday 20th December. Children will partake in a range of party games and activities through the afternoon. Children may wear their own choice of clothes on that day (trainers are ideal footwear and no jewellery please!)

An early reminder: We close for the Christmas holiday at 1.30pm on Friday 21st December.

We may show an entertainment video to the children as part of our end of year festivities. The film will be a U or PG certificate appropriate to the age of the class.

Handy Help Required



We have been so fortunate to be able to equip the school with brand new furniture and equipment. We are still receiving deliveries of new items each and every week. Much of this needs unpacking, sorting, labelling and constructing.

If you are able to help out, even for just a couple of hours – and especially if you are able to help to construct flat packed furniture – we'd be very grateful. Just let us know when you would be free to help and we'll give you a job to do (and all the tools you'll need). Thanks.

