

FROM THE HEADTEACHER...

A parent walked up to me the other day and said, "It must be cold: the scarf has come out!" And she was absolutely right – the darker evenings have arrived and with it fireworks, falling leaves and arguments in the Gilmour household about when to put the central heating on. November this half term brings with it new topics – look on the website if your child hasn't brought the leaflet home – and a sense of impending doom as Christmas approaches. Special events this month include Armistice Day Assembly, Children in Need Day and our Open Day (details below). But for now, back to the eternal search for my missing glove....

Iain C. Gilmour

STAFF NEWS

We have welcomed some more new staff since returning from the half term holiday.

Joining our teaching assistant team are Lucy Passmore and Wendy Dottin-Mills. Joining our lunchtime team are Lucy Mitchell and Stacey Oswald. Finally we have a new caretaker – Ricky Jeffery. Our strength as a school are the adults who work here and I hope every new member of staff enjoys being a member of the Brunel team.



Finally as Mrs Toghill starts her maternity leave, I am delighted to report that Miss Pearson gave birth to her daughter last week – mother and baby are well; father is wide-eyed and panic stricken.

OPEN DAY

Our open day for prospective new parents is on Thursday 17th November. We are running two sessions – 9:30am to 11:30am and 1pm – 3pm. Appointments are not necessary – please just turn up and we'll be delighted to give you a tour of the school and see us in action. We're not doing anything special – this will be a normal Thursday. Well as normal as you ever get round here.



Seriously though, I really do believe that at Brunel we offer a unique school environment. We are one of only three schools that offer the thinking curriculum in Portsmouth which really will make a difference to children's lives in the future. Every child here is brilliant and every adult here is amazing. I am fiercely proud of this school and I hope we get plenty of visitors next week to see for themselves what we can offer.



In addition, the more children we have, the better our budget is. Our wage bill is going to rise over the next few years and not because we are employing more adults: the living wage, increases in pension contributions and increases in teachers' salaries are all going to have an impact. Our main funding is calculated based on the number of children in school: a full Year 3 will give us around an extra £36,000 than we got this year: the annual cost of a teacher.



Please spread the word!

CHILDREN IN NEED DAY

The School Council have chosen to support Children In Need this term and so they invite children to come into school in non-uniform on **Friday 18th November**. The theme this year is “go spotty” if you want to follow it but this is not compulsory. We do ask that children do not wear football shirts as it gets a bit over-competitive sometimes, and onesies as these indoor clothes aren’t suitable for a school environment. In return, we ask for a donation of at least £1 which will go to Children in Need.



CHRISTMAS FAIR

The PTA have asked us to hold a second non-uniform day on **Friday 2nd December** in return for items for the tombola. The Christmas Fair will be on the following Friday, after school, during which the Christmas raffle will be drawn.



CHRISTMAS CONCERT AND CHRISTMAS JUMPER DAY

My dad celebrated his 75th birthday on Tuesday this week so I can speak of Christmas with impunity. Our concert will be on **Friday 16 December at 2pm** in **St Mary’s Church** and everyone is invited. The songs are based on the Biblical story of Jesus and we hope that everyone can join in this community event. We invite everyone to wear Christmas jumpers for that day providing a perfect visual example of the cognitive dissonance behind every Christmas event.



After the singing, there will be a collection to support St. Mary’s voucher scheme and there is a link on our Facebook page giving you more details of this. The concert will last around 45 minutes and afterwards you are free to take your children home. Please.

However if for religious reasons you would prefer your child not to take part, please write to the school. You will need to collect your child at 12pm as the school will be closed that afternoon.

CHRISTMAS SCHOOL DINNER

Our Christmas School Dinner is on Wednesday 7th December and needs to be ordered by 25th November. If you already order school dinners then this will be simple but if your child usually has a packed lunch, you will need to set up a Cypad account first. Please look out for a letter going home next week with more details.



2016-17 DATES

School finishes on **Friday 16th December at 3:20pm**

School reopens on **Wednesday 4 January 2017**

Spring Term 2017 – Wednesday 4 January - Friday 7 April - Half Term: Monday 20 - Friday 24 February

Summer Term 2017 - Monday 24 April - Tuesday 25 July - Half Term: Monday 29 May - Friday 2 June

INSET days: 4 January, 27 February, 5 June