

Dear Families and Friends,

Half Term update – May 2017

Those of you who keep up to date with our news via our website will have seen that we have a new Twitter account. You can follow us on @BrookfieldsSEN and @Pathwaytoemploy.



It has been a busy half term for the school with a range of onsite and offsite activities for pupils. We have had a number of residential visits this half term – students and staff from Key Stage 4 and 6th Form spent a week at The Kingswood Centre near Ashford. The staff team at Kingswood were very enthusiastic and the days were packed with a range of challenging and fun activities for the students. Key Stage 3 spent a week at Thirtover Place in Cold Ash. Some staff and students braved the poor weather and camped in the grounds! Despite the wet weather, everyone had a great time and joined in with a range of activities such as



grass sledging, bowling and toasting marshmallows round a campfire. The final residential trip of this half term was for some 6th Form and Key Stage 4 students who visited Blaen Wern Farm in Wales. Every student who participated in these trips gained from their experiences and all achieved something that they did not think they would. A huge thank you to all staff who were involved in planning and making these trips such a success for the pupils.



You will recall that Kerrie Byers (Team Leader, 6th Form) organised a 24 Hour Swimathon which was supported by staff, families, pupils, governors and friends of the school all of whom gave up their time to swim! As a result of the very hard work of the swimmers and supporters, the sponsorship and very kind donations, Kerrie and her team have raised a staggering £2,870 that will go towards funding the activities for this summer's Holiday Club. A BIG thank you to everyone involved and for your kind donations. We would like to say a special thank you to The Tilehurst RDA who donated £1,000 towards the monies raised!



You will be aware from previous newsletters that at Christmas, Merete Hawkins (Head of ABSS) retired and Sara Avenell (Head of Early Years) left to be Assistant Head at Kennel Lane School. Catherine Bernie (Deputy Head) has done a fantastic job in overseeing these two very important areas of the school to ensure that they have continued to run smoothly. Following recent interviews, we are pleased to tell you that Josh Connick has been appointed as Head of Early Years and that James Gearing has been appointed as Head of ABSS. Maurice George (Assistant Head) will be overseeing Key Stage 4 from September. Josh and James will take up their new roles from September.



Our governors continue to support the work of the school as well as provide us with positive challenges to enable us to continue to provide an outstanding education and provision for all pupils as well as moving the school forward. Dave Ebsworth (Chair of Governors) has temporarily stood down as Chair of Governors for health reasons, but is still an active governor. Chris Manning is now Chair and Stephen Flint and Jenny Hedge will be joint Vice Chair. Chris, Stephen and Jenny are established governors at Brookfields School and both Chris and Stephen have been Chair of Governors previously.

Through the amazing and creative work of the staff team, Brookfields continues to be one of the lead schools in the country for curriculum development, assessment and innovative teaching approaches. We have continued to host a growing range of visitors to the school who want to learn more from our work and what we do. This reflects our commitment to develop partnerships with other schools in the local area as well as across England.

You will know that Brookfields School is the lead school for the ITT arm of The Berkshire Teaching Alliance (BTA). We are thrilled to be working once again in partnership with The Castle School and Manor Green School next academic year, as well as with Addington School. They will be hosting placements for those trainee teachers we have accepted on to the course starting in September 2017. We are also working with these schools to develop a bespoke NQT programme for those students who have graduated from the programme this year and have been appointed to work in our schools.



**Berkshire
Teaching Alliance**

Those families who have visited the school in the morning or in the afternoon when pupils arrive or finish school will know that it gets rather busy with buses, taxis and cars arriving and departing at the same time. Since the single yellow lines have been put down in Sage Road, this has meant that buses, taxis and cars now have to wait on Knowsley Road until they can come onto the school site. We have spoken with West Berkshire about this but there is nothing they are able to do at this time. To ease the congestion, we have put into place a new arrival and departure system in the mornings and afternoons, which, overall, has worked well. So, thank you to all of you for your cooperation with this new system and your positive feedback.

Here are some dates for your diaries for next half term:-

June 2017

5th – Back to school

8th to 13th July – ‘Understanding and Managing Behaviour’ course for families

8th and 9th – Duke of Edinburgh Practice Expedition

12th – MOVE Open Day

15th and 16th - Key Stage 2 Residential to Thirtover Place

30th – Leavers Prom

July 2017

6th and 7th – Duke of Edinburgh Final Expedition

10th and 11th – For those pupils who will be moving Key Stages next academic year, they will be able to visit their new Key Stage on these days

11th – End of Year Pupil Progress Evening meetings with families

14th – **Whole School Sports Day**

21st – Prize Giving and Leavers Assembly

21st – School finishes at 1.00pm

23rd – Project SEARCH Graduation Ceremony

29th – ‘A Different World Festival’. Don’t forget to book your tickets for this amazing event being organised by one of our families. To book your tickets <http://www.adifferentworldfestival.co.uk/>

On behalf of all the staff and the governors of Brookfields School, I wish you a safe and happy half term. We look forward to seeing everyone back at school on **Monday 5th June 2017**.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Brandon Mills'.

Brandon Mills
Headteacher