

Dear Families and Friends,

Half Term update – February 2018

Although we have only been back at school for just over 6 weeks, when I reflect on this half term, the staff and pupils have been very busy indeed.

As I mentioned in the Christmas Newsletter, we welcomed two new teachers to the team in January. Shelley Riley joined us from Arbour Vale School as Head of Key Stage 4. We also welcomed Alex Gomez to our 6th Form teaching team who worked at Prior's Court before joining us. Shelley and Alex are both very experienced teachers of young people with learning difficulties and additional needs.



Shelley

Alex

We extend warm congratulations to three members of the team, Kirsty, Natasha and Charlotte, who went on maternity leave and have now welcomed new additions to their families.

Our Governing Board continues to grow and, in addition to Dr Anne Murdoch and Dr Tom Loucas who joined us last term, this term we have welcome Tom McAuslin. Tom is CEO at Flint House, the Thames Valley Police Rehabilitation Centre in Goring.

Many of you will be familiar with the Sensory Room in the Primary School which was designed by Mike Ayres and installed over 20 years ago. When it was installed, it was a state of the art sensory room but over time and being used every day, it became tired and like all antiques, it needed a lot of loving care to keep it going. Following extensive fundraising, we have redesigned the Sensory Room and installed new equipment. As you might imagine, the pupils love interacting with the new equipment, enabling them to develop skills and abilities.



The Rochford Review: final report

Review of assessment for pupils
working below the standard of
national curriculum tests



Chaired by Diane Rochford
October 2016

Those of you with a good memory will recall that at the beginning of 2017 we hosted a regional conference for 90 delegates (professionals from Local Authorities, special schools and mainstream schools). The conference was titled 'The Implications of the Rochford Review: Assessment for 21st Century Children with SEND' and was led by Prof Barry Carpenter, Richard Aird, Jo Edgerton and Bev Cockbill. The team spoke about the implications of 'life without levels' and how the Engagement Profile <http://complexld.ssatrust.org.uk/project-resources/engagement-profile-scale.html> might be

used to support the tracking of pupil progress and achievement over time. Brookfields School was chosen by the Department for Education as a Pilot School to research how the '7 Aspects of Engagement' might be used as an assessment tool to plot pupils attainment over time. Catherine Bernie, Deputy Head, has been leading a team of teachers and staff in this research project and feeding back the results to the co-ordinating school. We wait in anticipation to see what the government might do as a result of the research being carried out across England by similar schools to Brookfields. We continue to research and develop our 'basket of assessment tools' through which we monitor, track and report our pupils' progress, achievement and attainment.

As I write this, 'Careers Week 2018' is well underway for students in Key Stage 4 and the 6th Form. The Pathway to Employment team have yet again organised an amazing range of employment related activities for the students. These activities give the students a range of experiences to allow them to develop their



understanding of the world of work and the possible options they can access when they leave school. The week also enables students to develop their individual employment skills. Students have been developing and practicing their interview skills; visiting a range of businesses to learn first-hand about the world of work; leading business enterprise projects, and developing their life skills. Look out for more news and information about Careers Week on the school website and our Twitter feed.

Across the school, pupils have been engaged in a range of exciting learning activities and opportunities. Every pupil in the school has achieved and made progress and it has been a joy to celebrate their success and achievements with them. Key Stage 2 pupils have been having great fun this half term exploring their topic of 'Dungeons and Dragons'. Key Stage 3 have focused on



Key Stage 2 pupils.



Madejski Class at The Vyne learning about The Tudors.



'Rumble in the Jungle'

The Tudors and their cross-curricular day was all about 'Rumble in the Jungle'. Those of you who have kept an eye on the schools' website will have seen some of the activities that the classes have done.

The teachers we are training to be special needs teachers through our BTA (Berkshire Teaching Alliance) will be heading to mainstream schools for the next part of their training. We are looking forward to welcoming them all back to Brookfields next half term to continue to support their journey to become highly skilled and outstanding teachers of young people with learning difficulties.

Here are some dates for your diary for next Half Term

- **Tuesday 20th February - 6pm National Citizen Service Information Evening** for parents/carers of students aged 15 – 17.
- **Thursday 22nd February 7pm - Communication Course.** Those who have applied to do this course for family members will receive joining information at the start of next half term.
- **Thursday 1st March - World Book Day.** We will be celebrating with a day of bedtime stories where pupils can wear their pyjamas/onesies and dressing gowns to school!
- **Wednesday 7th March - 10.00am Coffee Morning and Key Stage 2 Stay and Play.** All welcome!
- **Wednesday 14th March – 10.00am EY Stay and Play** for parents/carers of Early Years pupils.
- **21st, 22nd and 23rd March - Secondary Production.** Rehearsals for this year's production are well underway. More details to follow!
- **26th – 29th March Autism Awareness Week**
- **Tuesday 27th March -6pm – 8pm Progress Evening**
- **Thursday 29th March - End of Term** Pupils will be leaving school at 1.00pm.

On behalf of all the staff and governors at Brookfields School, I wish you a safe and happy half term. We look forward to seeing everyone back at school on **Monday 19th February 2018.**



Brandon Mills
Head Teacher