



Newsletter for Parents and Carers

December 2011

Winter and Christmas!



At the time of writing it is unseasonably warm but no doubt it is only a matter of time before we have colder weather. Hopefully you all received the test text, if you didn't please contact the school office.

For those on Primary Campus, other than the Nursery who are not in the Musical, there is an order form for DVD attached to this Newsletter. If you wish to order please return your order form and money to the office by Thursday 8th December to ensure delivery by the end of term. Please remember that as mentioned in the November Newsletter only Parents can attend the Production this year due to limited space. I am looking forward to seeing as many of you as possible at the Christmas Musical on Primary Campus and the Carol Concert on the Secondary Campus but in case I don't see you before the end of term, can I wish you a very Merry Christmas on behalf of all the staff at The Bridge School as we look forward to a busy New Year and new challenges.

Multi Cultural

On the Primary Campus at the beginning of November we celebrated a Multi Cultural week with all the pupils learning about Diwali through stories, cooking and art. There was then an Assembly where they shared what they had learnt. There are more photos of the Assembly on the school website on the events page.



On Tuesday this week Secondary Campus had an Australian Day with guests coming into school to play musical instruments and to explain all about living in Australia. There will be photos on to website soon.

School Uniform

Please be aware that a school uniform order will be sent off on Tuesday 13th December so please ensure your order is with the office in time. There is likely to be a price increase in January. If you require an order form please contact the school office or print one off the school website on www.thebridgeschool.org.uk

Parents' Group

I met several of you at the Parents' Group meeting we had on Tuesday this week with Steph Harsant, the Music Therapist. It was very useful and informative and Steph was able to give an insight of how Music Therapy has progressed in the very short time she has had this term. A letter is due to come out any day regarding several meetings booked for January and February. I am hoping that we will be able to provide many more interesting meetings later in the year. If there is any area that you would like covered in these meetings please let me know. The sessions booked so far are:-

Tuesday 17th January on Secondary Campus, I will give feedback on the Parents Survey and will provide an opportunity for parents and carers to share information and good ideas about places to go in the community with your child – a bit of a "Days Out Swap Shop"!

Wednesday 25th January the Speech and Language Therapists will give a PECS Awareness session on Primary Campus.

Thursday 23rd February on Secondary Campus I have arranged for Voice Ability Suffolk to provide information about the how they help young people with additional needs have their voice heard and making sure that it is listened to. There is more information on their website www.voiceability.org.

All of these meetings are between 10 am and 12 noon. Please return the reply slip on the letter when it comes home if you wish to attend.

Children In Need

As you know we supported Children In Need on both Campuses. In total across the two campuses we raised in excess of £340. Thank you for all your support. You might remember that last year I had wet sponges thrown at me on the Secondary Campus. Unfortunately, this year I had a prior meeting booked before I knew when Children In Need was (I promise I wasn't trying to avoid it!). On Secondary Campus everyone dressed in pyjamas for the day and Viv, and Sue Howlett stepped into the breach and had jelly and flour thrown at them. The students really enjoyed this and you see more of the photos on the website.



On Primary Campus the pupils dressed in spots and had a Karaoke session in the afternoon. There are more photos on the website.



Thank you to everyone for contributing to such a wonderful total and to Viv and Sue for being such good sports.

Free Meals

Suffolk County Council are committed to providing assistance for children from entitled house holds and they would like me to remind you of the criteria required to have your child's meal provided free of charge. If you feel you are receiving any of the benefits listed below please call 01473 260989 and speak to Clare Perkins who will gladly advise you further.

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Employment Support Allowance (Income related)
- Child Tax Credit, **and** you are not entitled to receive Working Tax Credit **and** you have a taxable income of less than £16,190 (from 6 April 2010) as shown on your Tax Credit Award Summary
- The Guarantee Element of the State Pension Credit or
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

By applying for free meals this can often then entitle you to other benefits such as help with computers etc as the government uses eligibility to free meals as a benchmark. In addition, the new government has decided that part of the funding we receive to run the school will be determined by the number of children who are registered for free school meals. This funding, called the Pupil Premium, is extra funding on top of our normal budget.

It would help us enormously if all eligible children are registered even if they do not actually take the free meals by early in January when we have to complete a census for the Department for Education because this will then maximise the funding we receive within our budget. So even if your child will not eat a school dinner or is gastrostomy fed but you feel you would be entitled please call either Clare at the area office or the school office to discuss it further or to receive a form.

Dates for your Diary



8th December – Primary Christmas Production (Parents only)
13th December – Christmas Lunch Primary Campus
14th December – Christmas Lunch Secondary Campus
15th December – Carol Service at Shepherd's Drive Baptist church for Secondary Campus
16th December – Disco on both Campuses
16th December – Break up for Christmas
3rd January 2012 – Staff Development Day
4th January 2012- Pupils return to school
17th January – Feedback on Parents Survey Questionnaire on Secondary Campus
25th January – PECS awareness session on Primary Campus
10th February – Break up for Half Term
23rd February – Voice Ability Suffolk on Secondary Campus

And Finally

We will be opening the After School Club on Mondays after Christmas on Primary Campus and we may have spaces on Fridays. If you are interested in your child attending for the first time or an additional evening please contact Amy on 0795 664 8536 or by calling Primary Campus office and leaving a message.

Angela Evans who is a Supply Teaching Assistant who has worked on both Campuses has just taken part in the New York marathon by 'Walking the Walk' in aid of Breast Cancer. Angela and her friends' power walked the entire route in 6 hours and 28 minutes.

Angela is still collecting her donations but so far her total has just gone over £3,000. Well done Angela!

