

ADVERSE WEATHER

Temperatures have fallen and forecasters are saying there may be snow in the days ahead. It is always our intention to stay open, but there may be days when we have no choice but to close the school, either because we are directed to by the Local Authority or because our own risk assessment deems it unsafe to open. In the event of an unexpected closure, we will get the message out via our text message system, ClassDojo, the website and Twitter. Please do not phone the office to find out if we are open; if there is no message to say otherwise, school is open as normal.

PARENT WELLBEING SURVEYS

We asked parents last year to complete a parent wellbeing survey to help us identify how well we are supporting our families and if there were any improvements we could make to our approaches to supporting your wellbeing. Since they were completed, we have been reviewing your feedback and adjusting our practices to incorporate your thoughts. Hopefully, you will have noticed some of the changes already, but we have the feedback to share with you along with this newsletter.

We are aware that things may have changed a lot since the surveys were last completed, and we have some new parents who may want to share their views. Therefore, we are sending out the surveys again for you to complete with any new thoughts you may have about our school. We would like as many responses as possible and we invite you all to share your views, but before you do, please read the feedback from last year's surveys, as this will help you identify what we are already doing before you answer. The survey can be found here <https://forms.office.com/e/rap0wtdyJb> and will be accessible for one week only, so please complete it by next Friday. Thank you to everyone who completed last year's survey and again to all who intend to complete this one.

PROFESSOR MCGINTY

A friend of the school came back to see us on Thursday and Holly (5L) has written about it:

On Thursday 8th December, Year 5 had the pleasure of meeting Professor McGinty! He taught us all about Ancient Greece, while also being super comedic! He gave us a chance to experience being in Ancient Greece by dressing us up and handing out ancient artefacts. He shared all about his time-travelling adventures, such as visiting the Parthenon, experiencing a Greek theatre and shopping in the Agora with his companion, Doctor Hoot. We participated in lots more educational activities and it was overall a great experience. Thank you!

CHRISTMAS HELP OUT

We just wanted to say a huge thank you to everybody who donated to this cause. We have received some very generous donations, which will really make a difference to those families who find this time of year difficult. Remember, the scheme is available to you, if you wish, so feel free to attend St. Martin's Church on Wednesday between 11am and 1pm.

TIMES TABLES ROCKSTARS DAY

On Wednesday 11th January, we will be hosting our very first Times Tables Rockstars Day! Throughout the day, pupils will be taking part in a variety of activities that will allow them to rock out and compete with themselves, each other and other classes. We are asking pupils to dress up as their Times Tables Rockstar's avatar, a famous rockstar or a made-up one. Get ready to rock out!

PAYMENTS FOR SCHOOL TRIPS

Please make sure that you pay your first instalment on SchoolMoney (<https://tinyurl.com/yh5pxp4f>) by Friday 16th December. We set up the payment plan to help spread the cost of school trips over the year but many parents still have not paid the first instalment. Without your payment, we may have to cancel the planned trips. Please make sure that you pay any outstanding monies. If you have any difficulties, please come and speak to a member of the office staff.

DIARY DATES

Tue 13 Dec	Christmas dinner
Tue 13 Dec, 2.30pm	4L Christmas show
Wed 14 Dec, 2.30pm	4P Christmas show
Thu 15 Dec, 2.30pm	4AS Christmas show
Fri 16 Dec, 1.10pm	Optional early finish
Tue 3 Jan 2023	Teacher Day
Wed 4 Jan	School reopens
Wed 11 Jan	TTRS launch day
Thu 12 Jan	Autism parents' workshop
Thu 12 Jan	Y6 visit to Steelhouse Lane
Thu 19 Jan	Year 6 Maths workshop
Tue 24 Jan am	4P vihara visit
Thu 26 Jan am	4AS vihara visit
Tue 31 Jan	Year 5 Cadbury World visit
Thu 2 Feb am	4L vihara visit
Tue 14 Feb	Year 3 synagogue visit
Fri 17 Feb	Break up for half term

TEAM POINTS THIS WEEK

1	Team Cadbury (Red)	906
2	Team Zephaniah (Green)	894
3	Team Malala (Yellow)	847
4	Team Lewis (Blue)	778

Congratulations to **Team Malala** who have won this term's team treat! They will be visiting Wibbly Wobbly's on Thursday morning.

BEECHES BRILLIANT READERS

Year 3: Amrit (3P)	Year 4: Holly (4AS)
Year 5: Nabid (5P)	Year 6: Phoebe (6S)

PUPIL OF THE WEEK

3JW: Mason	4AS: Thomas	5A: Logan	6A: Lochlan
3P: Shanae	4L: Rahima	5L: Evelyn	6M: Kaiden
3RW: Zayn	4P: Dhanraj	5P: Olivia H	6S: Max

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GOVERNMENT ADVICE ABOUT “STREP A”

The Department for Education (DfE) have issued the guidance about Scarlet Fever and Strep A which is copied below. The main messages are:

- Strep A is rare but there is an increased number of cases this year.
- In most cases it is a mild infection, easily treated with antibiotics.
- Be vigilant and look out for symptoms (listed below).
- Just as we have been doing throughout the Covid pandemic, encourage excellent hygiene, particularly hand hygiene, with your child.



Department for Education

Scarlet Fever and Group Strep A Infections

The Secretary of State for Education, Gillian Keegan, is closely monitoring the increased cases of Group A streptococcus (Strep A) and scarlet fever. As a Department, we are working closely with the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), who are leading on the response.

UKHSA is reporting an increased number of cases of Group A streptococcus (Strep A) compared to normal at this time of year. There is no evidence that a new strain is circulating and the increase is most likely related to high amounts of circulating bacteria and social mixing.

What are scarlet fever and Strep A?

Scarlet fever is caused by bacteria called Group A streptococci (Strep A). The bacteria usually cause a mild infection that can be easily treated with antibiotics.

In very rare occasions, the bacteria can get into the bloodstream and cause an illness called invasive Group A strep (iGAS).

What are the symptoms of Strep A/scarlet fever?

Strep A infections can cause a range of symptoms that parents should be aware of, including:

- Sore throat
- Headache
- Fever
- A fine, pinkish or red body rash with a sandpapery feel
- On darker skin the rash can be more difficult to detect visually but will have a sandpapery feel

If a child becomes unwell with these symptoms, please advise parents to contact their GP practice or contact NHS 111 (which operates a 24/7 service) to seek advice.

If a child has scarlet fever, advise they stay at home until at least 24 hours after the start of antibiotic treatment to avoid spreading the infection to others.

Parents should trust their own judgement and if their child seems seriously unwell call 999 or go to A&E if:

- a child is having difficulty breathing – you may notice grunting noises or their tummy sucking under their ribs
- there are pauses when a child breathes
- a child's [skin, tongue or lips are blue](#)
- a child is floppy and will not wake up or stay awake.

How to help prevent Strep A?

To prevent the spread of Strep A, UKHSA advises children, young people and staff to implement good [hand and respiratory hygiene](#) practices.

For more information visit the UKHSA [website](#) or the [Education Hub](#).

Resources will be made available in due course on the [online resource centre](#).

PREVIOUS WELLBEING SURVEY RESPONSES

Is there anything you think we could do to improve how we support you and your child(ren) with their wellbeing at school?	Response
<p>Actually listen to the children and understand them during problems and if it's a group problem not go with the majority of people and be more neutral! Support them more with their problems instead of thinking they are solved actually follow up with them to make sure they are still happy with how things are after a week or two. Taking parents seriously when they come to you with a problem and not just brush it off as kids being kids and having silly arguments because it can lead to harder more upsetting problems as time goes on! Understand that what teachers may see as bullying is not what parents/children see as bullying.</p>	<p>In the event of any issue occurring, our first response is to gain as much evidence as possible to identify the facts, as sometimes a child's perceptions of an event can differ from the reality of what has actually happened. This does include seeking responses from those who have witnessed what has happened and when all facts have been gathered, a course of action is decided. Where necessary, support is offered to help support the pupils involved. The behaviour of all children is tracked to identify trends and where it is deemed necessary, additional measures are put in place. If there is an issue involving your child and you believe additional support is required, we would encourage you to contact the class teacher in the first instance. The best way to do this is via email or speaking to the office staff.</p>
<p>Maybe more to help pupils understand different special needs.</p>	<p>This has been incorporated into the curriculum and children are taught about an array of special educational needs. On the rare occasions we do have incidents of discrimination, we have a rigorous system in place to follow up on such incidents, including additional support to help educate the perpetrators of such</p>
<p>Lunch time supervisors to take more action if children are misbehaving.</p>	<p>The lunchtime supervisors are often managing activities and will refer incidents to other members of staff to deal with. We are aware that this may look like the issue is not being dealt with, but we do assure the children that incidents are followed up on and where they are concerned that this is not the case, they are encouraged to enquire about it with the lunchtime supervisor or their class teacher.</p>
<p>Children being able to go outside at lunch even when the weather isn't the best the amount of times my son has come home and hasn't been outside because of a little drizzle is absolutely pathetic, that's down to laziness of lunch staff not wanting to go outside in case they get a tiny bit wet.</p>	<p>Wet play is called when it is believed to be in the children's best interests. For example, when there are too many puddles or icy patches. Lunchtime staff come prepared for all weathers and decisions of this nature are based on the children's needs. Our lunchtime team prefer the children to be outdoors because they get to see how much pleasure the children get from the outdoor activities they participate in, and the teachers and TAs would much prefer that the children have been outside to expel some energy. There is also considerable research linking physical activity to effective learning, so we assure you, laziness is not part of any decision made.</p>
<p>I think the Year 3 work is too challenging. The weekly times tables tests are very time pressured and the spellings are so hard. They are harder than Year 6 spellings some weeks. It's so stressful for them.</p>	<p>Work for the children is set in line with National Curriculum expectations. It can be challenging and teachers review the outcomes to determine what support each child requires so that work is challenging, but achievable. The times tables tests are purposely timed to ensure the children's knowledge is embedded, which although this can be pressurising for them, it will help with their ability to achieve better under pressure in tests and throughout other pressurising situations as they grow older. It is a government expectation that children will know their times tables by the end of Year 4, and we are putting a lot of work in to support them in achieving this. We have a new spelling scheme in place that will hopefully address any inconsistencies between year</p>

Is there anything you think we could do to improve how we support you and your child(ren) with their wellbeing at school?	Response
<p>More communication when it comes to incidents or issues in school. Often I've found communication comes too late. Understandably teachers may be reluctant due to some parent attitudes but hopefully most are receptive to feedback and working in partnership with the teachers.</p>	<p>Since receiving this information, we have reviewed how we respond to issues, and we now send texts to parents when their children have been involved in incidents. Although this information can seem quite vague, it is the most efficient and cost-effective way we can do this as it would take a lot of staff time to call every parent for every issue, which then takes away the support from the children. If there is a more significant issue, calls are made instead.</p>
<p>Communication amongst teachers or when parents/carers have called office require improvement. Over the years, messages/conversations haven't always been passed onto class teachers leaving them in the dark when parents/carers approach them over matters.</p>	<p>We are sorry about any messages that have gone astray. The best way to get messages through to teachers about the day ahead is by directly emailing the school office or speaking to a member of staff out on duty. Teachers check their emails daily and, although you may not receive a response, the teachers will still be aware and doing what they can to support you and your child. Inevitably, things happen unexpectedly, so where a message needs to get to the teacher during the day, we ask that the request is made before 2:45pm to enable sufficient time for the office staff to get the message to the teachers before school ends. Requests after this time may not be passed on before the children are dismissed.</p>
<p>No, thanks. Thank you so much for everything.</p>	<p>You're very welcome. As much as we want to hear about things we can do better, we do like to hear of your appreciation too, so thank you.</p>
<p>Communication with the teacher, have not had a parents evening. Had to sign a letter for permission to investigate if my child has learning needs but no follow up.</p>	<p>Teachers have been reminded to check their emails daily, so hopefully this has improved. Parents' evenings for all classes take place in October and February (although a couple of times these have been delayed due to staff absence), but you are always welcome to request a meeting with a teacher via email or via the school office. Investigating learning needs is usually completed with the support of Mr. Ellis, so if you still have these concerns, we request that you contact Mr. Ellis who can help.</p>
<p>Maybe put more information about what mental health and wellbeing help is available on the newsletter each week...such as website addresses or places they can go or who to contact of the have concerns etc. A small section dedicated to different kinds of help of all kinds maybe rotate information each week.</p>	<p>Although this is a great idea, there is often very limited space on the newsletters to include this every week. However, we do have a page on the website dedicated to mental health, which includes an array of information regarding the mental health and wellbeing services available to our families. It also includes the staff in school who can help with any concerns you have. This enables access to these services any time it is necessary, even if it is out-of-school hours. You can access this webpage here: https://www.beechesjnr.bham.sch.uk/parent-information/mental-health-and-wellbeing-1-1</p>
<p>Teachers should be more approachable and return emails and calls.</p>	<p>As previously outlined, staff have been reminded to check their emails regularly, but if you are still having difficulties gaining a response, please speak to the year group leader who can help.</p>
<p><i>This content has been redacted to protect anonymity but it was a question about supporting children who have a family member in prison.</i></p>	<p>There are strategies available to children who are experiencing a variety of difficulties and, whilst we appreciate how difficult it can be to open up about things, please be assured that there are staff specially trained to help with these difficulties and they help either face-to face, over the telephone or via email, whichever you find easiest. If none of these options are appealing to you, please look at our website to see if any of the information on there helps.</p>

Is there anything you think we could do to improve how we support you and your child(ren) with their wellbeing at school?	Response
Explain more information about homework and give details of children's accounts for their work. Thank you.	We have reviewed our homework structure and homework is given out in children's homework books. Login details can also be requested from the class teacher via email or ClassDojo. If you need your child's Dojo login details, please email the class teacher.
Not to discourage a child from participating in a hobby/activity that is not approved of. I believe this can damage a child's confidence as many children look up to their teachers and look for approval. Individuality should be accepted across the board and encouraged.	We will need more information regarding this to determine whether this was a one-off occurrence before deciding how we can improve this as children should not be discouraged from taking part in activities without a valid reason. Therefore, we ask for you to speak to a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
It's been hard with Covid and lockdowns. But family fun days always bring people together.	We couldn't agree more and now that restrictions are no longer in place, we are hoping to continue to arrange them for the coming academic year.
Family fun days	Please see above.
My child told me there is one teacher who shout at kids sometimes when they don't know how to do something and after that they are not allowed to have playtime.	Staff have been reminded of the expectations and protocols for keeping children in at breaktimes. If you feel that this is still a concern, please speak to your child's teacher, the Year Group Leader or a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
My child is having a really good experience at Beeches Juniors school and I am very pleased with his progress	We are very pleased to hear this. We aim for all children to have a positive experience at school, so this is lovely to hear.
Classes on mental health and what mental health is for children as I believe they don't know enough about it.	This is incorporated into the curriculum to help build on the children's knowledge of looking after their own wellbeing and the wellbeing of others.
Thank you for everything you do. I think you get it spot on. Great that you celebrate, respect, and include EVERYONE. That's what stands you apart.	Another lovely statement to read, thank you. We are an inclusive school and will continue to strive to achieve this.
Have to concentrate on English homework.	We hope that the new homework support has helped. If not, please feel free to contact the class teacher to see if there is more support they can offer.
More community-based activities.	This is a work in progress, and we hope to have more community-based activities in the coming months, so keep an eye on the newsletter. If you have any ideas for community events, please contact Mrs Flint.
More information on what help is available for children and parents... Mental Health, well-being etc	As previously discussed, there is a Mental Health and Wellbeing page on the website with lots of information. However, if you cannot find the right information or are struggling to access it, please contact Mrs Liddington who can help.
Maybe there could be a "drop a worry in the box" available if children do find it hard to talk. They could write their concerns or worries on a piece of paper, then have a drop off post box. Staff can then approach the child.	Offering the children to write down concerns is a strategy we use when children find it difficult to talk, but we do not offer the use of worry boxes, as they cannot always be checked in a timely manner and issues can be left undetected. Instead, children are encouraged to let an adult know when they are feeling worried or upset, without any pressure to talk, so staff can check-in with them throughout the day.
Be more approachable and communicate better.	We hope that now restrictions have lifted, and school is now accessible to all that this has improved. If not, and there are barriers you are facing with this, please speak to a member of the Senior Leadership Team.