



Dear Parents/Carers

It's been a very difficult start to the term but with things now back to normal we would like to take this opportunity to provide you with one of our regular updates.

After School Club

The OFSTED report on our after school club, run by TEAMY, is now available following October's inspection. The club's overall quality, its effectiveness, leadership and management were judged to be 'good'. Particularly given the relatively short time the club has been running, this is a very pleasing result. The inspector noted that: "Staff meet the individual needs of the children by working positively and promoting their self esteem. Children make good progress in their learning and development as they have a wide range of good quality resources and play experiences with which to engage and have fun."

A full copy of the report can be viewed on the OFSTED website, by following this link:

[http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/oxcare_reports/download/\(id\)/259879/\(as\)/EY391224_INSP.pdf](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/oxcare_reports/download/(id)/259879/(as)/EY391224_INSP.pdf)

The club is continuing to develop and provides a different specialist activity each day. At present around 50 children from the Infant and Junior schools are registered. Any parents interested in finding out more about using the service can contact TEAMY in the Infant school at the end of each school day.

Breakfast Club

Thank you to all of you who filled in the questionnaire we sent out last term about the possibility of setting up a breakfast club and a big thank you to parent, Ruth Weinrabe who input most of the data. It does seem that there is a certain level of interest in having a breakfast club operating from 8am. However, there are implications for staffing and logistics – any club would need to be self-financing – so this is something, which needs to be considered carefully. We are now looking at the responses in more detail and will report back in due course.

E-safety talk/open forum evening

Over 100 parents attended the very successful November talk on e-safety and also took advantage of the opportunity to talk informally to governors at the end of the evening. Many parents commented to us that they had found the talk useful and informative.

Several other issues were also raised in our discussions. A few parents expressed concern to us about school meals. You will already have received information on changes including new menus for the spring term.

The other issue raised concerned reception children, and the way the school day is gradually extended over the course of their first term, according to children's individual needs. This was discussed at the last governors meeting.

Governors and staff feel that staying for lunch is a big milestone for children new to school. They are also mindful that one of the benefits of phasing in the longer day with small groups of children enables staff to support those children with the lunchtime routine before introducing a new group of children to it. The decision to extend the day for each child is made after careful consideration and in the interests of each individual child.

Contact with Governors

The notice boards in each playground now contain posters of the full governing body, complete with photos of individual members. The six parent governors have been elected by those with children in the school and are your representatives on the governing body. Feel free to approach us in the playground if there is something you particularly wish to discuss. Or drop us a line via one of the 'suggestions boxes' located by the reception area in each school.

The Head Teachers operate an open door policy and are happy to hear your views so please do also let them know if you have a matter you would like to discuss. With matters particular to your own child, you should always approach your child's teacher or their Head Teacher first.

Secondary School Transfer

Over 100 Junior School parents returned the questionnaire distributed last term to seek your views about the provision of secondary education in Barnet. Thank you for taking the time to do this and thank you to parent, Cath Bourne, who helped process the data.

Most of you feel well informed about the process of secondary transfer but there are a lot of concerns over the choice of locally available state schools: 54% of those who responded with sons at Brookland said they had 'considerable or very strong concerns' and 76% of respondents with daughters in the school felt likewise.

A number of you expressed a wish for a 'big Brookland' and several parents expressed dissatisfaction with the fact that Henrietta Barnet is not a local school for local children, drawing its children from many different boroughs.

Together with governors from Martin Community and Hampstead Garden Suburb Schools, we met up with the new Director of Children's Services for Barnet and passed on the results of the survey. A further meeting is to be arranged after which we will report back to you.

Snow Closures / Closures

We would like to assure you that the recent closures of the schools have not been done lightly. Our aim is always to open the schools where possible and the Head Teachers and Chair of Governors spend considerable time assessing the Health and Safety implications, reviewing weather forecasts, discussing the alternative options and communicating with Barnet and other schools in the area before taking the decision to close.

In reaching their decision to close due to snow, they consider not only whether local road and transport facilities would enable staff and children to get to and from the schools but also whether the site would be safe whilst they were here, including whether pathways can be kept clear and if emergency services would be able to reach the schools if the need arose. They consider both the actual conditions at the time the decision is made as well as the likely impact on conditions of the most up-to-date forecasts.

More recently, of course, there has been the need to close the schools due to problems with the heating and then the electrics. Once again, Health and Safety was a prime concern. Thank you for bearing with us.