



Dates for your Diary

6th Feb -	Parents Coffee Afternoon at 2.15pm
11th Feb -	Year 2 class assembly at 9.15am
12th Feb -	Year 2 Sats talk for parents at 3.30pm
12th Feb -	Movie night Reception, Year 1, Year 2 (3.15 until 5pm)
13th Feb -	Non uniform day - Valentines Lunch
13th Feb -	Break up for half term
23rd Feb -	School Reopens
24th Feb -	Year 6 to visit Safety Works
25 Feb -	Year 1 to visit Sea Life Centre at Tynemouth
26th Feb -	Year 3 to visit Segedumn
2nd March -	Internet Safety training for parents 5pm (further details to follow)
5th March -	World Book Day
11th March -	Parent Consultations 3pm - 6pm
12th March -	Parent Consultation 3pm - 5pm
13th March -	Year 6 to visit Nissan
16th March -	Chicks arrive in school
16th March -	Healthy Eating/British Week
19th March -	Year 4 class assembly 9.15am
20th March -	School Closed - Inset Day
25th March -	Year 4 to visit the Centre of Life
26th March -	Year 3 class assembly
26th March -	Year 2 visit to Gibside
26th March -	Year 3,4,5,6 Movie night
26th March -	Washington Primary Schools Annual Swimming Gala
1st April -	Easter egg competition/Easter bonnet parade for Nursery/Reception
3rd April -	School closed for Easter holidays
20th April -	School reopens for Summer term

All dates and events are on our school website



Headteacher's Update

The children have all (at last) enjoyed some snowy weather - let's hope that we see some temperatures rising for the half term holiday that quickly approaches! This half term our focus has been to collate the views of children across the school and ensure that their voice is at the heart of our school improvement work. The school council have met regularly and shared the views of their class members of what they like and would like in the future. From our meetings this term improvements have included a bike rack (on order) for key stage 1 and 2, a scooter pod (on order) for Foundation Stage children, more choice for school meals (further information in the newsletter) and more equipment for lunchtimes and playtimes. Pupil questionnaires have been completed by children across the school and we were delighted with their positive responses. They certainly enjoy school and especially like the varied curriculum and a wide range of experiences such as visits, visitors, extra curricular clubs and theme days we have at our school. I hope as many of you as possible can join me and the school council at our coffee afternoon on 6th February 2015 at 2.15pm. Enjoy the half term holiday when it comes.

Best wishes
Julia Watkins

School Meals

Following our school council meetings we have decided to review school meals across the school. After the half term holiday, we will be trialling a new system and menu (this will be sent home prior to the holiday). Each morning children will be given a choice of a hot meal, a hot vegetarian meal or a speciality sandwich. The usual salad bar, vegetable and dessert choices will continue to be available. The menu will continue to run over 3 weeks and each week the speciality sandwich will be a wrap, a hot pannini or a sub roll, each with a choice of fillings. We hope that these changes will ensure the children have more choice, there is less food waste and continue to provide our children with a pleasurable dining experience. They may be initial teething problems as the menu is introduced however, I will update you with how things are running in our newsletters. If you have any questions, please contact the school office.

Newsletter

News

Writing Competition

We have agreed to participate in a competition for children in Year 3,4,5 or 6 that has been organised and promoted by the Rotary Club of Washington. The competition aims to encourage child to use their creative writing skills. We would like children to produce a written or typed story entitled "Light Up the Community". Children need to think about helping one another in the community or a project or suggested project that could help the area they live in. The entry could also include fundraising ideas of how a project could or will "Light Up The Community." An A4 page or 500 words is a suggested amount to write. The closing date is Monday 30th March. Please send your entries to school. The prizes are:

Overall winner	£75
School winner	£75
Runner up	£50
School Runner up	£50

The Rotary Club of Washington will be judging the entries and winners will be notified by 22nd May 2015. Good luck to everyone.

Goodbye and Good Luck

Miss Burniston, part time class teacher in Year 2, will be leaving her post at Blackfell at the end of this half term as she is relocating to Scotland. Miss Burniston has been a loyal and dedicated teacher at our school for the past eight years and wish her the very best for her future in Scotland. We will be celebrating her hard work and dedication to our school with a warm send off on the last day of this half term with a special assembly.

Keeping children Safe Online

A meeting for parents has been arranged for Monday 2nd March at 5pm. The session will cover how to keep children safe online and the challenges that parents face. The session will last no more than 45 minutes. Please return the letter that your child has received so we can ascertain numbers. Childcare will be provided.

Newsletter

News

On Monday Mrs Watkins received a letter of congratulations from David Laws MP. He congratulated our school on improvement in terms of progress and attainment achieved by our disadvantaged pupils from 2011-2014 and thanked staff, governors, parents and pupils for their hard work and success in making a difference to the future success of pupils at our school. We narrowly missed qualifying for the Pupil Premium Award of £1000. We are delighted with our school achievement in all areas and thank you all for your continued support to provide the very best education for all children at Blackfell.



Sainsburys Active Kids is back. Please help the school purchase new sports equipment by collecting these vouchers. The campaign runs from Wednesday 28th January until Tuesday 5th May. The collection boxes will be in the main office, Nursery and Reception entrance.

Pupil Questionnaire

We have collated all our pupil questionnaire responses from last month to find out what children like best about our school and how we can improve things even further. The children were asked eleven questions and we were delighted with the overwhelmingly positive responses. All results were sent out at the end of last week (see website). We will update you of improvements and ideas from the children's suggestions every month in our newsletter.

Valentines lunch/non uniform day

We will be having a Valentine themed lunch on Friday 13th February. Children can come to school in non uniform. The menu will be chicken nuggets or burger in a bun, chips and a reduced fat sugared doughnut or biscuit served in a box. If your child is normally packed lunch and would like to stay for lunch, please send £1.90 to the school office by Monday 9th February. All children in Reception, Year 1 and 2 will receive a meal as part of the Universal Free School Meal Programme.