



Shield Row Primary School  
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Head: Andrew Knighton  
 Deputy: Claire Henderson

23<sup>rd</sup> January 2015

Dear Parents / Carers,

We are now mid-way through the half term and the children are nicely settled back into school after the Christmas break. Throughout this week, I have observed teaching and learning in all classes with Caroline Addison from the Local Authority. I was delighted with the children's behaviour and attitudes to learning, which were excellent in all classes.

**Early Years' Staffing**

As I am sure you are aware, Mrs Gascoigne is expecting her first baby soon and will be starting her maternity leave on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> February. Mrs Norman will also be returning to school on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> February. To ensure continuity for the children, Mrs Norman will teach the Nursery children during Mrs Gascoigne's maternity leave and Mrs Brown will continue working with Reception class for the remainder of the academic year. If you have any questions regarding these changes, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish Mrs Gascoigne all the very best and welcome Mrs Norman back to school.

**Attendance**

Our attendance for the first two weeks of the spring term was as follows:

Class	Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 3 & 4	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
% Attendance	94.2%	98%	93.9%	93.5%	91%	87.1%	95.6%	92%

Our whole school attendance for the spring term so far is 93.6. This is significantly below our target of 95.5%. Our attendance since September is 94.5%. Ongoing low attendance is a factor often linked to low levels of academic success. It can have a serious impact on a child's future and many pupils with low attendance have difficulty maintaining friendships if they have long or numerous periods of absence. We are sure that you are aware that every school day counts and missing any time from school results in lost learning.



To put these figures into perspective, 90% attendance is equivalent to missing 19 days per year and 85% attendance is equivalent of missing 29 days per year. It is extremely difficult for children to achieve their best when attendance falls to these levels and it will be difficult for them to keep up. A significant number of our children have attendance well below 90%. I will be writing to you shortly if your child's attendance is below 90%. The school's Education Welfare Officer is contacted when attendance is an ongoing concern.

It is also vital that you inform us of reasons for any absence and a phone call on the first morning of absence is needed. If there is no contact the absence will be logged on our registers as unauthorised. In addition, please help us to improve our figures by avoiding holidays in term time.

We appreciate there are many genuine reasons why children are absent from school. We are also aware of the sickness bugs that have affected the school. However improving our attendance will have a significant effect on children's progress. We would appreciate your support to help us raise attendance.

### **SATs / Ullswater Parents' Evening**

We will be holding a meeting for our Year 6 parents / carers on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> January at 6.00pm to give you more information about the Year 6 SATs. The sessions will enable you to find out about the work the children will be doing in the run up to the tests in May and how you could help them prepare at home. We will also be giving full details of our visit to Ullswater the week after the children's tests. I hope you will be able to attend this meeting.

### **Year 5 Robin Hood's Bay**

We will be holding a meeting for our Year 5 parents / carers on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> February at 6.00pm to give you more information about the residential visit to Robin Hood's Bay in May. I hope you will be able to attend this meeting.

### **Class Assemblies**

The dates for our spring term class assemblies are as follows:

Reception Class	Thursday 26 <sup>th</sup> March
Year 1	Friday 27 <sup>th</sup> March
Year 2	Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> March
Year 3	Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> March
Year 3 / 4	Friday 6 <sup>th</sup> March
Year 4	Friday 27 <sup>th</sup> February
Year 5	Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> February
Year 6	Friday 6 <sup>th</sup> February

All assemblies will start at 9.10 am. We hope you are able to attend your child's assembly and we look forward to seeing you on the above dates.

### **Dates for your Diaries**

Wednesday 25 <sup>th</sup> February	Years 2 – 6 "Sticks & Stones" Anti-bullying Production
Monday 10 <sup>th</sup> – Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> March	Book Fair
Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> March	Year 5 Play in a Day
Wednesday 6 <sup>th</sup> May	School Photographer – Formal Shots
Monday 11 <sup>th</sup> May 2015	Year 6 SATs week
Monday 11 <sup>th</sup> May 2015	Year 5 Visit to Robin Hood's Bay
Monday 18 <sup>th</sup> May 2015	Year 6 Visit to the Ullswater Outdoor Centre

If you have any questions about this information please contact the school.

Thank you for your continued support.  
Andrew Knighton  
(Headteacher)