

The

BERKHAMPSTEAD
School
Cheltenham

Times

16th September 2011

Diary Dates

16th September – 30th September 2011

Fri 16th Sep	3.15pm – Hockey Training Game v Dean Close (A)
Mon 19th Sep	6.00pm – Year 3 Parents' Evening
Wed 21st Sep	2.30pm – Hockey U11, U9 v Hatherop Castle (A) 2.30pm – Rugby U9 v Hatherop Castle (A)
Mon 26th Sep	6.00pm – 6M Parents' Evening
Wed 28th Sep	2.30pm – Hockey U11A, U11B v The Croft (A) 2.45pm – Rugby U11A, U11B v Richard Pate (A) 6.00pm – 6W Parents' Evening
Fri 30th Sep	2.30pm – Hockey U9A, U9B v Rendcomb College (A) 2.30pm – Rugby U9 v Rendcomb College (A) 3.30pm – PTA Cake Sale (Reception and Year 5)

Dear Parents,

It is lovely to be back and to see the new pupils settling so well, making new friends and learning. It's a pleasure to see the smiling faces of the Year 3 children as they embrace the new routines and challenges of the Prep department – they are rising to them, as are the Year 6s in their position at the top of the school.

The first meeting of the 'Friends of Berkhamstead' took place this week – our fabulous PTA do so much for the school and have lots of plans for the coming term. Welcome to Adrian Bird, the new Chair and to all new parents keen to get involved. Please do come along to a meeting if you would like to join the PTA; they are a super group of people and it really is a case of the more the merrier. The date for the first cake sale is Friday 30th September after school; do take the opportunity to buy something delicious for the weekend!

It has been a pleasure to see so many parents at the Introductory Evenings over the past two weeks. I hope that you found them interesting and informative –do remember that you can get in touch at any time if you have a concern, via the form teacher who should be your first point of call. Parents' Evenings for the Prep department begin next week.

We are now able to e-mail the Newsletters out to parents and you may already have found one in your mailbox, hopefully not marked 'junk!' We will continue for a time to send paper copies as well. Please could you let us know your current email address if you did not receive the newsletter this way.

Many thanks to all of you who are parking with due care and consideration at drop-off and pick-up times. There is still a small minority who are not and I would urge all parents to do so for the safety of the children and the benefit of local residents.

RPC

YEAR 6 VR PRACTICE SESSION

We are hosting a practice VR session on Saturday 1st October 8.30am until 10.30am for Year 6 who are sitting the 11+ entrance examination. If you would like your child to attend, please let Mr Cole know or email Mr Milner at prep@berkhampsteadschool.co.uk.

PRE PREP AND EARLY YEARS

Welcome back! All the children have settled down very quickly into the school routine; already, they are working hard and making good progress.

Year 2 started the term with a trip up Cleeve Hill to look at Cheltenham. In spite of the tremendous wind, the children had a lovely time and drew some wonderful detailed maps of what they could see.

We are delighted with our fantastic castle and have a rota for playtimes so that it never gets too crowded. Please could you supervise your children if they play on it after school and ensure that they keep the special castle rules. We are not allowing the children to play on the castle first thing in the morning.

Early morning playtime is from 8.30am until 8.40am, when the children are led into the school. There are two duty members of staff in the playground who are supervising the children. Please could parents not stand within the playground at this time as it makes supervision difficult; parents are welcome to watch from the other side of the fence and their children can stay with them if they choose to. Parents who need to enter the school building can walk through to the side (playground) door; no children should be unsupervised in the school building at this time. Thank you for your co-operation.

The Nursery and Reception children have settled back into school life very well. A special welcome to the children who have joined this term.

The Nursery children are enjoying their theme, 'Colours of Autumn', and have already created some lovely tractors and paintings. The highlight of the week has been a visit from Mr Cross who read a story to them!

Reception children have been enjoying reading the 'Owl Babies' after finding three toy baby owls in one of our trees!! They have created their own story maps and have enjoyed acting out the story.

Thank you for attending the Nursery and Reception Introductory Evenings, we hope you found them informative and please feel free to speak to us if you have any questions or concerns.

A special thank you to Charlotte Jones' parents for the donation of the house.

GA/HRW

A GREAT BIG THANK YOU FROM MRS SOONS

To all the present parents and their children and the Year 6 leavers of 2011 and their parents - I was overwhelmed with your kind messages, drawings and photos in the book that was given to me at the Leavers' Service. Thank you all so much for the lovely orchid that keeps blossoming, all the art materials that I promise to use and the voucher.

I keep thinking about 'Berky' as it was part of my life for such a long time, but I also feel very lucky to be able to enjoy my chosen leisurely lifestyle. My husband and I are planning our trip to Australia where our daughter lives so I am keeping very busy and getting very excited. Our little grandson keeps me entertained and exhausted and it is also a pleasure to play tennis during school hours! Thank you all for your kindness which is much appreciated. My best wishes go to you all.

MUSIC

Music Exam results from last term were again very good. The examiner commented on some expressive performances and was very encouraging to all. The results can be viewed in detail in the next copy of the Berky Blazer.

ORCHESTRAL DAY

On Sunday 9th October 11.00am – 5pm, Wycliffe College, Stonehouse hold an orchestral day each year for any players of about Grade 2 up (no exam cert necessary). It is usually great fun with a range of lively music including Harry Potter themes. There is a performance at the end of the day. Please let Mrs Mitchell or the Office know if you are interested in taking part – perhaps with a friend.

NATIONAL CHILDREN'S CHOIR AUDITIONS

We have had several children who have auditioned for this amazing choir in the past. Last year, 2 girls and a boy were among those who went on 2 courses during the year and had a great experience. The auditions are in Birmingham on Sunday 16th October. Please see Mrs Mitchell if you are interested to discuss preparation for the audition.

PM

CYCLE CHALLENGE

Thank you all so much for all the sponsorship and support for the Cardiff to Paris cycle challenge. It was a fantastic ride, clocking up 450 miles in 5 days with superb weather. I hope to finalise the total raised early next week so if there are any final donations they would be most welcome.

AJM

FRIENDS OF BERKHAMPSTEAD

The Friends of Berkhamstead kicked off the new term with a PTA meeting on 12 September. It was great to see a number of new faces around the table and we discussed our plans and aims for the coming months.

The last school year was a really successful one from the point of view of the PTA and it's great to see the children enjoying the new playground equipment on both sides of the road which the PTA funded. This year, in addition of course to seeking to build an ever closer community between Berky parents, staff and children, we'll be focusing fundraising efforts upon the enhancement of the playing field space that the school has acquired with the purchase of the new building, as well as on other enrichment projects.

We have a busy schedule of events planned for this term. The week after one of our ever popular cake sales (Friday 30 September - this one run jointly for the PTA and Macmillan Cancer Support) sees the PTA Annual General Meeting and Quiz Night (Friday 7 October). This is always a fun evening and, in addition to exciting entertainment courtesy of our resident quizmaster Mr Titley, will see the formal handover to the new PTA Committee. Don't miss out on booking your ticket! If you can donate a raffle prize please drop it into the office - thanks!

After half-term we'll be running the Bags2School day on 17 November, and then a crop of Christmas activities - the childrens' Christmas card project, a Christmas Fair (plus Santa's Grotto) on 3 December, the Samaritan's Purse Christmas Boxes appeal, and the childrens' Christmas parties/discos on 9 December. And throughout the term we'll be encouraging you to use the *Easyfundraising* website as you plan your Christmas shopping.

So do look out for more information on all these events nearer the time - or get in touch with any of the Committee or your Class Rep to learn more. Even better than that though, get stuck in with PTA activities! As well as raising funds for the school that enrich our childrens' Berky experience - whether in Nursery, Pre-Prep or Prep - the PTA is all about bringing parents, children and staff together. It's a fun,

rewarding and worthwhile thing to do and we're always on the look out for willing helpers, so please get in touch!

The Berky Directory

We shall soon be producing the Autumn edition of the *Berky Directory*. If you would like to include something please ask the office for an application form. **The deadline for the Autumn 2011 edition will be Thursday 22nd September.**

Adrian Bird (in-coming PTA Chair)

Match of the Week

HOCKEY

Under 11A v Rosehill Westonbirt

Glorious sunshine and fabulous grounds greeted the under 11 A team as they started their season against Rosehill. Uncharacteristically they were far too passive initially and found themselves defending for the first 10 minutes of the match; Milly in goal had a lot of practice! Gradually the cobwebs got blown away and they found their stride and ended the first half with a super goal from Ella. The score was 4-1 to Rosehill. The second half was a vast improvement on the start of the game and Berky started to play how I know they can: strongly, looking for space and driving forwards. Further great goals from Ella and Serena and fantastic goalkeeping from Milly ended in a loss of 8-4 but this match was chosen as match of the week for the huge improvement made as the match progressed, in all aspects of the game. Well done to all the team.

LW

RUGBY

U11A v Dean Close
Dean Close 6 Berkhamstead 3

This was an excellent performance by our boys in the first match of the season. After losing the first session, we went on to win the next two, making great progress throughout the game. Tries were scored by Felix (2) and George. Well done to all of our players.

PMcC