



Parents Evenings

It only seems five minutes since our last parents' evening back in November but it's that time again! Following the overwhelmingly positive feedback we received about our new format of evening in November, we will be running things in a similar way.

Parents of **Year 6** pupils are invited to attend between **15:45 and 18:30 on Wednesday 24th February** to talk to their child's English, maths and class teachers. There will be no appointment system on this evening due to the number of different teachers that each parent will need to see. If you wish to see any of our pastoral team who can advise on attendance, behaviour or any family support issues, please try and arrive before 17:00. The event will take place in our main hall. All parents will be given a short report on their child's progress to take away with them.

Parents of **Years 3, 4 or 5** pupils are invited to attend on **Thursday 25th February** and a letter will shortly go home with your child with a suggested appointment time. Please try and stick to the suggested time if at all possible as this will allow us to minimize any waiting around for you. Again, the event will take place mainly in the hall and all parents will be given a short report on their child's progress to take away with them. If you wish to see any of our pastoral team please try and arrive before 17:00.

Please note that **there will be no after-school clubs on these two evenings** to allow the events to take place.

Finally, I will be available to talk with you all during both evenings about the recent Ofsted monitoring report and how we are working to improve the academy. I am also really keen to hear your suggestions and feedback too.



Wendy Baxter
Principal

Half Term

Just a reminder **that the academy will close at the end of the day on Thursday 11th February** for half term and will re-open at the usual time on Monday 22nd February. We are closed on Friday 12th February for staff training. Our staff will be travelling down to London on that day to join with the staff of the other 33 Ark Academies to attend the Ark Education Conference.

All pupils will have been given work to complete over the half term to ensure that they keep up to date with their studies. In addition to the work sent home parents are encouraged to give their children access to Lexia and Maths Whizz, our online tutoring programmes.

Finally, please do take these holidays as an opportunity to check your child's academy uniform and purchase anything new that they require. After half term boots will no longer be allowed as footwear in the academy due to the improving weather.

INSET Days

As you will know from our last newsletter, our new building is now almost ready to move into. As this will take some effort to achieve, we are presently planning to close the academy on the first day after the Easter holidays, Monday 11th April, to allow this to happen. There is a small possibility that we will not be ready for the move by this date, in which case we will need to re-schedule this closure date. We will keep you informed. Other academy closure dates for INSET are 10th June and 27th June. We are currently finalizing our INSET days for the next academic year and will let you know these asap.



Joint Working with St Benedicts



It has been a pleasure so far this term to start meeting and working regularly with Mrs Williams and her team at St Benedict's Infants School. As we know, so many of our pupils attend the infants school before coming to Ark Chamberlain and many of our current pupils have younger siblings at the school. It therefore makes sense for us to liaise regularly and arrange joint events for pupils and parents alike. More of these will be announced in the near future.

Both Mrs Williams and I commented recently on the opening of 'all-through' academies and the opportunities that it gives for seamless education from ages 5 to 18. However, we are also aware that many parents want a greater choice for their children and are not able to forecast the best path for their future at 5 years old. This is where St Benedict's and Ark Chamberlain can work together to provide the very best for your child. We can give specialized education at infants and junior school and then can help your child to gain entry into the secondary school that best suits them. In fact many of our children gain entrance to the 'top' grammar schools in Birmingham.

Writing Competition

A final reminder that the entry date is fast approaching for our writing competition for Y5 and Y6 children. Pupils are asked to write, in their best handwriting, a short essay on the following topic: 'What is the biggest problem facing the children in your community and how would you improve this?' Entries must be on an official entry form available from your child's teacher and the closing date is Thursday 11th February. Judging will take place on 24th February by a distinguished panel.

Safeguarding – “Everybody’s business”

Tuesday 9th February was Safer Internet Day and you will no doubt have seen information on the news about younger children signing up to social media accounts. For most social media the minimum joining age is 13 and we advise parents to think very carefully about the consequences of allowing their children to join sites under this age. All pupils within the academy are taught the SMART rules of e-safety.



Dates for your diary

Half term holiday – last day of school is Thursday 11th Feb and the academy re-opens at the usual time on Monday 22nd Feb.

Judging for writing competition is on Wed 24th Feb

Parents evenings are on 24th Feb (year 6) and 25th Feb (years 3, 4 and 5).

World book day is on Thu 3rd March and 'Dreadlock Alien' will be visiting the academy on Tues 8th March to help us to celebrate this.

Goodbye to staff

We will be saying a sad farewell to two of our teachers at half term - Mrs Abell and Mrs Choudhury. Mrs Choudhury has worked at the academy for the past 11 years. We wish them both well for the future.

Travel Questionnaire

With this newsletter you will be receiving a short questionnaire about how your child travels to and from school each day. We are required to request this information by Birmingham LA. Please help us by completing and returning to us asap.