

Dear Parent/Carer

Welcome to Year 7 everyone! I am delighted to be able write to you to tell you a little bit about our year group. Let me begin by introducing our year team:

Head of Year:
Mrs M Johnston

Link Tutor:
Miss L White

Senior Management Support:
Mr P Kennedy

CSA Team Leader:
Miss F Ward

Form tutors:

7K Mr M Clement
7P Mr B Harrison

7L Ms R Fellows
7Q Miss K Hirst

7M Mr N Roscoe
7R Miss C Parr

7N Miss E Shore
7S Ms S Uden

7O Mr N King
7T Mr J Wragg

Support Tutors:

Mrs L Lloyd, Mr D Stokoe, Miss L Bowden, Miss A Mills, Miss J Hunt, Mrs C Jackson and Mrs M Storey

It is a privilege to lead such a varied, strong and enthusiastic team, along with Miss Lindsey White, our superb Link Tutor who is also our transition coordinator. Miss White deals with day to day issues and is the first point of contact by telephone. Our strong team is committed to supporting and encouraging your child throughout the year.

Our year group is made up of 268 pupils, taken from 11 partner primary schools (we actually received children from around 22 schools), in a 10 form entry. The pupils have settled very well, with (so far) only minor teething problems.

Attendance and Punctuality

Attendance so far has been very good indeed; it currently stands at 97.1% In one week, 7 forms maintained 100% attendance – a fantastic start! I cannot emphasise enough how important it is that your child is in lessons for their full 5 hour educational entitlement every day. In line with this, we do ask that you try to arrange any appointments after the school day. Similarly, we do not authorise holidays taken during term time; such absences are usually met with a fine from the Local Authority. The school should be informed of all absences by a telephone call to the dedicated Absence Line (215759) and a note in the pupil planner. As part of our drive to combat truancy, we alert parents on the first day of a child's absence from school where we have not received information from parents as to why pupils are absent. All pupils should arrive on time to school. This is extremely important, particularly on Friday, which is our assembly day, as important notices are given out. Attendance is monitored electronically in school, allowing quick and easy access to information. Miss White keeps a very close eye on attendance and punctuality throughout the school day. If there is something awry, rest assured we will be in touch.

Uniform and Equipment

I would like to extend a big thank you to all parents and carers who have gone to lengths to ensure that their child is properly equipped for school. If you are unsure about what your child needs each day, please consult their planner with them. We ask that you check your child's planner once a week and sign the appropriate page – this is a quick and efficient way of seeing straight away how their week has been; furthermore, this is often the best method of getting a message to your child's form tutor or subject teachers. Our basic uniform expectations are also published in the pupil planner. May I refer you to the Joint Heads' letter in September in asking you to ensure that your child is suitably dressed for school? Under current guidance to all schools, the school may, having contacted parents, legitimately send pupils home if they are incorrectly dressed for school. Their return would be subject to them conforming fully to the school's dress code. Whilst I am sure that this won't be necessary for our year group, some element of withdrawal from mainstream classes may also be used for pupils who persist in pushing the boundaries. Thank you for supporting the school in this matter.

Online Information

Parents and carers will be aware that, in an attempt to improve the efficiency of communication between home and school, the school communicates electronically (using e-mail and occasionally text messages) to parents who have expressed this as their preference. This allows the school to channel administration costs more directly into pupils' education and also ensures that parents no longer have to rely on their children to remember to 'deliver' letters to them. For the parents who have not yet opted for e-mail, paper copies of any correspondence will continue to be sent home with pupils.

In the meantime, if any parent has a change of circumstance during the school year and would like to receive e-mails or texts, they can notify the school either by letter or e-mail to kingstone@barnsley.org providing an e-mail address and mobile telephone number. Please refer to the Joint Heads' September letter which gave detailed information around a range of school issues and policies. This, along with other information, can be found on the school website. May I remind you that much of the information requested from school on a daily basis; term dates, contact details and more such information can be easily accessed through our school website: www.kingstoneschool.com

News

We are currently running a number of sponsored activities to raise money for our social fund; this began on Sunday 3rd October with a Sponsored Walk to Cawthorne. Many of our children are already taking part in extra curricular activities including the band, football and cheerleading.

Commendations are coming in thick and fast and I am proud to report that several children have already achieved 25; they will receive certificates in assembly.

I introduced our year group theme of BEACH to the children and each form displays their Beach Cove notice board. As a reminder, **BEACH** Club stands for:

B – Behaviour

E- Equipment

A – Attendance

C – Commitment

H – Homework

Pupils who maintain good standards in all areas of BEACH, are rewarded through our special assemblies and are eligible for year group trips.

Unfortunately, not all children arrived with reliable data from KS2; this has meant that we have recently undertaken benchmark testing in the core subjects to produce our own baseline data for every child; this will enable us to monitor, track and target our pupils.

On 13th October, we held our Year 7 Welcome Evening, to which all parents were invited. It was an opportunity for parents and children to meet with a member of the year team to discuss how children had settled and to offer information about their current progress. It was extremely well attended and was a great success, illustrated by the overwhelmingly positive questionnaires that were completed. Thank you very much to all those who attended.

Elections have already taken place to elect our Year Council and we are grateful to Steve Keates a Youth Participation Worker, who will work with the children over the coming year. It is hoped that some of the children will work closely with fellow pupils from Holgate to establish positive relationships, prior to the opening of Horizon Community College next year.

The first round of mentoring begins next month and will be one of the support strategies for our pupils. 70 children have already been given the opportunity to attend a weekend residential at Kingswood from 21st-23rd October. I am grateful to the staff who have volunteered to give up a holiday weekend to work with the children, as well as to Mr Ron Carbutt who is funding the residential, which is aimed at teambuilding and boosting self confidence.

Looking further ahead, 150 children and staff will attend the Pantomime (Robin Hood) at the Alhambra Theatre in Bradford on 26th January 2012, with our old 'friend', Billy Pearce.

Some future dates for your diary

21 st -23 rd October 2011	Kingswood Residential
Friday 4 th November	Harvest Festival Assembly
Friday 11 th November	Remembrance Day (Development Day)
W/c 21 st November	Year 7 Interim Grades home
W/c 28 th November	Form Tutor Mentoring fortnight begins
Thursday 8 th December	Year 7 Consultation Evening
Friday 16 th December	Christmas Service
W/c 9 th January 2012	BEACH Club Commendation Assembly
Thursday 26 th January 2012	Development Day and Pantomime Visit
W/c 23 rd April	BEACH Club Commendation Assembly & Year 7 Assessments fortnight
W/c 2 nd July	Year 7 Assessment for Living week & Year 7 Reports home
W/c 9 th July	Flame Events and Development Days

I am very much looking forward to the year ahead; the children in our year group appear to be a very friendly, polite, enthusiastic and hard working group who have settled well at Kingstone.

On behalf of the Year 7 Team, Miss White and myself, I wish all parents and pupils in Year 7 a very successful year.

And finally.....May the BEACH be with you all!

Yours sincerely

M Johnston

Mrs M Johnston

Pastoral Coordinator and Head of Year 7

