

**Maidensbridge Primary School**  
**Headteacher's Newsletter – Vol.11. Issue. 7**  
**May 2016**  
[www.maidensbridge.net](http://www.maidensbridge.net)

Dear Parents and carers,  
As I sit writing this newsletter I find it hard to believe that we are already so close to the end of the school year. I think it is safe to say that we are a school which is always busy so I can only draw from the fact that they say time flies when you're having fun. I hope that you enjoy reading this latest newsletter.

*Andy Hale                      Headteacher*

### **Summer Fayre**

Thank-you to each and every one of you who helped to make our summer fayre a huge success once again. The weather was extremely kind to us, considering that we had two days of none-stop rain in the week. It doesn't go unappreciated that we have so many donations of mugs, tombola items, bottles and of course the money that families spend on a lovely afternoon, all of which helps us to buy extra things for the children. Thank-you also to Vicky Charlton and the H.S.A. committee for organising the whole event, not forgetting all of the help provided by staff, parents, families and friends in running the event. We hope to have a grand total for you before too long but early indications are that it will be a very healthy total!

### **Year 6**

I would like to thank and praise the Y6 pupils and indeed their parents for getting through the SATs week with such a calm, measured and mature approach. The tests this year have been abysmal and there is a strong groundswell of feeling amongst Dudley headteachers that the situation cannot be replicated next year. I was happy that Mike Wood, our local MP, was interested to hear about the problems of the test papers and I do feel that he will take my comments back to the powers that be, along with those from other schools. Nevertheless, the way that our children coped with last week was impressive and was a direct result of a sensible approach to the tests which has been taken by the staff and by parents. Well done everyone.

### **Walk to School week**

This week, starting on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> May is National Walk to School week. Please encourage your children to walk to school. If you have to drive to school, please try parking further away from school and walk the last part of your journey.

### **Race for Life**

We shall be sending out the registration letters for our second Race for Life this week. We would love to have a bigger turnout than last year so please come along if you can on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> June. The race itself will start at 11am but please be there for around 10:30am for the warm-up and to soak up the atmosphere.

### **Football**

In the best league season for over 12 years our Y6/5 football team ended up narrowly missing out on the league title after losing their game to Alder Coppice before winning their final game to St. Chad's. The league stats were Played 7, Won 6, Lost 1, Goals scored: 33, Goals against 13.

There is still a chance of football glory as our Y5/4 football team ran out 4-1 winners in their semi-final last week against Red Hall. This means that they are in the final for the first time in well over 15 years. As our school has been used as the cup finals venue for the last five years we have the added thrill of the team having a home tie for the final. We really want a huge crowd of support for that game so please come along and watch. The final will be on the evening of Friday 10<sup>th</sup> June with a 5:30pm kick-off. Please note that the finals are organised by the Brierley Hill and Dudley Schools FA and there is an entrance fee of £1 for the final. This covers the costs of the medals and the officials for the game. Anyone coming to the final will have to pay the £1 fee apart from the team players themselves of course. Although parking will be available for visitors, can I ask that Maidensbridge supporters don't park on the school grounds and instead walk down to the school?

### **Tennis**

The amazing year of sporting success continued for the children last Thursday, when one of our Year 3 and 4 tennis teams reached the final of the tennis tournament, held at Quarry Bank Tennis Club and ended up being the eventual champions!

### **Term Time Absence**

As you will be aware, a landmark court case was won in the high court last week regarding a parent who had been fined for taking a term-time holiday for their children. We have had communication from the DfE and from the Education Investigation Service. Please note that despite this ruling, the law has not changed, however the government are working quickly to close the 'loophole' regarding what is viewed as 'regular' attendance. Until such time as the law changes, the policy in school remains the same. There is no entitlement to a term time holiday. This is the statement in law. There is only the possibility of being granted leave of absence for exceptional circumstances. For this reason we shall continue to not approve term time holidays until the law

changes. Anyone wishing to request absence in exceptional circumstances should obtain the relevant form from the school office and provide school with as much supportive evidence in the way of documentation, to assist with the decision. Please note that once the decision is made, if it is a declined request, the case is then considered for referral to the EIS. Once this is done, the decision will not be discussed further by myself or the school. This is because the process is already taking up far too much time that should be directed to other work.

On that note I would like to say that personally I would like the law to change so that it was easier to deal with and to reward children with good attendance but focus on targeting those with poor attendance to improve. My personal opinion would be that it would be useful for the government to give headteachers clear guidance such as 97% attendance and above, allow up-to 10 school days absence. Between 95% and 97% - 5 schools days. Below 95% - no entitlement. I have also shared that thought with the local MP. My feeling is that current thinking within the DfE is that NO term time holidays should be approved and that will remain in the law. It is a story and topic that isn't going to go away any time soon.

### **Sports Day**

Please note that due to our involvement in the Black Country Youth Games with our Tag Rugby and Tri-Golf teams, we have had to rearrange the *provisional* reserve sports day date. This will now be Friday 1<sup>st</sup> July. This will only be used if weather prevents us from holding sports day as planned on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> June.

### **Dates for the Diary**

#### **Term Dates Ahead**

Friday 27<sup>th</sup> May  
Friday 27<sup>th</sup> May

H.S.A. Toddler and Coffee morning 10-11:30am.  
Food Bank Friday collection day.

Mon 30<sup>th</sup> May – Fri 3<sup>rd</sup> June

#### **May Half Term Holiday**

Monday 6<sup>th</sup> June  
Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> June  
Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> June  
Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> June  
Friday 24<sup>th</sup> June  
Friday 24<sup>th</sup> June  
Friday 1<sup>st</sup> July  
Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> July  
Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> July  
Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> July  
Monday 18<sup>th</sup> July  
Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> July

Year 6 Residential to Pioneer Centre  
Race for Life Day  
Sports Day  
School closure for European Referendum voting.  
Last H.S.A. Toddler and Coffee morning 10 – 11:30am  
Last Food Bank Friday collection – The Big One  
Reserve Sports Day – new date!  
KS2 Production – 6:30pm  
KS2 Production – 2pm  
KS2 Production – 6:30pm  
Year 6 Leaver's Service – 2:30pm

**School closes for summer – 2pm for school, 3pm for Kid's Club**

### **Autumn Term 2016**

Monday 5<sup>th</sup> September  
Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> September  
Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> September

INSET Day 1 – staff in school  
INSET Day 2 – Staff in school  
School re-opens to pupils for Autumn Term 2016

### **Term Dates for 2016-17**

Autumn Half Term

Mon 24<sup>th</sup> Oct – Fri 28<sup>th</sup> Oct

Autumn Term Ends

Friday 16<sup>th</sup> December

Spring Term 2017

Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> January – school closed for INSET  
Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> January – schools opens to pupils

Spring Half Term

Monday 20<sup>th</sup> February – Friday 24<sup>th</sup> February.

Spring Term ends

Friday 7<sup>th</sup> April

Summer Term Starts

Monday 24<sup>th</sup> April

May Bank Holiday

Monday 1<sup>st</sup> May – school closed

Election Day

Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> May – school closed

Summer Half Term

Monday 29<sup>th</sup> May – Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> June

Summer Term ends

**Friday 21st July – school ends for pupils**

Monday 24<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> July – INSET days