

Brookvale Primary School

Newsletter



Dear Parents and Carers,

Happy New Year! I hope this message finds you well and that you enjoyed a peaceful and enjoyable holiday season with your loved ones. As we start this new term, I wanted to take a moment to share some reflections and priorities for the months ahead.

Firstly, I would like to extend my very best wishes to Mr Day through his continued absence. I know you will join with me in wishing him a full recovery, in advance of his return. While we do not yet know the exact date of his return to school, please know that he remains in contact, and he sends his warm regards to you all. In the meantime, I am privileged to continue supporting at Brookvale as Interim Head Teacher and remain committed to maintaining the strong and positive momentum we have built together.



Brookvale is a vibrant and thriving community where children benefit from high-quality teaching and consistent expectations in every classroom. Mr Mills, along with our teachers and support staff work tirelessly to ensure that school is an engaging and rewarding place for every pupil. This term, we are continuing to focus on strengthening those strong foundations so that all children can reach their full potential. By working collaboratively, we aim to maintain a unified and supportive environment for staff and pupils alike.

Our commitment to exceptional teaching remains steadfast. We are enhancing our collective understanding of how to activate pupils' critical thinking and deepen their foundational knowledge and skills. Professional development opportunities ensure that staff continue to grow in their practice, reflecting on and implementing innovative strategies that inspire and motivate our pupils.

We believe that every child thrives when they feel confident, independent, and connected to their school community. This term, we are further embedding approaches that nurture these feelings, fostering a sense of belonging and self-belief in every child. We are launching a programme called 'My Happy Mind' across school which aims to ensure every child has the tools to thrive in the modern world. <https://myhappymind.org/>

Inclusion is a cornerstone of our school's mission. We remain focused on ensuring that all children, including those with additional needs or facing challenges, make excellent progress across the curriculum. Through thoughtful and intentional support, we celebrate each child's unique strengths and achievements while helping them overcome any barriers to success.

Our pupils continue to amaze us every day. Their enthusiasm for learning, kindness towards each other, and determination to do their best are truly inspiring. It is a privilege to work with such incredible young people, and we are excited to see them continue to shine this term.

Finally, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to you, our parents and carers, for your unwavering support and partnership. Your involvement and encouragement make such a difference. Thank you for your trust and advocacy; it means the world to us.

Here's to a successful and fulfilling term ahead. Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or feedback - we are always here to listen.

With new year best wishes,

Dr Beth Clarke

We are caring citizens, shaping our communities.

We are ambitious for our success and the success of others.

Shaping Our Children's Futures, Together.

We are passionate about everything, and everyone.

We are the authors of our own lives.

Brookvale Primary School, Mallard Drive, B23 7YB

Tel: 0121 3599973

Email: office@brkvale.bham.sch.uk Website: www.brkvale.bham.sch.uk Social Media: @BPS_B23 (X)

Weekly Attendance



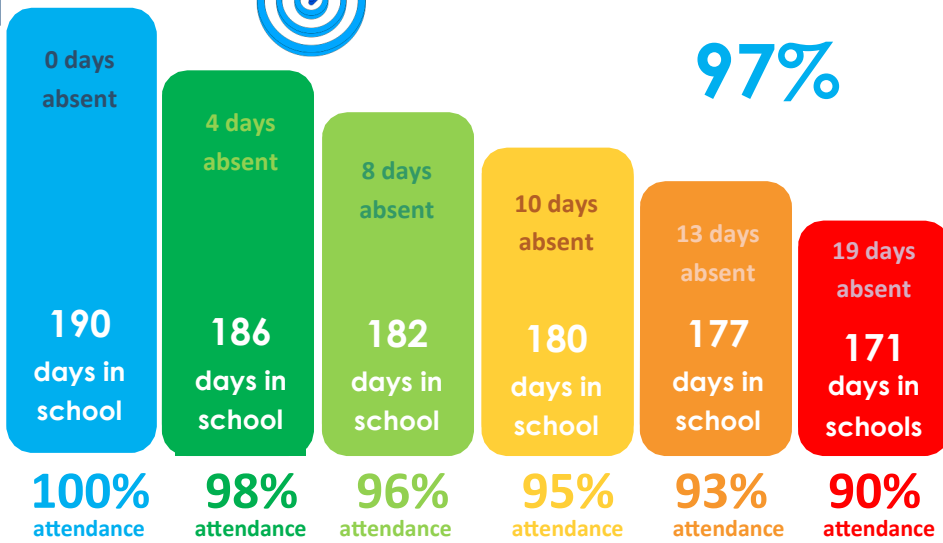
06/01/2025 to 10/01/2025

Reception	93.40%
Year 1	93.87%
Year 2	99.52%
Year 3	95.75%
Year 4	96.19%
Year 5	93.40%
Year 6	98.16%



Our School Attendance Target is

97%



Best chance of academic success and in later life.

Poor attendance—less likely to succeed academically/in later life.

Serious impact on education and reduced life chances

This week's Class Attendance Superstars



Y2



You get extra playtime!

This week's 100% attendance Winners:



Dawud Y3
&
Philippa Y2

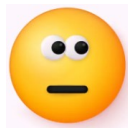


You each win a new book.

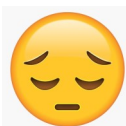
Great Job!

Attendance This Week

96.15%



Attendance Year-to-Date



95.15%

175 days off school per year.

Use this time for holidays, appointments etc

We are caring citizens, shaping our communities.

We are ambitious for our success and the success of others.

Shaping Our Children's Futures, Together.

We are passionate about everything and everyone.

We are the authors of our own lives.

Parental Safeguarding

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about JUSTALK KIDS

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

JustTalk Kids is a child's version of the JusTalk app – a highly popular social networking platform – designed for users up to 13 years of age, allowing them to video call, message and participate in group chats. While adults can link their own JusTalk account to their child's and make use of parental controls, it's important to understand the risks associated with the app.

SUBSCRIPTION FOR PREMIUM ACCESS

While JusTalk Kids is free, there's the option to subscribe to a Kids' premium account or a premium family account. At a cost, this feature allows children to have access to more fun features such as games they can play with others in a call; exclusive stickers; a badge denoting them as a premium subscriber; and exclusive ringtones and themes.

RESISTANCE TO CONTROLS

JusTalk Kids endeavours to allow children the sense of having a chat-based app while allowing parents to set controls (within the app or from their own adult JusTalk account). The basis behind this is positive; however, some children are challenging their parents by refusing to use JusTalk Kids, preferring to use the adult version without any restrictions in place.

KNOWING THE PARENT PASSCODE

After downloading JusTalk Kids, parents can set a passcode which users must enter to add contacts. The parental controls help to manage which content can be viewed and who children can add as a contact: this then allows children to chat with friends in a controlled environment. However, prospective contacts don't have to know a specific username. In theory, someone could type in a random name and then add them as a friend.

POTENTIAL DATA LEAKS

JusTalk and JusTalk Kids claim to be secure and encrypted, going so far as to state that even the developers themselves won't access your data. However, a security lapse in 2022 highlighted that messages were not in fact encrypted – leading to concerns around the security of the app and the transparency of the development team.

CYBERBULLYING

Online chats can provide a sense of anonymity, leading some users to post things which they wouldn't normally say in person. Combined with the option of group chats, there's a risk that young people might join in with this kind of behaviour, escalating it further and potentially turning what should be a fun experience into something deeply negative.

TOO MUCH SCREEN TIME

A report by the UK Parliament Education Committee highlighted a 52% increase in children's screen time between 2020 and 2022 – as well as finding that 25% of children used their smartphones in a manner consistent with screen addiction. Introducing children to social networking apps when they're too young can lead to bad digital habits and a reliance on technology from an early age.

Advice for Parents & Educators

JUSTIFY THE CONTROLS

If parents allow their child to use JusTalk Kids, they should explain that they're putting parental controls in place to make the app safer. Make sure the child knows not to put their full name on the account and doesn't use a photo of themselves as their profile picture. This type of open discussion will help to ensure that a child is aware of the app's potential risks and knows how to reduce them.

TALK ABOUT ONLINE FRIENDSHIPS

Young children could be excited to use this app. However, highlight that they must do so in a positive, respectful and responsible manner. While it can be easy to get caught up in a group chat, it's important to talk to others politely and call out any unpleasant behaviour. Discuss the importance of limiting their contacts to people they know in real life and use parental controls to enforce this.

DOS AND DON'TS OF SHARING

Some children might not understand the potential dangers of oversharing online. Set clear guidelines around what *is* and *isn't* safe to share on the internet, and discuss the concept of a digital footprint. Children need to understand that the things they say and share online can never be completely erased. Even if they delete it themselves, it can be saved and distributed by others.

ENCOURAGE OPEN COMMUNICATION

Apps like JusTalk can sometimes lend themselves to bullying behaviours. Parents should monitor what their child is sending and receiving, check in with them regularly and encourage them to share their feelings (both positive and negative) at home. Remind them that they can block a contact if someone is treating them disrespectfully.

Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/justtalk-kids>

@wake_up_weds

/www.thenationalcollege

@wake.up.wednesday

@wake.up.weds

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 08.01.2025



The National College

We are caring citizens, shaping our communities.

We are ambitious for our success and the success of others.

Shaping Our Children's Futures, Together.

We are passionate about everything and everyone.

We are the authors of our own lives.

WINTER SAFETY TIPS FOR CHILDREN

Extreme weather conditions and events, like record-low temperatures, can threaten children's lives and disrupt infrastructure critical to children's well-being. Here are some winter safety tips to help children stay safe, whether you're staying indoors or weighing the risks of outdoor winter activities.

- **Layer up!** Children's bodies are smaller, and they lose heat more quickly. Dress your child in several layers, and make sure their head, neck and hands are covered. Dress babies and young children in one more layer than an adult would wear.
- **Play it safe.** Even when roads are closed to traffic, it's not safe to play or sled in the street. Visibility may be limited due to snowbanks and ice on the roads makes braking difficult. Ice can be a big risk to children. Be aware of any ponds, rivers or lakes that may have frozen over and never attempt to go near or walk on them. It is important to teach children the dangers of frozen water.
- **Beware of clothing hazards.** Scarves and hood strings can strangle smaller children so use other clothing to keep them warm.
- **Check in on warmth.** Before kids head outside, tell them to come inside if they get wet or if they're cold. Then keep watching them and checking in. They may want to continue playing outside even if they are wet or cold.
- **Use caution around fires.** Wood-burning stoves, fireplaces and outdoor fire-pits are cozy but can present danger – especially to small children. Use caution and put up protective gates when possible. If you've lost power or heat and are using alternative heating methods such as electric heaters, be sure smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors are working.
- **Keep them hydrated.** In drier winter air children lose more water through their breath. Offer plenty of water and try giving them warm drinks and soup for extra appeal.
- **Watch for danger signs.** Watch out for Signs of hypothermia such as shivering, slurred speech, lips going blue, and unusual clumsiness. If you think your child has hypothermia, contact NHS 111 number directly.



Be prepared. Think about signing up to the Met office alerts and watch the weather forecast and prepare for the colder weather. Ensure you are aware of the procedures in your setting if there is bad weather and to avoid unnecessary travel. It would help if parents have a plan in place in case of school closures. Living in a cold home has negative impacts on a child's health and wellbeing. Many families are facing the rising costs of heating bills, and it is important to be aware of the available support.

News Items



BROOKVALE THE **WOW** CHALLENGE!



WOW is a pupil-led initiative where children self-report how they get to school every day using the interactive **WOW Travel Tracker**. If they travel sustainably (walk/wheel, cycle or scooter) once a week for a month, they get rewarded with a badge. It's that easy!

It's simple to run and children love taking part. Each year, the collectable WOW badges are designed by pupils in our annual badge design competition. On average, WOW schools see a **30% reduction in car journeys** taken to the school gate and a **23% increase in walking rates.**



As a reminder to all parents and carers,



Mallard Drive is **CLOSED** to non-resident vehicles between;

8:15am – 9:00am
3:00pm – 3:45pm

During the restricted times, driving in the zone is a moving traffic offence, with the Police as the enforcing body. They are able to issue a £50 fixed penalty fine to anyone caught driving in the zone without permission when this restriction is in place.

Brookvale Foodbank

All families

are welcome to visit the
Brookvale Foodbank every
Friday 3pm – 3.25pm

Please bring your own carrier
bags.

If you need further support
please contact the school office

We are caring citizens, shaping our communities.

We are ambitious for our success and the success of others.

Shaping Our Children's Futures, Together.

We are passionate about everything and everyone.

We are the authors of our own lives.

Events in school

Do you want a Movie afternoon?

Get collecting and donating...

The class that donates the heaviest donations
will win a



Our school is raising money by collecting reusable clothes.

Please help us by donating your unwanted reusable clothes and accessories.
Donated items become affordable clothing and accessories.

**WE ACCEPT CLEAN,
GOOD QUALITY, DRY,
REUSABLE CLOTHING**

- Adults, Childrens & Babies Clothing
- Jewellery and Accessories
- Paired Shoes and Footwear
- Belts and Handbags

A full list of reusable items is listed on our website
www.rags2riches4schools.co.uk

WE DO NOT ACCEPT

**POOR QUALITY ITEMS SUCH AS
DIRTY, WET, RIPPED OR SOILED
CLOTHES.
PILLOWS, DUVETS, CURTAINS,
BOOKS CDs OR ANY UNIFORM**

Please use the clothing bag provided.
You can also use any additional bag if required.

Collection Date:

Monday 3rd February 2025

Please remember - NO UNIFORM



Spring Dates for your Diary

Tuesday 7th January	All children return to school
Wednesday 22nd January	Panto 25 Trip
Thursday 30th January	Young Voices Performance
Friday 7th February	Y1 Black Country Museum Class Trip From 3.30pm - Work Share Evening in class Brookvale Foodbank and uniform Swap Shop in the Hall
Friday 14th February	Y4 Class Assembly 9am—families are welcome to attend Break up for Half Term
Monday 17th— Friday 21st February	SCHOOL CLOSED FOR HALF TERM
Monday 24th February	Back to School
Tuesday 25th February	Y2 and Y5 Open morning—Parents are invited to attend at 9am only The session will end at 10.50am
Thursday 6th March	World Book Day—details of the event to follow
Friday 7th March	Y3 Class Assembly 9am—families are welcome to attend
Thursday 20th March	SEND Coffee morning with Marie Smith 9—10am
Tuesday 25th March	Y1 and Y3 Open morning—Parents are invited to attend at 9am only The session will end at 10.50am
Wednesday 26th March	Y2 Sea-life trip
Friday 28th March	Family Lunch (This lunch is in replacement of Mothers and Fathers Day lunches) Details of the event to follow
Wednesday 2nd April	Y2 Class Assembly 9am—families are welcome to attend
Wednesday 2nd - Thursday 3rd April	Parent Consultation Appointments—Look out for the announcements of when this is available to book via MCAS
Tuesday 8th April	Y6 Open morning—Parents are invited to attend at 9am only The session will end at 10.50am Easter Lunch for Phelps and Cadbury at 11.30am
Wednesday 9th April	Easter Lunch for Zephaniah and Lewis at 11.30am
Thursday 10th April	Y3 Egyptian Class Trip
Friday 11th April	Awards and 100% Attendance Assembly Break up for Easter Holidays
Monday 14th April - Friday 25th April	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS
Monday 28th April	SCHOOL CLOSED FOR TEACHER TRAINING DAY
Tuesday 29th April	All children back to school