Newsletter 6

Dear parents/guardians,

**Reminder:** The school will be closed next Thursday 15th and Friday 16th of February for Mid-term.

School closure for voting on the 8th of March and for St. Patrick’s Day Bank Holiday on Monday the 18th.

**Exciting activities ahead in Brackloon NS**

Pancake Tuesday

Pancake Tuesday on Tuesday next week we will celebrate pancake Tuesday in school by making our own pancakes. The pupils can bring in their own toppings on the day.

**Engineers’ week**

Engineers week will be celebrated in school from the 26th of February to the 1st of March . We have lots of fun and creative lessons prepared for the pupils

**Seachtain na Gaeilge** begins on the    and runs in school from the 4th of March until St. Patricks. The pupils will be immersed in even more Traditional Irish games, dance and language.

We would like to invite all parents/family members in on the morning of the 15th of March to celebrate in our fun for Lá Glas.

**Completion of write a book**

The senior room has begun writing a book for this year. We now need parents' help to continue their stories. Each pupil has a plan of their story in their homework folder and their log in codes are in their journals. These will be sent home next week in their folders.

**Ukuleles coming home the senior room**

The senior room is learning to play the Ukuleles. They now have an opportunity to take these home and spend more time practising them.

**Friendship week**

Friendship week will run from the 18th of the 22nd of March.

**Grandparents Day**

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all the grandparents/family members who attended our Grandparents morning. It was a great success and the pupils were delighted to have their loved ones in school. We hope they enjoyed it as much as we did.

**School Garden**

We will soon get ready to work in our school garden. We are looking for: egg cartons, toilet rolls/kitchen roll inserts and small shovels/trowels. If you have any that you are getting rid of please send them in.

**Best Wishes**

Ms Finnerty has begun her maternity leave and we want to wish her the very best on the exciting weeks ahead. Ms. Kelly is in the junior room and can be contacted on the email below [dkelly@brackloonns.com](mailto:dkelly@brackloonns.com)

**RE: High Measles risk in Ireland and the Importance of the HSE School MMR Junior Infant Vaccination programme**

Dear Principal,

The HSE school immunisation teams are prioritising in mid-February the completion of the MMR vaccination programme in primary schools (junior infants).

This important measure is very timely because of the high risk of measles outbreaks in Ireland.

Reasons for this risk of measles are:

·There are **large outbreaks of measles in the UK and many other European countries** and these are due to low MMR vaccination rates. Many Irish families will be traveling during the mid-term break and at Easter.  Unvaccinated children are susceptible to measles infection if they travel or if they meet with visitors to Ireland.

·Measles is a highly infectious disease and immunisation with MMR is the key measure to prevent infection.

**But MMR vaccine uptake in Ireland is suboptimal**and less than the 95% target set by the WHO. Nationally, uptake has declined to below 90% since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic (early 2020). This is of great concern because of the serious and infectious nature of measles.

**Two doses of MMR vaccine are necessary to be considered fully vaccinated**. The first dose is given by a GP when a child is 12 months of age. The second dose is given by school vaccination teams when a child is in junior infants. Parents are encouraged to check that their children’s vaccines are up-to-date.

A highly effective vaccine, MMR, can prevent measles in over 90% of immunised children, following a single dose of the vaccine. With the second dose of MMR vaccine, over 99% of immunised children are protected from measles infection. MMR vaccination is the best way to protect people from measles.

About measles:

Measles is a highly infectious disease that can cause serious complications, particularly in children under one year of age, pregnant women, and the immunosuppressed.

**We therefore urge all schools to please facilitate the school immunisations and for families to take up the offer of vaccine for their children.**

**Serious complications of measles include pneumonia and encephalitis (swelling of the brain); one in five infected may need to go to hospital and it can be fatal**. Very sadly the HSE Health Protection Surveillance Centre was notified this week of the death of a person with confirmed measles, which took place in a hospital in the Dublin and Midlands Health Region. This is the first confirmed measles case notified in Ireland in 2024.

The symptoms of measles include:

·Cold-like symptoms such as aches and pains, a runny nose, sneezing and a cough · Sore red eyes that may be sensitive to light · A temperature of 38 degrees Celsius or above, which may reach around 40 degrees Celsius · Small greyish-white spots in your mouth

·Loss of appetite

·Tiredness, irritability and a general lack of energy

Rash, which usually appears on head and neck first and spreads to rest of body.

Further information about measles symptoms is available at: <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/measles/>

Have a lovely weekend,

Brackloon NS