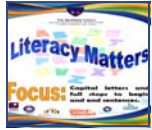




Seal Page 2



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Bankfield News

"Bringing Out The Best!"

Dear Parents/Carers

School Photographs

Just to remind you that students in Years 7 & 11 will be having their year, form and individual photos taken on Wednesday 11th November during the morning.

Radon Gas

The national Health Protection Agency (HPA) has recently made Halton Borough Council aware that there may be a small risk of the presence of radon in 36 schools across the borough. The school your child attends is one of the 36 Halton schools.

Monitors will be installed in Halton Schools in three phases, November 2009, February 2010 and May 2010. The installation of monitors in our school will take place this week.

Please see the attached letter from Halton Borough Council regarding this matter and some frequently asked questions and answers which I hope will allay any concerns you might have.

Governors Conference 2009

We will be holding our joint staff/governor training session on Saturday 14th November. The focus of the day will include use of data to monitor and improve student attainment, the new OFSTED framework, Safeguarding our students as well as our termly business meeting.

Literacy Matters

One of our key School priorities this year is a focus on basic skills with particular reference to literacy. Every two weeks we will be having a whole School Literacy focus to reinforce student skills. This is even more important in this age of 'text speak' which encourages us all to have bad habits. You can help your child by reminding them of the focus when doing homework. This will be displayed each week in this newsletter.

Yours sincerely

Carole Owen

Headteacher



Operation Christmas Child



Students of The Bankfield School are proudly supporting Operation Christmas Child which aims to deliver gifts to disadvantaged children in a variety of countries across the world. Some of these children will never have received a toy or present in their lives and our students feel it is important to let them know that they have not been forgotten and to give them a very special Christmas.

Students from Year 7, 8 and 9 are busy organizing the packing of their shoeboxes and teachers have been very impressed so far by their enthusiasm for this project.

The Bankfield School is also an official "drop off" point for the community of Widnes so if any parents or community members would like to join us in this very worthy operation we would be delighted to accept your shoeboxes until they are picked up by Samaritan's Purse on November 18th. For more information about Operation Christmas Child please visit <http://www.samaritanpurse.org/index.php/OCC/> which gives full details of the operation, how to prepare a shoebox and even how to donate online and track your shoebox. You can also access this information through the VLP on our website.

Miss Clancy



Dates For Your Diary

- Thursday 19th November—Celebration Evening at the Foundry
- Monday 7th December—Y10/Y11 Textiles Trip—Clothes Show
- Friday 11th December—Y7/Y8 Grade Cards
- 11th –17th December—Celebration Assemblies
- Wednesday 16th December—Christmas Concert
- Friday 18th December—School Closes for Christmas
- Monday 4th January 2009—School re-opens
- Thursday 14th January—Year 9 Parent/Carers Evening
- Thursday 4th February—Year 8 Parent/Carers Evening
- Thursday 11th February—School closes for half term
- Friday 12th February—**INSET** Day (School closed for students)
- Thursday 25th February—Year 9 Options Evening
- Thursday 25th March—Year 10 Parent/Carers Evening
- Friday 26th March—School Closes for Easter
- Monday 12th April—School re-opens
- Thursday 22nd April—Year 7 Parents/Carers Evening
- Friday 30th April—**INSET** Day (School closed for students)
- Monday 3rd May—School closed for May Day
- Friday 28th May—School closes for half term

The Bankfield School
Specialist Science & Applied Learning College
A Gifted & Talented Lead School

Literacy Matters

Focus: Capital letters and full stops to begin and end sentences.

APPLIED LEARNING Science Healthy Schools Gifted & Talented Lead school Specialist Schools Trust HALTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

YEAR 7 OUTCOMES	YEAR 8 OUTCOMES	YEAR 9 OUTCOMES
I understand why it is important for us to identify rights and responsibilities and can work with others to write a class charter	Over this half term I will show I can put things right when there have been problems in a relationship	This half term I will make reasonable adjustments to my expectations of myself in light of the expectations of others



Dear Parents/Carers

The national Health Protection Agency (HPA) has recently made Halton Borough Council aware that there may be a small risk of the presence of radon in 36 schools across the borough. The school your child attends is one of the 36 Halton schools.

Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas. You cannot see, hear, feel or taste it. It comes from the minute amounts of uranium that are present in all rocks and soils in the UK. The gas disperses outdoors to generally very low levels but can accumulate within buildings. We all breathe in radon throughout our lives but exposure to raised levels of the gas over a prolonged period of time may increase the risk of developing lung cancer.

The HPA has recently published a detailed map as part of a national schools campaign showing areas where radon levels might be higher in England and Wales. Radon levels are measured on a scale running from Class 1 (lowest) to Class 6 (highest). Some parts of Halton have been classified as Class 2 (second lowest). We are now required to undertake surveys in the schools located in this Class 2 area as a precautionary measure. Even in this Class 2 area it is expected that 97-99% of monitoring results will fall below the action level for radon.

Please note that other schools across the country in areas with potentially similar or significantly higher levels of radon will also be monitored as part of this national campaign. Monitoring is carried out by placing small devices around the schools for three months, which record the atmospheric readings. The results from the monitors will then be analysed and the schools advised of any required action. If radon is found, a number of solutions are available which will be implemented.

In the meantime, the HPA advise that no special precautions are necessary and the routine of each school should continue as normal. The monitors will be installed in Halton Schools in three phases November 2009, February 2010 and May 2010.

We enclose a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) fact sheet that should answer any immediate questions you may have about radon. For more information on radon and the schools programme, please consult the HPA's radon website: www.ukradon.org. This website also contains information for those who live in potentially affected areas. If you do not have access to the Internet and require more information, please call:

The HPA Radon Information Line on 01235 822622.

RADON FAQs:

1. WHAT IS RADON?

Radon is a natural radioactive gas which seeps into buildings from minute amounts of uranium present in all rocks, soils, brick and concrete. The amount, or activity, of Radon is measured in Becquerels (Bq).

2. CAN RADON BE FOUND IN HALTON?

Yes. Radon is a natural gas that is found throughout the world, although levels can vary significantly. The UK measures radon on a scale running from Class 1 (lowest) to class 6 (highest). Some parts of Halton have been classified as Class 2 (second lowest) where there is a 1-3% chance of being above the screening value.

(The areas have been identified using a map of areas with a 1-3% chance of being above the residential screening value of 200 Bq. The value for schools and commercial buildings is 400 Bq).

3. WHY HAVE I NOT HEARD ABOUT RADON BEFORE?

Recent changes to British Geological Survey (BGS) Radon Mapping now show areas of Halton in Class 2. As well as the underlying geology, levels can vary depending upon the building layout, construction, age, heating, ventilation, occupancy and use. The council has decided to act on this new information and to monitor actual levels in schools within or close to the Class 2 area as a precaution.

4. CAN RADON GET INTO MY HOME?

Yes. Although Radon enters homes all the time, some is carried away by the natural ventilation.

Radon levels in homes vary during the day, from one day to the next, and from Winter to

Summer. Levels are generally higher at night and during the Winter. Even in areas affected by Radon, most homes have low levels, and high levels can generally be reduced at fairly moderate cost.

5. WHAT ARE THE HEALTH EFFECTS OF RADON?

High levels of radon are associated with an increased risk of lung cancer.

6. HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE HEALTH EFFECTS OF RADON?

Contact the Health Protection Agency (HPA). The HPA is the organisation responsible for providing advice, support and reassurance on radon.

Tel: 01235 822622

Email: radon@hpa.org.uk

Website: www.hpa.org.uk

7. ARE CHILDREN MORE AT RISK THAN ADULTS?

No. There is no indication from current evidence that the risk to children is any greater than that for adults.

8. WHAT IS A SAFE CONCENTRATION OF RADON IN MY HOME?

The Health Protection Agency recommends that Radon levels should be reduced in homes where the average is more than 200 Becquerels per cubic metre. This concentration is known as the Action Level and has been endorsed by the Government.

9. HOW ARE RADON CONCENTRATIONS MEASURED?

This Action Level refers to the annual average concentration in a home, so Radon measurements are carried out with two detectors (in a bedroom and living room) over three months, to average out short-term fluctuations.

10. CAN I TEST MY HOME FOR RADON?

Yes. A Home Measurement Pack is available via the Health Protection Agency (www.hpa.org.uk) or from the British Geological Survey Radon website (<http://ukRadon.org>).

The Home Measurement Pack contains two Radon Detectors, placement instructions and a postage paid envelope for detector returns. The cost is £43.40 and includes processing and advice explaining the results.

11. CAN RADON LEVELS IN MY HOME BE REDUCED?

Yes. There are several tried and tested methods to reduce Radon levels in existing homes. The choice of method depends on the Radon level and the way your home is built, but prices range from approximately £500-£700.

The HPA website (www.hpa.org.uk) offers further information.

12. WILL ANY OF THIS AFFECT THE VALUE OF MY HOME?

A property search is likely to provide information on which class the property falls into, which will be Class 1 or 2 for Halton; the two lowest classes. There is no reason to suspect that property values will be affected as solicitors are familiar with this issue as Radon can be found throughout the UK and in neighbouring areas.