

Thursday 8th March, 2018

Dear Parents

Snow Closure:

We have tried our best this morning to keep school open as we are aware of how difficult it is for parents to arrange childcare at short notice. Most of our students walk to school and many parents would have set off for work. We therefore supervised students in the Hall and Gym until teaching staff could get into work.

By 9.30 we had lots of students in school, but large numbers of teaching staff were still stuck on the motorway networks and A roads – including myself and two of the Senior Leadership Team. At that point it was not feasible to safely monitor so many students with the number of staff that we had and the decision was taken to close.

We hope that you appreciate that Balshaw's did its best to minimise disruption for parents. **Year 9 Parents' Evening** is rescheduled for **Thursday 12th April 4.00 – 7.00**.

Good News

Entries from the Geography House Cup Challenge were put forward to the Jet2holidays *The Ultimate School Trip Competition*. One of our students has won the regional final and won £1,000 of resources for the Geography department and now is one of 5 finalists with the chance to win a trip for 30 students and accompanying staff to a theme park in Spain for a weekend! Congratulations to Mia and let's keep our fingers crossed for the final!

The Balshaw's Association and PTA met last night to consider bids put forward by staff for items that will create additional opportunities for our students. They are delighted to announce that they have been able to support all the bids and are putting thousands of pounds that have been raised through their events towards a number of projects from hockey kit and equipment to sound studio and recording equipment; equipment for the Gardening Club to new ICT suite for use in the Geography department.

Thank you for your support of PTA events and we look forward to letting you know of the future projects that they are looking to raise funds for.

Reading

"Reading for pleasure is the single biggest factor in success for later life, outside of an education. Study after study has shown that those children who read for pleasure are the ones who are most likely to fulfil their ambitions. If your child reads, they will succeed – it's that simple." (Bali Rai, UK author)

As a school we actively encourage our students to read as much as possible – tutor time and the start of every English lesson provides time for our students to read. However, the more students read in their own time, the more successful they will be. We will be promoting reading even more than usual soon and I urge you as parents to encourage your child to read as much as possible.

Politeness

We are very fortunate at Balshaw's to have so many supportive parents who value their children's education and the commitment that staff put into the learning of their children. Recently, however, we have experienced a small but growing number of parents who speak rudely or aggressively to support staff and are unreasonable in their demands and the tone and language that are used. As with any other public institution such as a hospital or a doctors' surgery, please act with politeness as staff should not be subjected to rudeness or aggression. The school has a zero tolerance approach to this and will not engage with parents whilst they are behaving in such a manner.

Hopefully we will not experience any further unforecast weather conditions such as the one that we had this morning!

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'S. Haycocks', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mr Steven Haycocks
HEADTEACHER