

Garstang Community Primary School



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Dear Parents and Children

Welcome back to a new school year, although after 3 weeks it feels like we have never been away! The children settled back into working beautifully and we have a calm and productive atmosphere all around school. Reception Class have already made their mark and become an important member of our school family, and the buddies are very much enjoying looking after their young charges! We have 20 children in Acorn Class this year, our smallest for a while, but they make up for their small numbers in enthusiasm and noise! We also took two children into other classes at the start of term, and we welcome Amber in Rowan Class, and Carys into Maple Class.

It has been lovely catching up with you all on the playground and finding out about the summer adventures. As always, a member of the Senior Leadership Team will be on the playground before school each morning, and all teaching staff will accompany their classes out on to the playground each evening. We operate an open door policy—we truly believe that the sooner any issues are sorted, the better for everyone. Please appreciate that the staff are very busy in the mornings, so this really is just a time for quick messages, perhaps about something that might affect your child during the day. After school there is time for a longer chat, or you can always pop into the office and make an appointment with either myself or the classteacher. Please let us know of anything that might affect your child's happiness, whether it be a school based issue, or something that is happening at home. We want to be able to work together to ensure that your child's primary years really are the happiest time of their lives.

Thank you for your continued support

Stephanie Reeves
Headteacher



Staffing

This term we welcome Mr Geeson to our staff, who has already made an impression on pupils and staff. Mr Geeson will be teaching in Beech Class for the Autumn Term, whilst we go through the process of appointing a new Deputy Head. The closing date for the post was last Friday and we will be interviewing just before half term.

Mr Forshaw leaves us this Friday, and we shall all be very sad to see him go. In the five and a half years he has been with us, he has worked tirelessly to ensure our school is a safe and clean place to be. I truly believe there is not a cleaner, more orderly school in England! Thank you Mr Forshaw! Mr Forshaw's replacement is Mr Clensy, who will start work as soon as his DBS disclosure comes through.

Fencing

Our new fencing is almost finished and is looking fantastic. I had been a little worried about us looking like Fort Knox, but I am pleasantly surprised at how well the fence has blended in. It will be even better when the shorn hedges grow back through! The site will still be open at weekend and during the evening for the time being, but the new fence will give us the facility to be a closed site if we continue to have issues with vandalism and unwanted visitors of an evening. Please keep a vigilant eye out if you live nearby or use the playground out of school hours and let us know of anyone who is not using the site with community spirit!



Scooters/Bikes

Just a reminder, and so that our new parents know, children must dismount their scooter or bike before entering the playground, and wheel it to the appropriate scooter/bike rack. Please also make sure that scooters are ridden carefully on the pavements, especially at busy times. Also a reminder that children must not play in the Theatre Area before or after school. We do hope to have some exciting plans for the area over the year.



School Improvement

As a school we are constantly working hard to ensure that our children receive the very best education, and that we mould the citizens of the future. We were pleased with our KS2 results this year, where 70% of last year's Year 6 achieved age related expectations in Reading, Writing and Maths SATs. The national average was 64%,

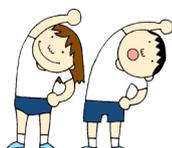
After analysing results throughout the school, the School Leadership Team and Governors have written the School Improvement Plan and made the following actions priorities for the year:

- To narrow the attainment gap between boys and girls, especially in Reading and Writing, and combined scores, to <10%
- To improve the progress measure in Maths at the end of KS2 to 0 or above, through an emphasis on mastery, specifically in problem solving activities and an emphasis on developing girls' maths skills, particularly at higher levels.
- To align, strengthen and improve the accuracy and robustness of teacher assessment in school to seamlessly work alongside termly summative assessment without contributing to teacher workload.
- To achieve identified standards towards the Lancashire Healthy Schools Standard Award

Staff undertake termly pupil progress meetings with a member of the SLT in order to ensure all pupil needs are met and that support and challenge is put in place for all children. We work hard to deliver an engaging and exciting curriculum, and it is lovely to see how much our children love to learn. Thank you for all you do to support them at home.

PE Kit

A reminder that full PE kit should be in school at all times. Full kit consists of white crew neck t-shirt, black shorts and black pumps. If your child wears a PE kit for an afterschool club, please ensure that it is returned the next day. PE is a statutory part of our curriculum and all children should be taking part. It's a good idea for PE day not to be a tights day for girls, or that you provide a pair of socks for them to change into, as children should not be wearing tights for PE. Thank you for your support.



Clubs

We are offering a number of clubs this half term for different classes. There is always a number limit, and some clubs are oversubscribed. We try to allocate places fairly, and ensure that if your child is unlucky at gaining a place in one club, they are first on the list for the next club. We do have a database of participation and we might target certain children who do not regularly join clubs. Participation in Wake and Shake is included in the database. ALL children are welcome at Wake and Shake, Tuesdays and Fridays at 8:30 led by Miss Julia.

School Activities

We have signed a service level agreement with Fleetwood Town Football Club this year, who will be delivering a range of clubs, curriculum support, reading interventions and training activities over the year. They are currently running a multiskills club for Rowan and Willow classes after school and supporting the Year 3 curriculum by teaching Indoor Athletics to Ash Class. Last week the multiskills club were delighted to welcome Fleetwood Town development squad players Ged Garner and Lewis Baines, and first team player Ash Hunter to join in with their activities. Being a FTFC season ticket holder, Mrs Reeves was over the moon!



Our visitors to assembly have begun, with Rev Keith leading an assembly, our Open the Book team re-enacting the story of Paul, and Debbie from NISCU telling the story of the Lost Sheep. Friday assemblies have been busy with out of school achievements which has been lovely. Don't forget to send certificates and trophies into school before 9:30 on a Friday.

Oak Class are receiving lessons in Fencing at the moment, which they are greatly enjoying.

MR Basketball is running an afterschool club for Beech and Oak classes

Miss Julia has begun preparations for 2 dance festivals in Blackpool and Preston with Dance Club.

Maple Class are working with Rob from FTFC on a Healthy Heads programme, looking at the importance of eating healthily and being active on mental health. Every class in KS2 will benefit from this over the year.

The Nationwide Bank visited Willow Class to talk to them about dealing with money and the importance of saving. (perhaps I should have sat in!)



Ash Class have begun their swimming lessons.

Considering we have only been back 3 weeks we seem to have been very busy. Keep up with our adventures on Facebook and Twitter! We shall also be showcasing great homework on our pages too!

We Are Reading

As I mentioned in my last newsletter in July, we have signed up to the Lancashire pledge We Are Reading. This is a Lancashire wide initiative to encourage reading for pleasure. We set the children a task over the summer to send us a photo of themselves reading in an unusual place, and also a reading challenge to read in as many different places and ways as they could. Thank you to all those children who took part. I am currently meeting with a company who will bid on our behalf for money to transform the outdoor theatre area into an outdoor reading space, which I'm sure you will agree will be a much better use of the space. We encourage reading for pleasure all the time with our children, and talk about all the doors a good book can open. Sharing a good book with your child at bedtime (even when they are in Year 6!) is a lovely way to feel connected, and it's something I really miss now my girl is all grown up! We never get these years back! I'm now looking forward to grandchildren to share my favourite books with (not too soon though!)



ParentView

ParentView is the Ofsted Parental Questionnaire site where you can (hopefully!) tell Ofsted what a wonderful school we are! The site is accessible all year round, not just at inspection times, and I would encourage you to register so that you can answer the 12 questions about your child's experience of school. It certainly helps us as a school see what we're doing right and where we can make improvements. Last year I sent out a paper version as we didn't have many responses on the website. I'm pleased to say that they were overwhelmingly positive. You can access the site by clicking on the icon, which I shall also include in the header of the newsletter each time.



Diary Dates

We have set dates for the whole year to try to help you, but please note all dates are subject to change and the list of activities will be added to over the year. Any changes will be communicated to you as soon as possible and highlighted in red on newsletters.

September



- 26th Curriculum Evening
5:30 Acorn Class
6:00 KS1 & 2
- 27th PTA AGM 7:00pm. All welcome

October

- 8th-12th Oak Class to Tower Wood
- 15th Maple Class to Ribchester
- 16th Rowan Class to Blackpool Zoo
- 17th Yoga day
Owl visit to Acorn and Rowan
- 19th Interim Report 1
- 20th PTA Fun Run
- 22-25th Book Fair in school
- 22nd Parents' Evening 4:00 -5:45
- 24th Individual and Family Photos
- 24th Parents' Evening 5:30-7:00
- 25th Beech Class Harvest Assembly 9:30
School Closes
- 26th INSET Day—School closed

November



- 5th School re-opens
- 8th Science Day
- 12th Clothing recycling collection
- 20th Dance Festival Blackpool
- 22nd Dance Festival Preston

December



- 4th Maple Class to Springfields
- 5th Acorn Nativity 2:15 & 6:00
- 10th KS1 Nativity 2:00
- 11th Maple Class Brass performance 2:00
- 12th KS1 Nativity 6:00
- 20th KS2 to Dukes—Peter Pan
- 21st School closes

January

- 7th School reopens
- 9th Flu Vaccines Rec— Y5

February

- 15th School closes
- 25th School reopens



March

- 29th Interim Report 2

April

- 1st Parents' Evening 4:00—7:00
- 4th Parents' Evening 4:00—7:00
- 5th Willow Class Assembly 9:30
- 23rd School reopens (TUESDAY!)

May (KS1 SATs take place during this month)

- 6th School closed—May Day
- 13th—16th KS2 SATs
- 13th Maple Class to Cuerden Valley
- 16th Maple Class Water Cycle Workshop
- 23rd School closes

June

- 3rd School reopens
- Wb 10th Rowan Class Phonics Assessment
- 26th Sports morning and picnic

July

- 3rd Sports morning reserve
- day
- 9th Oak Class Production 7:00
- 12th Full Report
- 19th School closes



Punctuality

Please can we respectfully remind you that the doors are locked in the morning at 9:00 and all children should be settled in their classrooms by this time. School closes at 3:20 and we often have children left until after 3:30 with no message. Whilst we appreciate there is the odd occasion when things go wrong, it is very upsetting and unsettling for children to arrive late to school or be picked up late. We are unable to allocate Discovery Vine places—this must be arranged directly with Discovery Vine on 01772 731808. Thank you.