

Garstang Community Primary School



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Dear parents and children

For all our established parents—welcome back! And to our new parents—welcome to the GCPS family! It is really lovely to be back in school, seeing the children embracing their learning, looking smart and making us all proud. They have been so excited to tell us what they've been up to over the holidays—what busy bees they've been! We have taken 29 new children into Acorn Class this year, and they are settling well. They've even joined us in assembly already! We also welcomed 6 new children to other classes in the school and they too have settled well. Alongside the pupils, we also welcome Mrs Walsh, who will be working in Beech and Acorn Classes.

Thank you for ensuring that the children are looking really smart and have the correct equipment. You should have received a class newsletter via email (years 1-6) that lets you know what days your child does PE—please remember that we keep the PE kit in school for the half term. If your child has worn it for an after school club and come home in it, please return it the next day. Please also ensure that EVERYTHING that your child could remove during the day is labelled—I already have one age 9-10 jumper that apparently belongs to no-one!

There is a handy reminder section later on in the newsletter, and also dates for your diary. We do try hard to set the dates in advance, but they are subject to change. If we do have to change them, they will be highlighted in red in later newsletters.

Remember that we are here to help and we operate an open door policy - meaning that we aim to see you as soon as is practicably possible. Quick messages can be passed on at the beginning of the day to the teacher or via the office, or longer meetings can be requested via the office at a mutually convenient time. Please don't let worries linger - the sooner we can sort them the happier everyone is. Please let us know of any changes that may affect your child - we are here to support both them and you. All teaching staff will be at their doors or on the playground at the end of the day for a quick chat.

Thank you for your continued support.

Stephanie Reeves
Headteacher



Time to Talk

As you may have seen, our Theatre Area was transformed over the summer, with Lottery funding, to create a quiet space for children at playtimes and lunchtimes. The title of the project was 'Time to Talk'. Unfortunately, the area is not ready to be used yet as we are unhappy with some aspects of the work, but we hope these will be rectified in the next few weeks so that the children can begin to enjoy the area.

School Admissions

Year 6

Parents of Year 6 children should all have received an LCC flyer explaining how to apply for your child's secondary school place. Applications need to be made, online, before 31st October.

Reception 2020

If your child has their 4th birthday between 1st Sept 2019 and 31st August 2020, you need to apply for a place in Reception for next September. Applications for a primary school place need to be completed by 15th January 2020. If you would like to take a look round, please make an appointment through the school office or come to one of our Open Days.

We are holding Open Days on 14th and 30th October, between 10:00 & 11:30 and 1:30 & 3:00—please let anyone know who may be interested.

Applications for both Primary and Secondary School must be made at:

<https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/children-education-families/schools/apply-for-a-school-place/>

Summer Works

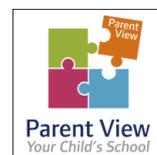
Over the summer, school was a busy place! The front of school had not been decorated for a long time and was looking rather tired, so we now have new doors, carpets and paint to make it more welcoming. We have also started replacing our lighting system in school, taking out all the old tube lights and replacing them with more energy efficient LED lights—they are certainly brighter! We applied for an interest free loan for these, and we hope the saving we make annually



on energy will cover the loan repayments. All the classrooms and the hall were completed over summer; the rest of the school will be finished at half term.

Ofsted

As you may know, we are very overdue for an Ofsted inspection, our last one being in 2009! Since then the framework has changed numerous times, with expectations raised each time. Each year Ofsted undertake a risk assessment, looking at our school data, and if they feel a visit is necessary they would visit. They have now added length of time since the last inspection to this risk assessment, so I am certain that they will come this year! Whilst we feel that the work we are doing in school gets better each year, the Ofsted framework is hugely different to the one that we were inspected against in 2009. In fact it is interesting to note that of the 305 outstanding schools inspected nationally last year, only 49 (16%) retained outstanding! Whatever the outcome, we know that the education we are providing for your children is excellent and we are confident that Ofsted will be pleased with what they see. Part of their inspection process is continuous, and that is the opportunity for parents to express their views of the school through an online platform called Parent View. There is always a link to Parent View at the top of every news letter, and you are able to register your views on an annual basis. I will also put a link here for you so that we can have some responses. Thank you.



School Library

Mrs Newiss has worked really hard over the summer to ensure that the library is a lovely place for the children to visit. Part of this was to throw away all the tatty and outdated books we had. The library bus will visit before Christmas, meaning that we can change 200 books, but we would love donations of books if you have them. Please donate well cared for, suitable books your children have grown out of, or even donate a new one to celebrate your child's birthday! We would be incredibly grateful!



Aldi Sports Stickers

We are collecting the Aldi stickers for Kits for School. Please send them in with your child—we have the poster for them to be stuck on!

Reminder Section!

Birthday Non-Uniform

Children may come to school in their own clothes when it is their birthday so that we can all make a fuss! Don't worry if it's at the weekend or in the holidays - they can come on the school day closest to the day. Hair and make up rules still apply.

PE Kits

These should be in school, in a clearly labelled PE bag, all of the time. They will be sent home at the end of each half term. If your child is regularly without a PE kit, or forgets for two lessons in a row, we will send a reminder note home. PE is a statutory subject and all children must participate.



Medication

Only prescribed medication can be given in school. If the medicine says 3 times a day please time these so a dose does not have to be taken in school. If it is unavoidable, we will endeavour to administer the medication. There is a form that must be filled in before any medication is given.

Celebration Assembly

Most Fridays we hold a celebration assembly. The children may bring in any award they have achieved out of school. If badges are included, such as swimming, please seal them in a plastic pocket so that they don't fall out! I do often ask the children about their award, especially if they are gymnast of the week or suchlike, so please practise with your child what they might say. For Water Skills type awards I may ask for one thing they needed to do to get the award. It's amazing how many children don't know! If your child has been awarded Superstar, Class Star or Learning Hero, their photo will be displayed in the foyer and on our Facebook and Twitter pages, and their names will appear (hopefully!) in the Courier.

Snack/Lunches

Children in Acorn, Rowan and Willow Class receive a piece of fruit each morning, as part of the Government scheme, and so they should not be bringing in any snacks. KS2 children (Ash, Maple, Beech and Oak) may bring in a healthy snack for morning break. Fresh fruit or veg is best as that is what they are used to in KS1. We do not allow sweets, chocolate and crisps. Similarly, sweets, chocolate bars and fizzy drinks are not allowed in packed lunch boxes.

Children are actively encouraged to bring in a water bottle each day to keep hydrated. This must contain water only. They may have juice in their drink for lunch. We do send home any rubbish in packed lunch boxes so that you can monitor what your child is eating.



Payments

Most payments can be made online using Parent Pay - all families except Acorn should already have a log in. Acorn log ins will be sent home when a payment is needed. Any other money should be sent in a sealed envelope with the child's name, and purpose clearly labelled. Dinner money is £2.30 per day and MUST be paid two weeks in advance. We cannot allow the Parentpay accounts to be in debt so please monitor your balance and ensure that there are always funds on the account. Please ensure your child knows each day whether they are having a packed lunch or school dinner - they often forget they have a packed lunch and have a dinner instead! Please note that any changes to your lunch pattern must be made in writing, and changes can only be made at a half term.

Earrings

These must not be worn to school please. Thank you for your support so far. If you wish for your child to have their ears pierced, this must be done at the start of the long summer holiday, to give them time to heal.

Scooters/Bikes

These must not be ridden on the school grounds at any time. Please ensure your child dismounts at the gate in a morning, and wheels their scooter across the playground. We often get complaints about the way in which children ride their scooter on the pavements outside of school—please talk to your child about safe riding!



Reminders cont...

Before and After School Supervision

Please note that children should NOT be arriving at school before 8:45, especially if they are not accompanied by an adult. A member of school staff comes on duty at 8:45. Please ensure that your child is adequately supervised after school too. The children know that the school time rules still apply (no tree-climbing, scooter riding, playing in the Time to Talk Area etc) both before and after school. Thank you for your co-operation in this.

Car Park

Parents are not allowed to use the school carpark, unless they are dropping off or picking up from Discovery Vine. Also please do not wait for your child in the driveway after school, as there are cars using the carpark at this time.

Wake and Shake

ALL children are invited to our Wake and Shake lessons led by Miss Julia. They are held in the school hall every Tuesday and Friday at 8:30am.



Free School Meals

If you are entitled to certain benefits your child may also be entitled to free school meals. This also then means that we can find funding for free milk and free school trips. If you feel that you may be entitled then click on this link for further information: <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/children-education-families/schools/free-school-meals/>

School Photos

Your child's school photograph has been sent home—we are very happy with Jonathon's beautiful portraits! Please either return £10 (cash or cheque) for the photo and your order for extra before Friday 20th September. If you don't want the photo, please return it to school. Jonathan will be able to recycle the photo paper. School do receive a percentage commission on each photo sold, so more orders means more money for your children!

Extra-Curricular Opportunities

There are currently lots of extra-curricular opportunities open to the children. Some of these are limited on numbers, so not all children can attend. However we do keep a register of participation and try to ensure a fair share across the year. Currently we have on offer:

- Y3/4 Football
- Y5/6 Netball
- Y2 Tennis
- Y5/6 Dance
- Y5/6 Speed Stacking
- Y1/2 Athletics
- Y4/5 Gardening Club
- Y4/5/6/Singing Club

School Assessment and Reporting

In school we are constantly assessing the children - in lessons through observations and questioning, through marking books and chatting to children about their learning. At certain points during the year, we undertake more formal assessments to inform our day to day assessments. For certain year groups these assessments are statutory (we have to undertake them and report the results to the Department for Education).

Our in-school assessment weeks will take place during the weeks beginning 2nd December and 18th May. Statutory assessments take place in the summer term for Y1,2, and 6. Year 2 will be assessed throughout May (there is no set timetable). Year 6 will be assessed in the week beginning 11th May. Year 1 phonics tests will take place in the week beginning 8th June. We like to report to you throughout the year. This year we will hold Parents Evenings in October and March/April, which are an opportunity to talk to the class teacher and look at the books. We will also send home an interim report on January 31st and a full school report on July 9th. We hope this keeps you fully informed about your child's progress.

Diary Dates

We have tried to book dates as far in advance as possible, but they are obviously subject to change. I will highlight any changes to these dates in red in future newsletters. Please put them on your calendar now!

September

19th Willow Class trip to Brockholes
23rd NSPCC Assemblies
25th Curriculum Evening (letter already sent)
26th NSPCC Workshops Oak and Beech
PTA AGM 7pm
30th Oak Class to Tower Wood

October

4th Oak Class return from Tower Wood
7th Maple Class Martin Mere Trip
8th Rowan Class Zoo Trip
10th Beech Class Assembly 9:15 am (Harvest)
14th Open Day for prospective parents 10:00-11:30 1:30-3:00
15th Parents Evening 5:30-7:00
17th Flu Vaccines
Parents Evening 4:00-5:30
School closes (THURSDAY!)
28th School reopens
30th Open Day for prospective parents 10:00-11:30 1:30-3:00
PTA discos

November

12th Dance Platform at GCA (Dance Club)
25th Dance Festival Blackpool (Dance Club)

December

2nd School Assessment Week
3rd Acorn Nativity 6pm
4th Acorn Nativity 2pm
10th Maple Class Brass Performance 2:30
Rowan/Willow Nativity 6pm
11th Rowan/Willow Nativity 2pm
18th KS2 to Dukes Theatre
20th School closes

January

6th School opens
10th Maple Class Swimming starts

January cont...

29th Young Voices at Manchester Arena (Singing Club)
31st Interim reports

February

13th Willow Assembly 9:15am
14th School closes
24th School opens

March

5th World Book Day
25th PTA Discos
31st Parents Evening 4:00-7:00pm

April

2nd Rowan Class Assembly 9:15am
Parents Evening 4:00-7:00pm

May

KS1 (Willow Class) SATs will take place during this month
8th May Day Holiday (FRIDAY!!)
11th KS2 SATs begin
14th KS2 SATs end
18th School Assessment Week
21st School closes (THURSDAY!)

June

2nd School opens (TUESDAY!)
8th Y1 Phonics (Rowan) this week
9th Ash Class Assembly 9:15am
17th Sports Morning and picnic
19th Acorn Class Assembly 9:15 am

July

6th Oak Class Performance 7pm
7th Oak Class Performance 7pm
8th PTA Discos
9th Reports home
14th Maple Class Brass Performance 2:30
17th Oak Class Assembly 9:15am
School closes for summer