

# Garstang Community Primary School



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Dear Parents and children

I can't believe that the first half term has flown by so very quickly! I am writing this looking out at the pouring rain and hoping that the weather improves before half term! I hope that whatever you've got planned, you have a lovely time. Maple Class were telling me of their half term plans yesterday—some sounded very much like mine—stay in pjs all day, read a book! I shall also be baking my Christmas cake so something productive might come out of my half term!

Thank you for your support over the half term, particularly in respect of COVID 19. Please continue to be vigilant as cases in the local area are rising. If your child shows any of the symptoms, please ensure they get a PCR test as soon as possible. We will notify you if there is a case in your child's class, so that you can watch for any symptoms developing in your child. We remain very careful in school, and do have a contingency plan if cases rise.

Thank you also for your patience around Parents' Evening. Last night did seem to go fairly smoothly, so we hope that Thursday will be the same. Thank you to those parents who phoned to say they were having technical difficulties— hopefully we have been able to sort you out. We did have quite a few parents who forgot their appointment, which is frustrating for all concerned, and does add to the staff's workload. If we can rearrange these for a telephone call, we will try, but it may now be after half term.

Have a fabulous half term whatever you do and we'll see you back at school on Monday 1st November.

Stephanie Reeves  
Headteacher

## School Lunches

Thank you for your support with the school lunch situation. Mrs Bickerstaff has been a star throughout, trying really hard to ensure that the children still have some choice. We have been informed that lunches should return to normal after half term. We will be on the new winter menu which will be sent out to you after half term. Please ensure that your ParentPay account is up to date as we can't hold a debt on the system.



## School Admissions

If your child turns four during this academic year, it is time to apply for their school place. Applications can be made here:

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

We hope to hold an open day for prospective parents on Tuesday 9th November, 10-11:30 and 1:30 till 3:00

## Uniform

Thank you for ensuring the children are coming to school looking smart. After half term, we will be in winter uniform, which means summer dresses can go away until the weather gets warmer again after Easter.

After donating 34 jumpers to the PTA uniform shop after summer, I now have **8** more unnamed jumpers and cardigans that have been collected since we started in September. We do take these round the classes as soon as we find them, but without names, they are every hard to re-unite with their owners. **Please ensure all items of uniform are clearly named and please keep checking the name can be read after washing.** We do talk to the children regularly about their responsibility for looking after their own things. If there is a dry day when we return after half term, I will put the lost property out for you to look at and reclaim, and any that are left will then be donated to the uniform shop. All items at the PTA shop are £1. They have trousers, shorts, dresses, skirts, PE shorts, school bags, as well as the school jumpers. The contact is Anna Coulton and her number is 07733081337.

## Parent Governor

We currently have a Parent Governor vacancy on our Governing Board. Being a Parent Governor is an interesting and varied role where you have the opportunity to help shape the future of our wonderful school. Nomination forms will be sent out in the first week of term—if you are interested in the role but would like a little more information, please come and have a chat to me, or one of our other parent governors (Petra Werler and Luke Holmes).

## Parent View

Don't forget to use Parent View to let Ofsted know your views on our school and the education your child receives. The link is always at the top of the newsletter, and is also found at the following link:

<https://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk/login?destination=give-your-views>

You are able to share your views once each year, so if you filled in the form last year, you are able to do so again this year.

## School Improvement Plan

Each year, we produce a School Improvement Plan, where we identify our priorities for the coming year. Obviously, this year our priority is to ensure children are happy and settled in school, and that enforced school closures have had as little impact on their mental health and attainment as possible. We also aim to provide as much continuity of education as we can in these difficult times.

Our priorities for the coming year are:

1. To ensure that challenging targets and quality first teaching continuing to allow all children to make good or better progress.
2. To ensure a broad and balanced curriculum with a clear emphasis on progression of skills and knowledge, with a detailed scheme of work for subjects.
3. To continue our review, update and evaluation of the teaching of reading within school so that reading scores are at least in line with national averages. Develop and write a robust phonics programme tailored to our children and school.
4. To create and implement an effective, efficient and manageable assessment system to address the new early learning goals in EYFS, to ensure children make a good start to their learning journey.

## School Activities and Achievements

A group of Year 6 girls attended Garstang Academy to play in a football tournament. They had a great time, worked incredibly well together and came joint 2nd!

Willow Class undertook the challenge of putting on our Harvest Assembly—they were fabulous! They treated us to a rap of 'The Little Red Hen', sang 'Harvest Samba' beautifully and really made us think carefully about Harvest time. Thank you to everyone who donated food—our elderly neighbours were very grateful when Oak Class came knocking on their doors!

Our Open the Book assemblies have re-started and the children have been fascinated by the re-enactment of the creation story and the story of Adam and Eve.

Maple Class have had the opportunity to work with our ukulele teacher, Mr Lupton, to compose and perform a song that reflected their experiences over lockdown. The song will be available to hear on a special website called 'A Song for Us', and we'll let you know how you can access this when it goes live. Apparently we were the only school in Lancashire who were asked to take part!

Rowan Class had a fabulous visit to the zoo to support their topic work—the weather was miserable but Mrs Ayers reports that they didn't stop smiling all day! What a fantastic class they are!

The pumpkin carving and colouring competitions that the PTA organised were very well supported and the creative pumpkins we have in the sensory garden are a sight to behold!!

### November

1st School re-opens  
 2nd Flu Immunisations  
 3rd/4th Life Education visit to school  
 9th Open Day  
 12th Rowan Class Assembly 9:15 am  
 15th **Odd Socks Day (info to follow)**  
 15th Anti-bullying week  
 16th **Dance Festival—Winter Gardens**  
 26th **PTA non uniform day (info to follow)**

### December

6th Oak Class to Tower Wood  
 7th Maple Class ukulele concert 2:30pm  
 8th Acorn Class Nativity 2pm/6pm  
 13th **PTA Secrets Room (info to follow)**  
 14th KS2 to Dukes Theatre  
 KS1 to Free Methodist Panto  
 15th Rowan/Willow Class Nativity 2/6pm  
 16th KS1 to Blackpool Grand Panto  
 17th School closes

### January

5th School re-opens  
 28th Interim reports out



### February

9th **Ash Class Assembly for parents 9:15 am**  
 10th School closes for half term  
 21st School re-opens

### March

3rd World Book Day  
 11th Beech Class Assembly for parents 9:15 am  
 29th/31st Parents' Evening 4-7

### April

1st School closes for Easter  
 19th School re-opens

### May

Year 2 SATs will take place during this month.

9th Year 6 SATs week  
 27th School closes for half term

### June

7th School re-opens  
 9th **Ash Class trip to Footprint**  
 20/21st **Oak Class Bikeability**  
 30th Acorn Class Assembly for parents 9:15am

### July

13th Sports morning and picnic  
 15th Reports out  
 20th Oak Class Awards Evening 6pm  
 21st School closes for summer.

