



NEWSLETTER

Headteacher: Mrs Maria Whitehead

Friday 11th September 2020



Dear Parents,

Our new academic year has begun and it has been wonderful to welcome ALL our pupils back to school after the summer break. Of course things are a little different, however the children have accepted all the changes to our routines with remarkable resilience. They are all happy to be back with their friends and school is buzzing with energy.

Thank you for your help with staggered start and finish times, and also a gentle reminder to social distance on the school grounds. We need to be extra cautious now as autumn begins and with it so does the 'coughs, colds and flu' season, which will make all of our lives a little trickier this year.

We still receive daily updates from the Department for Education and if there was anything significant that would require a change to our school Covid-19 Risk Assessment and current arrangements, then we would let you know via Parentmail immediately. So please can we ask that you read all school emails carefully.

If your child experiences symptoms of Corona virus – a new, persistent cough, a high temperature or a loss of taste and smell then they must self-isolate for 10 days. Everyone else in your household must self-isolate for 14 days from when the child's symptoms started. Book a test either online or by phoning 111. If the test is positive then the 10 days self-isolation must be completed. If the test is negative and your child is symptom free, then they can return to school. If the test is negative but they still have symptoms, then please keep them at home until they are symptom free. Please keep school informed at each stage of the process. If a child does test positive in school, then we will ring Public Health England's local health protection team who will advise school on the course of action we need to take. This may involve closing a class bubble who would all need to self-isolate for 14 days, however we would follow the local health protection team's advice about this.

Thank you very much for your continued support.

New additions to the Park Hill Family

Ayub in Year 1 now has a lovely baby sister – Amina.
Abu-Bakr, Ziyaad and Haatim now have a lovely baby brother – Hamza.
Many congratulations to both families.

Ask me what I'm reading

You may notice your child proudly wearing an, 'Ask me what I'm reading' badge. These badges are being awarded to one child from each class (Reception to Year 6) every Monday. These should be returned to their class teacher on a Friday afternoon. The purpose of these badges is to encourage everybody in our school community to talk about the book they are currently enjoying and to share their love of books with everybody. The idea is to start having more conversations about books. Teachers are looking for children who are enjoying reading, being adventurous in their choice of books and recommending books to their friends. If you notice your child sporting the badge, ask them what they're reading!



Growth Mindset

Recently, we have been talking a lot about Growth Mindset in school. Growth Mindset is all about valuing a child's effort over natural talent and developing resilience in the face of setbacks. These qualities are an essential part of successful learning and our aim is to encourage this mindset in all our children. We would appreciate your support at home to continue helping your child become a Growth Mindset learner. With that in mind, a short explanation of Growth Mindset can be found below. In addition, we have attached some ideas and conversation starters for you to use with your child.

What is a Growth Mindset?

We used to think that our intelligence was fixed – meaning we were either smart or we weren't. Scientists have proven again and again that simply is not true. Our brain acts like a muscle – the more we use it, the stronger (and smarter) our brain becomes.

A person with a **Fixed Mindset** may do these things:

- avoid challenges
- give up easily
- ignore feedback
- become threatened by other people's success
- try hard to appear as smart or capable as possible

A person with a **Growth Mindset** may do these things:

- embrace challenges
- give their best effort
- learn from feedback
- become inspired by other people's successes
- believe their intelligence can change if they work hard



A separate email will be sent with some additional resources for parents to use with children about Growth Mindset.

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Roald Dahl Day

We are celebrating the wonderful work of children's author Roald Dahl on Monday 14th September. The children will be taking part in some Roald Dahl themed activities in their class bubbles. This year we will not be coming to school in fancy dress, however we will still have a great day. Watch out for photos on Facebook and the website.



School uniform

We know that Grays have been experiencing some supply problems (due to Covid-19) with our school uniform. Let us know if we can help in any way, as we may have some spares of the item you are waiting for.

It is advisable to launder school uniforms daily if possible to minimise the risk of transmission. You can launder clothes just as you normally would and no further precautions are necessary.

Dance, drama and music lessons

As you know, as part of our school risk assessment, the children remain in a class bubble with two consistent staff for all of their lessons. Therefore we have had to be creative with lessons which visiting teachers would normally deliver. This week your child may have had a Zoom dance lesson with Mrs Porter and video lessons with Miss Alice for drama and Mrs Goffee for music. Ask them what they thought. They certainly appeared to really pay attention to the teacher and try their best.

Assemblies

As we can no longer gather in large groups for assembly, we are having a virtual assembly in school each week. We have focused on Self-belief last week and Hope this week. Our message, which we hope you can reinforce at home, is that even when we are faced with something tricky or a difficult challenge, if we believe in our self and try hard then we can achieve anything. We all have something we are good at and we can use these talents to help us overcome difficult challenges.

Hope is symbolised by the rainbow and we discussed the importance of remaining hopeful in difficult situations, as Noah did in the Old Testament story of Noah's Ark. If we can stay positive, then we can usually achieve our goals, especially if we ask God to help us.

On the 8th September we remember Mary, the mother of Jesus, and celebrate her birthday. We prayed the Hail Mary, asking her to help us when we find things difficult this term.

Contact forms

Please can these be returned a.s.a.p to school as it is imperative that we have up to date contact details, especially with the current Covid-19 being so volatile.

PTA

We would normally be holding a PTA meeting to organise social fundraising events for this term, however this will have to be different this year. If anybody has any ideas of how we could fundraise while having fun with the current Covid restrictions, then we would be delighted to hear from you.

100 Club

You have to be in it to win it! If you are interested in supporting school and being in for a chance of winning a cash prize yourself, then email Mrs Duncan for the details.

Winners are:

March – Catherine McDermott and Lyndsay Scott
April – Stephen Malpass and Elin Kendall
May - Darren Pilkington and Arthur Eva
June - Carl Carey and Philip Keck
September - Pauline Taylor and Rick Cheshire

Cheques have been sent home with children this week.

October Half Term Travel plans

We realise that lots of families missed out on their usual foreign holiday break this summer, and that many of you may have postponed holidays until the October half term break. Please can we ask that you inform the office if you plan to travel abroad. With the quarantine measures in place, and changing daily, we need to be kept informed of your travel plans so that we can ensure we comply with the latest government guidelines, and ensure the safety of all in our school community. Given the amount of lost learning time this year, absence requests for holidays in term time will not be authorised. Thank you for your co-operation.

Dear God our Father,

As we open our school year, we pray that your Spirit may always be found in our midst.

May our school be a place of safety.
May our school be a place of equality.
May our school be a place of truth.
May our school be a place of growth.
May our school be a place of joy.
May our school be a place of faith.
May our school be a place of hope.
May our school be a place of love.

Lord, bless our pupils and staff: The citizens of our school with whom we will share our classroom and corridors this year.

Bless the families who have trusted our school with their precious children.

Help us bless our community and be blessed in turn by the community.

May we look back on this school year in times to come and say that this was a time when we found something wonderful and new in ourselves and recall a place that was more than a school,

But a family.

For where two or three gathered in your name, there are you.

Father of all, we ask in your name – Bless this school.