



Together We Learn and Grow'

Great Sankey Primary School

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Monday 2nd November 2020

Dear parents and guardians

I hope that this letter finds you and your families well rested and you all managed some quality time out during our two-week break, despite being somewhat limited on what we can do and where we can currently go! It was lovely to see some pictures of Halloween fun at homes shared on Twitter over the weekend.

I write to warmly welcome you all back to the second half of the autumn term. I imagine you will be feeling mixed emotions on our return to school this week, particularly in light of the recent government announcements with regards to another 'lockdown.' However, it is very positive and right that schools remain open as, like us, you will have noted and seen first-hand the many positives for the children being back in fully since September. They have all settled back into routines, some of them new, and thrived at being back in classes learning with their friends.

Last half term was challenging in many ways, particularly as we had a number of confirmed cases resulting in some bubble closure. What made it easier however, was the wonderful support, kind words and positive attitudes from all our families, children and staff. I cannot thank you all enough for the support you have given so far, particularly when bubbles have had to close at short notice, as is the nature of how we often find out test results. I also thank you for your support in both getting your children into school so they can get back to the business of school life as well as keeping your child at home if they have shown any potential symptoms. Also thank you to those that have supported home schooling when asked to do so. I ask that you continue to support us all in this way once again as we work together as team to try to keep everyone as safe as possible.

We continue to work hard to follow the guidance alongside our own risk assessments and will keep you updated with any further adaptations that may be required over the coming weeks. As we return back into school, we must ensure that we continue to take the same precautions we saw over the first half term. This includes keeping our distance from one another as we drop off and collect the children as well as wearing face coverings at all times when on the school site. We also ask that you keep your child with you as you vacate the school, particularly around the back of the school area, remaining on the path. We are still having to staff this as there are a small number of children who are running up and down the steep, slippery hill and mixing with other classes. We are trying hard to minimise contact across the day with other class bubbles and we really do not want it to break down as they leave. Please support us with this.

Rather optimistically I was hoping that we could soon resort back to our normal school timings. Unfortunately, this is not currently an option as we must continue to minimise the number of people gathering on the school site. Therefore timings will remain in place to support the staggered start and

finish time however, please continue to stick to timings and in particular for picking up your child so that they do not miss any vital learning time.

Good ventilation remains an important feature of the guidance so we will be keeping some windows open to support with this. The heating will be on so when the rooms are empty they will heat up but during lesson time, when there are larger numbers in the spaces, we must keep air flowing through. I am therefore conscious that as the weather becomes increasingly colder, children (and staff) will need to potentially wear more clothes to school. In the first instance, we would like to continue to ensure that all children have their school uniform top layer of jumper or cardigan available in school at all times. If your child is particularly susceptible to cold weather then a base layer of thermals, vest, or t-shirt might be suitable. If the temperatures drop further and we are finding that the children are cold, coats, fleeces, gilets or body warmers may need to be worn.

I am sure we will be faced with more testing moments over the coming weeks, but we like a challenge at GSP. Staff are, as always, excited and committed to giving every single child the best learning and experiences regardless of any virus! We are planning a number of exciting events for the children over this half term, particularly with regards to Christmas. It may not be the normal types of Christmas performances we all enjoy but staff are thinking creatively at things we can do. We will be commemorating Remembrance next week and poppies will be on sale at the start of every day at the school gate should you wish to make a donation.

We are also holding our first virtual open event for prospective parents starting on Monday 16th November. Please share this detail with any prospective families who have a child starting reception in September 2021. Further information can be found on the school website. We are offering this only as a virtual event currently as we continue to keep any visitors to an absolute minimum in school as part of our safety measures.

I am aware that some families may be facing difficulties with the continued challenges both financially as well as mentally. Please remember that we are still here to help and support as always. If you need to discuss anything in confidence, please contact me or speak to a member of staff. Miss Leah is also on the gate every morning to offer any wider support. This is, by its nature, a long term in normal circumstances and the darker and colder days can be a chore so please do not be afraid to ask for support. There are also helpful links on our website under the 'Keeping Children Safe' section and Early Help tab.

Take care and stay safe



V.J. Briggs
Executive Headteacher GSP