



# Greatstone Primary School

## NEWSLETTER

Date: Friday 2nd October 2020

### Attendance matters

As the Headteacher of Greatstone Primary School, a big part of my role is to evaluate 'where we are' and what we could do better. This is always rewarding, challenging and incredibly motivating.

One of these areas, is our attendance. Historically, this has been significantly below the national average and therefore a key priority for our school. I'm fully aware, that due to CV-19, children may need to isolate which is only right and proper– the safety of our children and their families has and always will be, very important to us. Children who are absent for reasons related to the pandemic will not be penalised, it just simple wouldn't be fair.

Children learn best when they are in school, I think as a nation we recognise this now more than ever following the national lockdown in the summer term. Children need to be with their friends and to learn from teachers . Did you know, that continued attendance below 90% can result in up a whole GCSE grade lower at secondary school? Missing education can affect children's mental health, their confidence as well as impacting negatively on their education.

With this in mind, we will be working closely with you to improve our overall school attendance from the 92% where it has been, to reach 96% which is where it should be. This will require a massive effort from everyone, including parents.

As you will be aware, no Headteacher is allowed to authorise any holidays during term time, this has been the law since 2013. For any parent who takes their child out of school for a two week holiday– we have to and will refer for a penalty notice. This will be for the local authority to issue and they will collect the fines– no money is received by us from this process. Our advice therefore is always LOOK BEFORE YOU BOOK– check out the term times (which can be found on the school calendar) before you make any holiday reservations please.

As a whole school, we will be rewarding children for their good attendance across a term through our new gold, silver and bronze certificates which will celebrate attendance from 95% upwards. If your child has been off due to CV-19 related circumstances, this absence will not be included within our calculations.

At the end of each term, we will share the overall class attendance with you so you can monitor the progress we are making. There will also be an overall award for the class with the highest attendance at the end of the year.

We hope you understand and appreciate why this is such an important issue– for families where attendance is a concern, you will be able to work with Mrs Roberts closely to make improvements.

All the very best,

**Sharon Lewis**

**Headteacher**

### Headteacher awards:



Huge congratulations to the following children for their achievements:

**Coral Class:** Elle, Alfie, Ruby, Kamran, Keegan, Aaron, Daniel, TJ, Ernie, Jasmine, Aisha for their excellent positive behaviour for learning and their excellent listening skills.

**Jet Class:** Freddie for his excellent writing about Red Riding Hood

**Crystal Class:** Kacey for an amazing newspaper article

**Rhinestone class:** Theo and George for always paying attention and being excellent role models

**Turquoise class:** Abigail for her amazing science learning.

**Well done all of you, we're so proud of your achievements.**

### Behaviour policy update

As a staff, we reviewed our behaviour policy during the INSET days in September. I'm pleased to inform you that both this and our new Child Protection Policy have been agreed by the governors and can be found on our school website. I will be sharing further information about the behaviour zones over the coming weeks.

### MacMillan coffee morning

A huge thankyou to Kate Williams from the nursery for arranging a special and poignant coffee morning for all staff last month. Thank you also to all the staff who made delicious cakes and for your donations. We raised a total of £117.90



### Our Pupil Leadership Team

In our last (and first!) newsletter, I informed you of our new Head Boy/Girl and the deputy posts too. This week, we have invited them to share their hopes and dreams (almost a mini- manifesto) for our school.

My name is Jessica and I am pleased to be Greatstone's Head Girl. I am in Year 6 and in Ruby Class. I am a keen dancer and gymnast and enjoy taking part in competitions. I will take my position on the Young Leadership team very seriously and will listen carefully to everyone's opinions.

Hello, my name is Joe and I am privileged to be Greatstone Primary School's Head Boy. I enjoy playing basketball and going on walks with my family. While I am part of the Young Leadership team I will strive to make a difference at GPS and ensure that it is an enjoyable and fun place to learn. I promise to always be enthusiastic about my role and do the best I can.

My name is Charlie and I am Deputy Head Boy. I love being outdoors and am very active, I enjoy swimming and karate. I would love to be a paramedic when I leave school and think that all Year 6s should be trained in basic first aid. I will try and help as much as I can to make Greatstone an even happier and safer school.

I am Deputy Head Girl and my name is Emily. I enjoy art, basketball and spending time with friends. I also like to help younger children reach their goals. I am ready to do any jobs that I am needed to do as part of the Young Leadership team. I am really looking forward to showing visitors around our amazing school.



### COVID- 19 update

Please make sure that you have downloaded the new NHS CV-19 app to help the track and trace process– thank you.

Thank you to everyone who is leaving the playground in a timely manner at the end of each day, this is really helping. If you leave via the front of the school, we ask that you carefully observe others leaving the playground, there is the gate by Diamond class to reduce the flow of people using the gate by the top path.

We are making sure that we open the gates in the morning and afternoon a little earlier so that parents have time to walk onto the playground (if they have a child in KS1) whilst keeping a distance. In the mornings, please do keep your child with you until we open the gates, this is to make sure there isn't a large group of children (and therefore bubbles mixing) by the gate that I usually open. The crowd certainly isn't as big each morning, but there's still room for improvement. Parents who use the gate by the car park, please remember to socially distance whilst you are waiting.

New signs reminding everyone to keep their distance have been put up around the school as visual reminders (these ones are a bit more heavy duty so will hopefully survive the bad weather a little longer this time).



### Drive with care please

Some parents have come forward who are concerned with how fast some cars are travelling. Please remember outside any school, there is the added danger of little ones who may roam into the road. The speed limit is 20mph for this very reason.

Please make sure you drive carefully to and from school making sure that seatbelts are worn and that cars are NEVER overloaded. I know you want to keep others safe as much we do.

