



Newsletter 20th October 2020

Dear Parents

What a wonderful first term of the year! All the children have enjoyed being back amongst friends, making new ones and practicing our school vision:

'caring about our learning, each other and the world around us'.

We've been doing our best to ensure that everyone stays safe at school, and we want to thank you for following our guidance on social distancing and wearing face masks outside school– please continue to do so next term to help us all stay safe.

We are looking forward to next term and challenging ourselves to make progress in everything we do.

We hope that you all have a relaxing break for the next week and can find some time to sit and read a book with your child or for them to read themselves – especially in a strange location (see our extreme reader challenge)!

Mr Price

Attendance

Our whole school attendance is currently 94.46%

The class with the best attendance this term was Reception (97.04%)! To congratulate them on their commitment to school we have celebrated with a host of play equipment.

While we must follow government guidance while awaiting tests this term, it is vital that any other time your children are in school and we thank all parents and carers for ensuring your children maximise their learning opportunities.

New starters

Having only just welcomed our new Reception children, we are already thinking about next year. If you speak to prospective parents please let them know we are open for visits (every Friday afternoon) as we'd love to show them our learning environment and welcome them to Gagle Brook.

Recent comments from new parents

"We are completely blown away with how wonderful the school and staff have been in the lead up to the start of term, and we are just as excited as our son to be part of the Gaglebrook family."

"He absolutely adores coming to school and we are so thankful to you and your amazing team for this."

Diary Dates

November:

2nd Back to School - Start of Term Two and new topic: *What's Inside Your Imagination?*

4th Flu vaccinations

13th Children in Need

16th – 20th Anti-bullying week

16th Odd socks day!

16th Parents Consultation meetings

17th Parents Consultation meetings

December:

14th Christmas lunch and Jumper Day

15th One Planet parent celebration (online)

16th Christmas Zoom disco (online)

18th End of Term

Caring about our reading: Library and Extreme Reader challenge

We are excited to have launched the school library and are really pleased to have a group of volunteer librarians from Year 2, who have been trained and are ready to manage collections and returns. Year 1 and 2 have already had an opportunity to take a book home and all we ask is that books are returned on the same day the week after (Mon Y1, Wed Y2, so you can enjoy it together over the weekend). Reception will continue to share their books with Mrs Buckley but will have reading time in the library through the year.

We are also encouraging all children to take part in our 'extreme reader' competition during half term. We challenge the children to bring in or send a photo of them reading in the most extreme location possible. Maybe up a mountain, in the sea or underground - let their imagination run wild. Our 3 most extreme readers will **win a book of their choice** to celebrate their achievement!

Mega Maths

We had our inaugural Mega Maths challenge on Monday when children moved around the school in groups to be challenged to explore maths in different ways. Teamwork and growth mindset meant all the children rose to the challenge and had great fun at the same time.

Farewell to Whitelands

It has been a pleasure to host Whitelands in our building but they will be starting Term 2 in their new building. I would like to thank all parents and the community for their understanding and flexibility. We are looking forward to the first opportunity for Gagle Brook pupils to visit and experience the Whitelands school for some wonderful learning opportunities in the near future!

Extra-Curricular Activities

You will have received my letter explaining that we will not be able to open Dragonflies safely and in a financially secure way yet. We will keep this under review next term but also hope to start exploring after school clubs – watch this space!

Health & Happiness this term

While we couldn't have an in person celebration of Health & Happiness this term, hopefully you can see how much the children have embraced the Principle in the videos shared with you all!

Thank you to everyone who has embraced our new healthy Run Across the World project. We had a live call with the pupils of Ocean View this week who have already started their 'journey' to Abuja. I can announce that Gagle Brook has already travelled...631 miles so only 3,229 miles to go. Remember the details to record are on the newsletter section of the website.

We are working hard to put funding in place for our outside play equipment. The total cost will be £9,500 of which the school and White Horse Federation will fund the majority. We have also secured £2,000 funding from the WPA foundation for which we are incredibly grateful and the PTA have set a target to raise £1,000 towards the total. If we are successful, we hope to install the equipment before the Summer term.
<https://www.wpa.org.uk/supporting-good-causes>

You will have seen the news that our kitchen will be open for fresh lunches after half term. Please do look at the **new menu on parent pay** to make choices. We are supporting healthy, high fibre and organic wherever possible as well as meat free once a week as part of our One Planet commitment.

Next term Value and One Planet Principle

Principle - CULTURE & COMMUNITY

Value – RESPONSIBILITY

Staff updates

I am really pleased to provide a couple of updates regarding staffing:

- Mrs Evans is pregnant! She will be with us until after February half term and working with her replacement for a smooth transition for Year 2
- Miss Clark will be working with the Early Years team in the afternoons from half term (while Dragonflies is closed) which is great news.