



AUTUMN 2022 NEWSLETTER

Dear Parent / Carer

We have completed the first month of term. On the whole, children have made a good start to the new academic year but a few things have come to our attention and we want to keep you informed and also ask for your help.

Firstly, we are now aware that not all of you are getting information when it is sent out electronically and we need to improve this situation for you.

We send information out via email, text message, the school Face Book page, a communication app and the website.

Our Facebook page is called Parents of Gilesgate Primary School. It is a secure Facebook Group for Parents and Carers of children in our school. To sign up log into your Facebook account and search for the group.

To access our emails and receive text messages please download the Parentmail app via Apple Store, itunes or Googleplay.

Can you please help us by letting us know your mobile number and email address if they change? Could you also inform the school office if you are not receiving emails and text messages or if you would prefer paper copies of information.

Some parents have asked what topics their children are learning this term. The attached sheet lets you know what your child will be learning between September and December. We will update you at the start of each new term with topics that are relevant.

Some parents have also asked us about Little Wandle phonics and early reading and we know that there is a lot of technical vocabulary related to phonics. If you want to find out what we mean by phoneme or grapheme, how we teach phonics and what you can do at home to help with early reading we are going to hold some short meetings in school to help. Please use the return slip to indicate which of the suggested meetings you want to come to. (This is most relevant to children in Reception, Year 1, Year2 and Year 3)

We are also busy working with Chartwells' who are the new school meals contractor. We know that some children have not liked or wanted the meal choices that parents have selected for them and we have contacted families and made some changes to individual menu choices already. We will always do this if your child is not eating a lot in school, as it is important that we provide a healthy and nutritious meal; but that meal is no good if a child does not want to eat it. We will continue to monitor this in school, if have any concerns please let us know.

Thank you for your ongoing support. I hope to met you at the parent meetings on the 17th and 18th, if not before.

M Turner

Reporting Absence

Please can you inform us via email or telephone before 9am if your child is going to be absent. You should report your child's absence everyday they are absent. If they have sickness and/or diarrhoea, they must remain at home for 48 hours after the last bout of sickness or diarrhoea. Please contact the school office if you have any queries.

Outdoor clothing

Could all parents and carers ensure that all children come to school with a suitable outdoor coat as we are outside in all weathers. When possible please send hats, scarves and gloves too.

Important - Child's Details

Please can you ensure your child's address, contact telephone numbers, medical and dietary details are up to date. To update your child's details please see the school office for a paper copy of the required form.

Reception and Nursery Places – September 2023

To apply for a Reception place for your child to start in September 2023, please complete the application form on www.durham.go.uk/schooladmissions Closing date is 15th January 2023.

Our Nursery also has availability please contact the office for information.

Secondary School Applications for Current Y6 children going into Y7 in September 2023

Applications are now open and the closing date for applications is Monday 31 October 2022. Local Secondary schools are currently holding open evenings. Please contact them direct for further information. www.durham.go.uk/schooladmissions



Durham Gilesgate Primary School

Spooky Day – Monday 31st October – 1st day back

Monday 31st October is our first day back after October half term and children can come to school in non-uniform or spooky fancy dress. Please do not go to any additional expense. We are raising money for our school fund and ask for a voluntary donation £1 per family donation.

Uniform and Jewellery

Just a quick reminder that children should be wearing uniform for school. This is a gold polo shirt and blue sweatshirt with black/gey trousers or shorts.

We are also starting to collect pre-loved uniform again. If your child has grown out of theirs and you have no further use for it, the uniform can be dropped off at the school office. We will also be collecting pre-loved coats, waterproofs, school bags and wellies. Donations will be gratefully received.

Can I also remind parents that jewellery should not be worn in school, this includes ear-rings, bracelets and necklaces. For health and safety reasons, there should be no hooped ear-rings at any time and studs/sleepers must be removed for PE lessons; it is best if children come to school on PE days without studs/sleepers unless they are able to take them out and put them in themselves, staff are unable to do so.

Important Christmas Dates

Friday 25th November - Panto Y1 – Y6 Durham Gala

WC Monday 12th December – Christmas Performances

More details to follow.

Wednesday 14th December – Christmas Lunch

Christmas Jumper Day

Friday 16th December – KS2 Carol Service

Monday 19th December – EYFS Party – Morning

Y3 and Y4 Party - Afternoon

Tuesday 20th December – Y1 and Y2 Party – Morning

Y5 and Y6 Party - Afternoon

Break Up for Festive Holidays

Thursday 5th January 2022 - Return to School

PE Timetable Autumn Term 1

Monday

Year 3/4. Miss Smithson

Year 4/5 Swimming

Tuesday

Year 1 Mrs Stubbs

Year 5/6 Mrs Matthews

Wednesday

Year 2 Mrs Stringer

Year 3/4 Miss Smithson

Thursday

Year 1 and 2 Mrs Stringer

Friday

Year 4/5 Mrs Fowler

Year 5/6 Swimming

Pick Up Time

Can parents picking up from the yard at the end of day please walk all the way around so that staff can hand over to you.

Fireworks

We will be holding a Firework Safety Assembly in school. It is important to follow safe practices whilst enjoying Firework displays and Bonfires.

Sleeping Beauty at Durham Gala Theatre

It's nearly that time of year again (oh no it isn't). Our Year 1 to 6 children will have the opportunity to enjoy Panto at the Gala Theatre in Durham.

The children attending the afternoon performance on Friday 25th November and will send out further details nearer the time.



Children in Need – Friday 18th November 2022

To raise money for Children in Need we will be holding a non-uniform day on Friday 18th November. Suggested donation £1 per family.



Parents Evening

Parents evening is taking place on Monday 17th October and Tuesday 18th October. More details to follow.



Attendance

Attendance Ladder



Having good school attendance is important for all our children and 96% attendance across a year is expected.

We do know that children can become ill and have to have bed rest to recover. These will be times where a child has a transmissible virus that leads to illness, often with a high temperature. In addition, sickness and diarrhoea do require 48 hours absence from the last episode to prevent the transmission to other children.

However; a cough, a sore throat or a mild cold is not a good reason to have time off school. Please send your child and inform us of these symptoms and we will keep a special eye out for them.

If you go to the GP for advice always keep your appointment card and let us take a photocopy for your child's records.

If attendance starts dropping we will contact you to discuss the reasons and see how we can start to improve it again. Any attendance at or below 90% will require a face to face meeting and an agreed plan to make improvements.

You can help us achieve great attendance by: –

- making sure your children come to school every day possible.
- Sending your child to school, even if they say they are feeling a bit ill; staff will closely monitor them and let you know if they get worse.
- Telephoning us and reporting any illness absence. It is ok for children to be absent if they have a genuine high temperature, have been sick, have diarrhoea or a transmissible illness. In these cases please let us know.
- Letting us know about any family emergencies or other circumstances that might cause your child/ren to miss school.
- Talking to us about any potential longer absences in term time. Only in exceptional circumstances can these be authorised and we cannot authorise them if we don't know, nor can we authorise them after the event.
- Trying to arrange medical appointments outside of the school day where you can.
- Letting us know if you are worried about attendance or any concerns your child has about coming to school; we have good support for children who have anxieties.
- Working with us if attendance has dipped. By working together we can secure regular attendance.
- Avoiding booking holidays in term time, we cannot authorise leave of absence based on the fact that term time holidays are cheaper. It is always best to come and talk to us about your exceptional circumstances first before booking so that you are clear about what we can and cannot authorise and are not disappointed if a fixed penalty is issued for any holiday taken in term time. ("As head teachers should only grant leaves of absence in exceptional circumstances it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday." Working Together to Improve School Attendance P13).

There is a dedicated page for attendance on the school website with more information.