

Ghyllside Primary School
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Headteacher: Mr.H.B.Davies (BA. Hons)

6th September 2024

September 2024 newsletter

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope this letter finds you all well.

We have had a great start back to school. The children have moved into their new classes and classrooms brilliantly and appear to really be enjoying the start to the new school year. They were all amazing in our first assembly of the year, and behaved really responsibly during our first practice fire evacuation. Thank you to all of you for helping us make the start of the new school year go so smoothly.

Site management staff changes

At the beginning of the Summer our previous site manager, Jake Wainwright, secured a new job working as the University of Cumbria's fire safety officer. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Jake for his work in school over the last three years and wish him all the best in his new job, and his family all the best with their move to the North of the county.

Jakes replacement will be a familiar face to some of you as his predecessor, Wayne Lees, has returned to Ghyllside as our new site manager. It is great to see Wayne back – he has slotted back into the staff team seamlessly.

Attendance & Holidays during term time

You will all be aware that improving school attendance is an increasing focus for the Government, and Westmorland and Furness Local Authority. The information for schools has now been released and a policy for this provided for us by the Local Authority. (This is to ensure all schools are doing the same thing.) You can find this on the website.

We have been asked to send the below letter to you all from our Local Authority attendance officer –

Dear Parent/Carer,

Following a recent attendance review I am pleased to inform you that your child's school clearly recognises the importance of excellent attendance, and they have robust systems in place to support and challenge attendance concerns.

However, the review did identify that there has been an increasing trend of term time holiday requests this previous academic year. This is concerning and needs further monitoring. This letter therefore serves as a formal reminder of your legal duty to ensure regular attendance at school.

Term time holiday absences will not be authorised by the school except under exceptional circumstances, which means you may be guilty of an offence under Section 444 (1) or Section 444 (1A) of the Education Act 1996. The maximum penalty for these offences is a fine of £2,500, 3 months imprisonment or both. Alternatively, the Local Authority/School may choose to impose a Section 444A Fixed Penalty Notice in the order of a fine instead of prosecuting for the offences given above.

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Our Values: Inspiring Healthy Inclusive Nurturing Experiences

Currently the amount of the fixed penalty notice is £80.00 if paid within 21 days. It raises to £160 if it is not paid by 21 days, but it is within 28 days. Failure to pay a penalty notice will result in prosecution except in limited circumstances.

The situation will therefore be reviewed regularly, and I urge you to give your full cooperation to your wonderful school staff, who are working hard to ensure that your child receives an excellent education.

Yours sincerely,

Vicki Longcake-Smith
Inclusion Officer (Attendance),
Westmorland and Furness Council

The upshot of all of this increased emphasis on attendance is that, basically, schools and families will be under increased pressure to ensure the children are in school on time and as much as they possibly can be.

(If you have concerns about this I would suggest you read the Local Authority policy that we have adopted and contact me if you have any questions.) Many thanks for your support with this.

School uniform

Please can I remind parents that school uniform is our green jumpers, grey or black trousers / skirts / shorts, and ideally black shoes. Trainers for fitness and a waterproof coat need to be in school every day. If you need grey or black trousers / skirts / shorts we have a stock of pre-loved uniform, please see the School Office.

PE kit is the navy blue hoodies, light blue t-shirts and black shorts. Non-branded black leggings or tracksuit bottoms are fine for PE if the weather is cooler. Children need to be dressed in uniform on non PE days and they need to wear the correct PE kit for PE days. Earrings need to be removed or covered with tape before school.

Many of you have spent hard earned money on school uniform for the beginning of term. Please can we ask that you name all items of uniform as we are already collecting new unnamed clothing into our lost property. Thank you for your help with this.

Nut Allergy

There are several children in school who have an allergy to nuts including:

Peanuts

Peanut Butter

Nut oils

Nut flavourings etc.

Touching, eating or even inhaling these items may provoke a severe allergic reaction. For the safety of these pupils, we are asking parents not to send any food containing any nut products to school.

Thank you for your support and co-operation in this matter.

Music Lessons

If your child is having music lessons this year, our music teachers are hoping to be in on the following days. This may be subject to change as they are still confirming their timetables in other schools across the county.

Mon: Claire Windsor (piano)

Tues: Mrs Thomas (violin and cello), Mr Duesbury (guitar), Mr Middleton (drums) & Mrs Staniforth (flute, clarinet, saxophone)

Wed: Miss Baines (piano), Mrs Howard (harp) & Mrs Knaggs (singing)

Thurs: Claire Windsor (piano)

Fri: Miss Baines (piano) & Mr Middleton (drums)

If your child is a new starter this year, their teacher will meet with them next week to sort out instruments, practice books and study books.

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If there are any children who wish to start instrumental music tuition this year who have not yet returned their letters, may we ask that the letters are returned to the school office as soon as possible. We have requested our tuition hours for all of our teachers based on the pupils we know about. We do have two weeks at the start of the academic year to make changes to this tuition time for harp, violin, viola, cello, bass, singing and guitar. After this, it may not be possible.

If your child wishes to start any of: piano, drums, flute, saxophone, clarinet or oboe, the letters can be returned throughout the year. We are immensely fortunate this year in having access to a potentially large amount of teaching time with our woodwind teacher Sally Staniforth who is now working as a freelance teacher. Sally is one of the very finest and most talented music teachers I have encountered and her pupils make outstanding progress and enjoy their music making with her enormously. If your child is keen on a woodwind instrument, this is the year to start whilst she has availability!

If you have any questions about music, please talk to me. I'm on the junior yard with my Y4 class after school most days. Michelle Crowley

Asda Cashpot for Schools

Asda are running a Cashpot for Schools promotion from 2nd September till 30th of November. Every time you shop with Asda Rewards 0.5% of your total spend will go to a Primary School of your choice, plus Asda will pop one pound into your school's Cashpot every time someone opts in.

Here's how:

Download the rewards app if you haven't already and opt into the Cash pot.

Choose your primary school.

Shop in-store and scan your Asda Rewards app at the checkout.

Shopping on line simply log in to Asda.com using the same details as your Asda Rewards account.

Please encourage everyone you know to opt in and support Ghyllside School when they shop! Many thanks

As usual, if you have any questions about the content of this letter, or anything else, please do not hesitate to give the office a ring.

Kind regards



Huw Davies

Dates for the diary

Friday 13th September:

Y4 Swimming starts

Tuesday 17th September:

Y2 Transport trip

Tuesday 17th September:

Reception reading workshop, 6pm

Wednesday 18th September:

Y3 Stone age workshop

Wednesday 2nd October:

Y6 Leighton Moss trip, letter to follow

Monday 7th October:

Harvest Festival, tbc.

Wednesday 23rd October:

Rec-Y6 Nasal flu immunisations

Thursday 24th October:

PTA Halloween disco

Friday 25th October:

School finishes for half term, 3.20pm

Monday 4th November:

School starts

Tuesday 12th November:

Individual photographs

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