

Parent Rep Meeting & Ms Steele (HT)

1. Class Bubbles

The question of how class bubbles are working, as there appears to be mixing of bubbles at break times, and what happens if a bubble has to isolate were raised. Firstly children are continually reminded and monitored as much as possible to ensure they stay in their bubbles. Different classes have different outside areas, but there are 250 children and every effort is made to keep them in their bubbles. The biggest issue is siblings, especially with reception. We have asked children not to play with their siblings, but that is really difficult. It is really hard as it goes against the Gresham ethos and value of everyone looking after each other.

The question on what would happen if there is a second lock-down or a bubble has to isolate, in terms of school work. The school will be using Google classroom to deliver some on-line lessons and work. We will try to differentiate work as much as possible. Mrs Forsyth will also assist in delivering lessons for some children.

The majority of staff do not move between bubbles, for the few staff that do move extra care is taken to distance themselves from children (not moving around the classroom) and additional hand-washing before and after entering class. It was acknowledged that if a bubble were to isolate then all staff that were in close contact would be required to isolate as well.

2. Drinks & Water bottles

What strategies are used to encourage reception drinking throughout the day? In terms of reception Mrs Atkin sent out a letter to all parents and this was addressed in it. Children are never denied access to water, they have their water bottles with them throughout the day and are encouraged to drink and re-fill them when required. During mid-morning snack reception children will sit on the carpet and have either milk or water with their fruit.

Some children are confused about when they can refill bottles and can they take them out at lunchtime. Each class has their own system depending on the timings of the school day. This was a subject of much discussion with teachers and we have put something in the newsletter this week. Generally speaking water bottles need to be brought in full in the morning. They can be taken outside at lunchtime/ break and can be re filled then from the fountains. We do not want learning time being disrupted by filling up bottles and the children are remembering to do this more.

3. Blocking the pathway outside the school.

This was mentioned in last week's newsletter, so hopefully this has been dealt with.

4. Hand washing

Some children have complained about dry/sore hands. The soap has been changed, so hopefully this will help. Children are allowed to bring in hand cream, to be kept in their bag, if needed.

5. Christmas Concert

Will there be a Christmas concert and are the school thinking of an alternative way this could be done i.e. filming or strict numbers. The school will be considering the best option nearer the time. The plan is for reception to prepare something with the hope of being in a position to opening the doors, but everything will depend of government guidelines, if not we will record something. Mrs Atkin is definitely planning something but how we deliver that we are unsure of at this time.

Some parents have not received copy of last year's Christmas concerts/play. A number of email reminders were sent out both before and after Christmas initially asking parents to send in £4.50 in an envelope with their child's name on it - only a handful of these were received. Copies of the concert/plays were made available for collection after February half-term and a last reminder email was sent 10th March. If parents requested, paid and are still waiting please let your class rep know, likewise if you did not request a copy but would now like one please let your class rep know by Friday 9th October.

6. Lunches

Firstly children are heavily supervised to ensure they eat their main meal before pudding. They are also encouraged to eat and try new foods, but if there are any issues or concerns parents are notified. Currently this is the most challenging part of the school day. Whereas previously children could take as much time as they wished to eat they are encouraged to eat a bit quicker so that tables can be cleared and the next group can come in. We have staggered lunchtimes starting at 11.30 am for reception and currently finish at 12.45 pm.

For reception children it is still early days, for them it is best if they choose food they are confident with and happy to eat.

KS1 children eat their packed lunches in the dining hall and KS2 children currently eat their packed lunch outside weather dependant, otherwise they will eat lunch in their classrooms and teachers will clean surfaces afterwards.

Not enough lunches or not receiving what they ordered – there was an issue last week where some year 6 children did not receive what they ordered, unfortunately this was due to a few dropped dinners.

Food portions are in accordance with health food guidelines although year 6 children will often get extra food when it is available. Ms Steele has discussed lunches with year 6 and they have been told to go and see her in the afternoon if there are any issues so that she can address them immediately.

7. Follow-up call for reception parents.

Mrs Atkin contacted all reception parents to catch-up, however some parents report not having had a call. For those parents who have not had a follow-up call please can they contact the school office and let them know when they are available. The letter sent to reception parents has been gratefully received – normally reception parents would be invited in for lunch and to see a phonics lesson but this is not possible, however if parents have any questions they can drop an email to admin.

8. Swimming

There are no plans to start swimming at the moment. There's the issue of public transport and currently Purley pool has announced it is closed. This will be re-assessed in the New Year.

9. Drop off & pick up

The question of what will happen in bad weather. The school do let children in early and try to get them in as quickly as possible but they have to keep children in bubbles and follow the one-way system.

Children will need to wear waterproof coats and can arrive in wellies and change into their shoes – just please make sure they are named. The greatest help is for children to arrive on time.

The question on whether siblings can be dropped and collected together was raised. Unfortunately this is not possible as children have to be supervised and class teachers are very busy preparing for lessons and trying to get booster groups running.

10. Wrap around care – Breakfast (BC) and After-School club (ASC)

BC is now open and parents should contact the school office if they need to book a place. In regards to ASC we are not running it at the present time and we are not the only school not offering this service. Every school has to make a decision based on space and staffing. We are very limited with space / room wise and the rigorous cleaning required to keep the school environment safe is a priority.

11. Parents evening

It will probably be some form of virtual 10 minutes face-to-face – Zoom, Google classroom etc. over a couple of weeks

12. School uniform

The question of whether the school will change supplier after the difficulties of ordering uniform. Hewitts and all clothing suppliers have had issues with supplies this year due to lockdown. We did consider logo badges but they do not last well.

13. Playtimes

Whilst the weather is nice children can use the field, outdoor classrooms and new play equipment (classes are on a weekly rota). Once the weather deteriorates the field will not be used.

14. After-school clubs

We are just starting to consider clubs. We are starting to consider what is feasible. Mr Prior is starting to offer football to year 5 and year 6 after school but they have to be on separate nights because of the class bubble situation. Teachers are also starting to organise booster groups and these have to be after school because it isn't possible in the mornings because of the staggered starts. If they are doing boosters then they can't run other clubs. We will continue to review over time and as the new routines become more manageable then we hope to offer more opportunities for the younger children.

15. Boosters

Boosters will be run after school rather than before school. There are a few boosters starting up over the next couple of weeks but it will take time to organise as they have to fit in with collections. Mrs Gough has already started and Mrs Naidoo will start boosters on her return. There is a lot of support and intervention going on throughout the school for all who need it.

The first 2 weeks have been ensuring the children are settled into new routines and feel happy and safe in school and all teachers have submitted a baseline assessment of the children in reading, writing and maths. This data is then used to target individuals and groups. There is additional adult support in classes during the week. This might be a TA working extra hours or a member of the SLT.

16. Parent Volunteers

We are still restricted with numbers of adults we need but if anyone would like to volunteer please email the office and let them know what you can/will to do or not want to do. Lunchtimes are particularly challenging at the moment.

The question of whether the school has thought about asking what skills parents have that could help the school e.g. IT skills – creating copies of school concerts/plays.

17. PE Kits

There has been positive feedback from parents in regards to wearing PE kits into school. School ask that if children do not have a black sweatshirts please can the wear a school jumper.

18. Homework/home learning

Has been mixed feedback to homework. As children have lost out in their education the focus on homework is the basics, spelling, reading, vocab etc. If parents have a specific issue with homework please contact/email your child's teacher. Homework should not be onerous but it should be done. Equally if a child is off due to the family isolating teachers will send work to admin staff the night before so ALL children that are off will get work in the morning. It will not be possible for teachers to provide feedback during the day as they are in class, teachers will catch up with the child upon their return. Once Google classroom is being used then feedback will be given there after school where possible. If the child is unwell then the work does not have to complete (parent decision).

19. Additional Support for children suffering with anxiety.

Some parents have reported concerns over their child exhibiting symptoms of anxiety since lockdown. We have a number of programs such as ELSA and draw and talk that can and have been offered. If a parent has a specific concern they should contact the school.

20. Secondary school information

Information regarding secondary schools was sent out in last week's newsletter and any further information will be sent out as and when it's received.