

Parent Rep Meetings & Ms Steele

1. Homework

Yes, homework can be submitted either on paper or via Google classroom, please just let your class teacher know.

No homework is planned to be set for Reception. This past year has already been challenging for everyone and would create additional work for the staff and unnecessary pressure for parents with children that would find homework more challenging. The current focus of reception staff is the children's well-being and settling back into school life. Should Reception parents wish to do additional work at home there are a variety of age appropriate activities/work available on-line e.g. BBC bite size, oak academy.

Reception team - A member of the Reception team has been absent for some time and parents were enquiring. Unfortunately, Ms Steele is unable to answer/discuss personal matters, but it's hoped the member of staff should be back soon.

2. After School Club (ASC)/wrap around care

The school has had only a small amount of interest in possibly extending ASC. The current issue is that it's run by existing staff. Pre-covid the school did advertise to recruit additional staff but had no interest. Unfortunately, since the start of Covid the school has not had a full complement of staff for various reasons and the school's priority must be ensuring appropriate staffing levels between the core hours of 9am-3pm.

The school also have the additional complication that children need to remain in their class bubbles. Depending on the level of interest school may be able to offer one/two extended days per week, possible up to 5.15pm after half-term, but no food will be offered – this is being constantly being reviewed.

3. School social events

The school have put some dates in the diary – sports day, Year 6 productions, Leavers assembly – which they are hoping will go ahead albeit there may need to be some restrictions compared to previous years e.g. only 2 parents/carers per child at sports day, everything is dependent on further Covid restrictions lifting. Gresham is unlike other local school, who are not planning on any school social events in the near future.

A specific question on possibly holding the Talent show before the end of term was raised. Obviously, this would normally have happened in March but due to the second Covid lockdown this was not possible. There are no plans for this event to happen before the end of the year. The PA have a family event pencilled in before of the end of this school year, which they hope to be able to hold pending current restriction lifting.

4. Planned trips in Summer Term

There are no trips planned this coming term for the majority of the school. Year 4 have a walk around the local area which is in relation to class topic work. For the remainder of this school year the focus of any trips will be for Year 6, who have the Aqua Park and PGL planned near the end of the summer term.

5. Allocated lunchtime/Portion sizes/menu variety/Hot homemade pack-lunch

Children do not have an allocated lunch slot, but allocated tables on which to eat their food. Children are given as long as they need to eat. The entire lunchtime process takes 1.5 hours, with Reception going into lunch, earlier than previous years, at 11.30 through to year 6. It is hoped in September lunchtime can return to 12-1pm.

Children sit in their bubble whether they are in the hall or (juniors) outside with their packed lunch. Children don't always eat everything and more often than not they just want to go outside and play with friends. Ms Steele is always on duty in the dining hall is continually monitoring the quality and

variety of food on offer and has already had changes made to the menu. Likewise children are both monitored and encouraged to eat more/try new things, where necessary, by staff.

The school have had new caterer since returning after the Easter break. There were one/two hiccups to begin with but these have now (hopefully) been resolved. The chicken sandwich was specifically mentioned by some parents because it was served with mayonnaise, which some children did not like. Ms Steele had already spoken to Chartwells and last week mayo was optional. The chicken goujons have been very popular and are not particularly spicy.

Portion size is (nationally) determined by government for different aged children. The caterers cook what is ordered on the day (with a few extra portions for waste/spillages and the odd change of mind).

Below are some images Ms Steele took of portion sizes



Only Year 6 occasionally get seconds if there is anything left.

Juniors eat their pack lunches outside (or in the classroom if raining) it is more difficult to control than when in the dining room and spillages of hot food is too great a risk at present with the current restriction. Once restrictions are lifted we will consider hot packed lunches (soups etc) providing they are eaten in the dining hall.

Parent Feedback – ‘from a nutritional/allergy point of view the new caterers are far superior then previously’.

6. After school activity clubs

There are no after-school activities for reception, KS1 and Year 3 (only years 4-6) as the school has limited outside space and must be done in class bubbles. There are no plans for any KS1 clubs as they would require more staff to manage much younger children that require a greater amount of support. There is also limited space because of the bubble restrictions.

Currently only 5 year 4 children have taken up a tennis place. If this remains unviable the activity may be offered at an alternative year group instead.

7. Wearing PE kit on PE days

Yes, children will continue to wear PE kit on PE days for the rest of this academic year. As yet the school have not made a decision as to whether this will continue next year.

Positive feedback received from all years, and would like to see it continue.

8. Lost Property

In the past there was a lost property box which was outside. The lid was always being left ajar/off and clothing got wet/damp.

All lost property is returned to the child where it has been name (and sometime when it has not). There is a large number of items that are not labelled or the name has faded which is in school.

As previously happened the school are hoping to have an afternoon where all the ‘lost items’ are put out/ displayed for parents to reclaim.

9. Boys Toilets

Have been described as 'Disgusting!' Staff are continually talking/working with the boys, they are cleaning throughout the day and items (pencils) retrieved out of the toilets. They are regularly monitored but cannot be 'policed' all the time.

10. Dogs

A number of parents have raised the issue of the increased number of dogs on the school run. It is recognised that taking the family dog on the school run allows families to 'kill two birds with one stone', the number of dogs outside the front of the school it has been described as an 'assault course' of dog leads and additional obstacles when trying to navigate the public path. Whilst the number of dogs off leads at the park entrance has intimidated some children and parent alike. It was requested that Ms Steele will include a polite message in the school newsletter.

11. Thank you - for all the lovely words of support received.

"Please can you express our gratitude for everything the teachers have done for our children over the past year. I know they've had to adapt themselves with daunting situations and living through this pandemic with their own families and worries. I think Gresham staff have been beyond amazing!"

12. Returning to school life

Due to all the recent uncertainty of this past year and the restrictions (bubbles, missed and/or limited/reduced social interaction with family, friends, peers, clubs etc.) The school has noticed an impact on children's behaviour/behavioural patterns/lack of maturity which has resulted in an increase in behavioural incidences (lot of falling outs at lunchtime), particularly in some class groups compared to previous years.

It must be recognised that every child's lockdown experience has been different and the school has been and will continue to do a lot of PHSE/well-being work, and staff have received additional training to help support this and the children.

On-line learning went really well for upper KS2 (Y5&6), whilst KS1 have adapted really well to all the changes.

Ms Steele stressed the importance of allowing the children to 'download' at the end of the day. Then change the focus, do something different, have a break - eat dinner. Then later on re-visit any issues and (in particular with the older ones) ask them what do you want to do about it? Let them take some ownership and have a say.

Overall the children have cope really well.

13. AOB

It was suggested that in light of the lockdown have the school considered the possibility of getting in getting in additional mental health support/counselling such as the charity 'Place 2 Be' <http://www.place2be.org.uk>

Ms Steele agreed that something like that would always be beneficial and that she would contact Zoe Barkham, who presented an Anxiety workshop earlier in the year, to discuss further.

The suggestion of having a Well-being afternoon for each class with a variety of fun activities for the children to partake in was also discussed, with the possibility of PA and parent helper support. Ms Steele was in favour of such events with the view of organising/holding them in the autumn term.