

Grasmere Primary School

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Thursday 10th December 2020

WEEKLY LETTER

Dear Parent or Carer,

As the end of term approaches, we see the final month of 2020 bring the real possibility of a return to a more normal 2021. I truly hope this is the case and that the roll out of the vaccine means that life at Grasmere can get back to what we were used to: assemblies together in the hall, school events and fund raisers taking place, older children supporting younger children, enriching class trips, face to face parent meetings, school performances and, at a more fundamental level, an increase in meaningful daily human interaction that we have all missed so much.

I therefore look ahead to next term with optimism. I can see the pre COVID momentum return in many ways. Not only in making headway with the school priorities regarding the curriculum but also with our continued involvement in the Wellbeing and Mental Health [WAMHS] project, completing work on the KS2 playground and renovating the hall.

I will not spend too much time reflecting on this year [it would be a long letter if I did!] but needless to say it's been extremely challenging for us as a school community. The first lockdown was incredibly hard for every family in so many different ways. Since September, it has been heartening to see the children return, settle back to familiar routines and expectations and get going with their learning. Looking at the recent progress data this term, we have been pleased to see that gaps are starting to close and children are definitely catching up. There is a huge amount in place at school to support individual or groups of children who need it and this offer is always being added to. We are confident that as the academic year progresses the gap will continue to close to ensure children fully recover from any missed or lost learning.

The single most contributing factor to this progress has been high quality, consistent class provision and this has only been possible thanks to your child attending every day. Even with children missing school through testing, self-isolation or illness, the attendance figures for the school has been just under 96%. When compared to the national average of 85.5%,

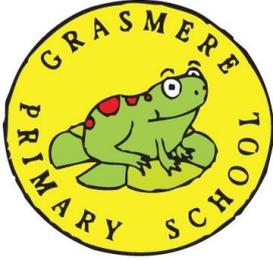


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this is amazing. Thank you for supporting the school in the measures it has adopted and following guidance both in and outside school to make this happen.

Although no child has tested positive for COVID so far [not to jinx it!] we have had some positive cases within the staff. As a result, other staff have been identified as close contacts as well as more who were contacted by track and trace. Added to this staff whose own children's bubbles have closed and have needed to be absent for child care, the usual seasonal illnesses and a few long term absences it has been a daily challenge to make the provision work. For several weeks we were operating with approximately 60% of our staff.

I would therefore like to thank every member of staff for being flexible, solution focused and so incredibly hard working to ensure the provision for your child remained open and as consistent as possible. Their attitude has been fantastic and I am so thankful to lead such a dedicated staff team.

In other news, I am pleased to say that the performances have been filmed and are being edited together as I write. Please remember to look out for the Zoom link and tune in on **Tuesday 15th December at 2pm** for the show!

Finally, **Santa and the Grinch** are still planning to visit Grasmere on Friday. Each child has a really special gift that is totally COVID secure. Huge thanks to your kind donations and FROGS volunteers for the time and effort in making the gifts so special. There is also a **Gingerbread man competition** so please encourage your child to take part [and it might keep them busy for a bit over Christmas!]. We hope to display them after Christmas and up to 10 children will win prizes.

Thank you again for your continued support.

Kind regards,

Nick



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