

30th June 2023

Dear Parents,

Teacher Strike

You may have heard that there will be further strike days on 5th and 7th July. I am pleased to confirm that **school will be open on both days to all children.**

The date of transition day where Year 6 move to secondary school and all of our children move up to meet their new teacher and we invite our new Reception children and their parents into school has had to change because of this. It will now be on 12th July and not 5th July, as secondary schools are generally not now having Year 6 children on 5th because of the strikes. Year 6 children should have received communication from their secondary schools detailing any changes to arrangements for this. I will confirm new teachers and classes for September after children have met them on 12th.

Reports and Parents Evening

End of year reports will be sent home with your child on 14th July. Again, this is slightly later than we had planned, because the date KS2 SATs results will be released to schools has been delayed by the Government. If you need to discuss anything further with the class teacher once you have read the report, please email them directly on the year group email to arrange a meeting.

On Tuesday 18th July, (note change of date from Monday 17th July), there will be a drop in parents session between 3.30pm - 4.00pm. This will simply be an opportunity to look at children's work and for you to collect the books that we are able to send home this year. No appointments are needed.

House System

In an exciting development, as part of our new behaviour policy that we have been successfully trialling this term, we are going to introduce a House system at Grendon. Children from across school will be split into 4 Houses. Children will earn house points for demonstrating excellent behaviour and for achieving in other areas of school life, such as sports day, Times Tables Rock Stars and Numbots. At the end of each year a trophy will be awarded to the winning house. On Thursday 13th July we will have a whole school day to launch this with children. They will find out the names of our Houses, which House they are in and begin to work together as a House. I will tell you more once we have launched this with children! Children do not need to do or bring or wear anything special for House Day on 13th.

Drinks in School

Children should bring a drink with them for playtime each day. This does not have to be water, but could be squash, juice or flavoured water. Children will also have a drink at lunchtime, and are again allowed alternative drinks to water as above.

All year, but particularly in the hotter months, we understand the importance of remaining hydrated. For many years now, we have asked children to bring water bottles into school in addition to the drinks above, and have water coolers available for children to refill with fresh, cold water. Please ensure that there is only water in these bottles. Children have access to these water bottles at all times in the classrooms while they are working. Anything other than water can leave sticky marks over tables, books and children's work if it is spilt or drips.

To recap, children are allowed squash, juice, water or flavoured water at break and lunchtimes, but should only have access to water as an additional drink in the classroom. Children should not be bringing FIZZY drinks or any of the PRIME brand drinks into school for either playtimes, lunchtimes or in the classroom. Please do not send Prime bottles at all, even if they have other drinks in. This is causing problems between the children. From next week, we will take Prime bottles off children, no matter what they contain, ensure children have an alternative drink during the day and return them to you at the end of the day. Many thanks for your support with this.

Parents Survey Results

My thanks to the 35 families that responded. Responses from these families were very positive. 100% agreed that their child was happy at school, that staff were helpful and approachable and that their child felt safe at school. 97% felt communication is good, school does all it can to support attendance and that the school is well led.

We were pleased that 91% felt children behaved well, as this has increased consistently from 76% in 2020. Our new policy has helped with this and it remains on our School Improvement Plan.

Issues raised included increasing before and after school clubs. This year we did increase our offer and have no clubs that are running at capacity at the moment - there are spaces. We will look next year at offering different opportunities and also focus on increasing opportunities for our younger children.

Individual responses raised that you would like us to:

- give more information about how to help children at home - and so we are restructuring Welcome Meetings and Access Clinics for parents next year that will help address this.
- provide more homework - our Homework questionnaire earlier in the year showed equal numbers of parents asked for more and less homework. Our policy will remain unchanged, although we will move towards making this available on Microsoft Teams next year and so all can be accessed from one place.
- improve our KS2 playground as we had done the front and side playgrounds recently and so we have added outdoor gym equipment already and will continue to add to this next year.
- Avoid parents gathering by the gates. I agree that is difficult. Please can I ask you to meet well away from the school gates if you are talking to other adults while waiting to collect your children or after they are in school in the mornings. We would like to keep the area in front of the school gates clear for access - both pedestrian and vehicle. Many thanks for your support with this.

And finally...

You know already that Grendon is a good and improving school. It seems that our message and popularity is spreading. We have increased numbers on roll from 341 to 386 in the last 18 months as recommendations have been made. According to an article published on line this week, we now feature on 'The 15 hardest Birmingham primary schools to get into in 2023'. Unfortunately, many parents who put us as first choice were not allocated a place. While this is not good news for those parents and children involved, it certainly shows that our reputation is spreading and, as we all know already, Grendon is a great place to be!

Thank you for your continued support,

Mrs Ridley