

Dear Parent/Carer,

6th October 2017

OCTOBER NEWSLETTER

Short message from the Head

All the children are now well settled into their new classes and enjoying school. Many of the teachers have been to me to express how impressed they are with their new classes and how so many of the children are willing to 'give things a go' which is great. I am sure that moving forward we have a very successful term ahead of us.

Staff Changes

As you are aware Sandra Stewart is retiring from working at Ghyllside for 27 years and in this time has been a cornerstone of the school having helped steer the school through many changes and challenges in her role as Business Manager. I know that in the relatively short time I have been here I have quickly grown to rely on Sandra's advice and support. So it is with mixed emotions that we are saying goodbye to Sandra, sad that she is going but happy for her that she is moving onto the next exciting phase of her life. Good luck in all you do in the future Sandra!

The good news is that Nicola Audin is taking on the role of Business Manager in school. Nicola has extensive past experience of running accounts and small teams, knows school really well from working in the office and has worked alongside Sandra for the past half term. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome Nicola into the team as Business Manager. She has big shoes to fill but I am sure she will do this brilliantly.

Changes to PE

Our new PE arrangements are going very well with the children now enjoying three shorter 'fitness' sessions a week, and one longer skills session. Please can I just remind parents that the Health and Safety directives that we have states that children should not wear earrings for PE. We were once allowed to cover earrings with tape, which we still do in exceptional circumstances, but the newer advice is that we should not be doing this. **Therefore, can I ask you to ensure that if your child is wearing earrings in school they are able to take them out and put them back in themselves and if they can't, that they don't wear their earrings in school.** Many thanks for your help.

Reports and Parents' Evenings

As was highlighted in the last newsletter we are changing the way that we report to parents. This year we will be sending a brief written report home in both the Autumn and Spring terms which will give parents reading, writing and maths attainment and grades for behaviour, effort and attendance for their child. There will be a parents evening for all classes after each of these reports. In the Summer term there will be a more detailed report which will again be followed by an opportunity for parents to talk to their child's class teachers.

Please keep an eye open as your child will be bringing their first report, and a parents evening booking slip home during the first week after half term. Parents evenings will be on the 7th and 8th of November.

Reception Open Evening and School Tours

There will be an open evening on Wednesday 18th October 4.00pm - 6.30pm for children due to start school in September 2018. If you or anyone you know is looking for a Reception place, please feel free to drop in whenever convenient. We are also holding school tours on Tuesday 31st October 9.30am or 1.30pm and Thursday 9th November 9.30am or 1.30pm. Please contact the school office to let us know if you would like to attend any of these tours.

Secondary School Transfer

Parents of pupils in Year 6 should return their Transfer to Secondary School Form to school by Friday 20th October. Applications can also be made online and the closing date is Tuesday 31st October. Please do not miss these deadlines because if a secondary school is over-subscribed pupils are unlikely to be offered a place when parents have applied late.

Torchlight

You may be aware that Ghyllside School won the award for best school float at Kendal Torchlight this year. I would like to thank Rachel Braithwaite and Chloe Iveson for the huge amount of hard work that they put into this - we wouldn't have had a float without them and I know it was an evening that all the children involved really enjoyed.

Building Work

As you are aware our kitchen is now up and running and providing hot school lunches again. We have some snagging issues with the kitchen, but basically it is working very well. Thank you for your patience and understanding while this work was going on.

There will be some less disruptive building work taking place through the Autumn term inside the main body of the school. This work is to update our existing fire alarm system and install new fire doors. There will be no work taking place while the children are on the school site, but there will again be a small builder's compound in the corner of the yard next to the boiler room. As a result, for the time that the building work takes, there will be no access to the Reception playground from the main school playground. Parents will again need to use the ginnel to access Nursery and Reception. **For the duration of the building work we will again unfortunately not be able to let the children play on the yard at the end of school as this space may be needed for deliveries etc.** Having said this, the vast majority of this work will be going on after the clocks have changed so there won't be a great deal of daylight after school. Again, as a school we have put extensive measures in place to ensure the children do not inadvertently come into contact with this work.

Reading Books in School

As I highlighted in our last newsletter, our stocktake over the summer holiday has highlighted that about **£3000** worth of books were not returned to school last term. We have had many books returned, but still have a large hole in our stock. **PLEASE CAN I ASK YOU TO AGAIN CHECK AT HOME AND SEND IN ANY BOOKS THAT YOUR CHILD MAY HAVE.** Thank you in advance for your help with this.

PTA News

Many of the parents who run the PTA have children in year 6 and will be leaving at the end of this year. We need a group of enthusiastic volunteers to take over the mantle and continue to hold events and raise funds for the school. If it wasn't for the PTA your children would not have theatre and artist visits, replenished stocks of reading books in the library, a sound and lighting system for the hall, outdoor equipment to use at break times, an amazing sprung floor in the dance studio, Christmas and summer fairs, discos, film nights and more, so come and find out about how you can help. We will be at the parents' evenings in early November and our next meeting will be at the Riflemans at 7pm on 14th November.

In the meantime we are in need of a new treasurer. If you have a head for figures and can spare a few hours each month we'd like to hear from you, please leave your details at the school office.

Our next event is the Christmas fair on 8th December - put the date in your diaries. More details will follow soon.

Nasal Flu Immunisation

The school health immunisation team will carry out nasal flu immunisations in school on Monday 20th November for children in Reception, Y1,2,3 and 4. Information and consent forms will be sent home nearer the time.

As the likelihood of wintery weather increases please ensure your child comes to school appropriately dressed with a coat, hat, etc. (marked clearly with their name). We send children out for breaks in all types of weather.

Free School Meals and Clothing Grants

If you are entitled to certain benefits you may be able to claim "Free School Meals and Clothing Grants". The local authority has now launched a new and improved online application process. This is held within the Citizens portal and the link is:

<https://emsonline.cumbria.gov.uk/CitizenPortal> LIVE/Account/Login?ReturnUrl=%2fCitizenPortal LIVE

We would like to encourage parents to apply this way but if this is not possible, application forms are available from the School Office which you can complete and return to us and we will post on your behalf.

Vacancies

Anyone who is interested in the parent governor position, please submit your written nomination to the school office by Friday 13th November.

The deadline for the mid-day supervisor vacancy and bank staff applications is also Friday 13th November. If you would like to apply please return your completed application form to the school office by this date.

Holiday Club

Due to building work that is scheduled over the half term, there will be no holiday club running for that week. The Out of School Club apologises for any inconvenience this may cause.

£1 Coins

We will be unable to accept the old £1 coins in school after Friday 13th October.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Tues 10 Oct:	Y1-Y6 Individual/Sibling Photographs Y1-Y6
Wed 11 Oct:	Nursery (pm) Individual Photographs
Wed 11 Oct:	Out of School Club Committee Meeting, Neighbourhood Centre, 6.00pm (new members welcome!)
Fri 13 Oct:	Y6 Comic Art Festival Performance, Brewery
Wed 18 Oct:	Reception Open Evening for September 2018, 4.00-6.30pm
Fri 20 Oct:	Half Term begins, 3.20pm

Half Term: Monday 23rd October - Friday 27th October

Mon 30 Oct:	Term re-starts
Tues 31 Oct:	School Tour for Reception 2018, 9.30am and 1.30pm
Tues 7 Nov:	Parents Evening
Wed 8 Nov:	Parents Evening
Thurs 9 Nov:	School Tour for Reception 2018, 9.30am and 1.30pm
Tues 14 Nov:	PTA Meeting, Riflemans, 7.00pm
Fri 17 Nov:	Children in Need, £1 donation
Mon 20 Nov:	Nasal Flu Immunisation, Rec-Y4
Fri 8 Dec:	PTA Christmas Fair

End of Term: 2.00pm, Tuesday 19th December