

Giffard Park Primary School

‘Success Starts Here’



09 February 2018

Dear Parents/Carers,

It has been a fabulous first half of the Spring Term and as usual we have a number of new items to share with you.

Welcome to new children and staff

We are delighted to welcome all the new children and parents to our wonderful school. We also have new additions to our staff team; Mrs Wiles our new Deputy Headteacher and Mrs Smith who is teaching Morpurgo class (Y4). We will also be welcoming Mrs White who will be teaching in Walliams class after the half term until Mrs Koke joins us after Easter.

Friends of Giffard Park

A huge thank you to the hard working and dedicated team of Friends and staff who made our Christmas Fayre such a success. Altogether we raised over £1000. Thank you for your support and attendance.

Preschool

Our Preschool has grown! We started as a brand new provision In September 2017 with 6 children. We now have 21 children on roll with more visiting every day. A really big thank you to Mrs Mistry, Mrs Knight and Mrs Luya for working so hard with our youngest children to give them such a wonderful start at Giffard Park. We are holding a special Easter Egg Hunt and Open Morning on Saturday 24th March at 10.00am until 11.30am and we would love you to join us. More information will follow on Parentmail.

Our values

We expect the highest possible standards of behaviour from all pupils and in order to achieve this we have established a School Charter. The SMART Charter is used across the school with all pupils from Foundation to Year 6 and sets out the attitudes and values that we believe underpin the ethos of our school:

SMART learners are

Sensitive	Kind, gentle and helpful to others. We don't hurt people or their feelings.
Motivated	Hard workers who have a go. We don't waste time or give up.
Attentive	Good listeners who concentrate. We listen to instructions and don't interrupt.
Responsible	Careful with property and nature. We don't damage or waste things.
Truthful	Honest. We always tell the truth.

This half term we are focusing on the value of being **truthful and sensitive**.

(Please see our website for a copy of our behaviour policy.) Our **Celebration Assembly** will continue to take place every **Friday** where we hold our Remarkable readers raffle, celebrate SMART awards and children's achievements both inside and outside of school. It will also include awarding the class trophy for best attendance. We also have our weekly Student of the Week postcards that will be posted home.

Growth mindset

As you will already know at Giffard Park we have created a positive learning culture based on children and adults having a 'growth mindset'. Through this children develop an understanding of how they learn best and also a positive

'can do' attitude when approaching new challenges. Our children are learning how to grow into independent learners who are willing to strive, even when learning is not easy. At Giffard Park when children are faced with new challenges they will keep persevering and say: "I can't do it **yet**."

How can parents help support?

To help us establish a growth mindset culture, you should begin by praising your children for **effort** and **achievement** rather than ability, and using the language of being brave, learning, challenge and valuing mistakes.

Avoid using the word 'clever'. Praise to young children reinforcing 'cleverness' or intelligence gives the message – to get approval you need to master new things quickly, with little effort both of which will earn you the clever label. It creates a fear of failure and the unwillingness to take risks.

People with a fixed mindset avoid challenging tasks for fear of failure and therefore miss many valuable learning opportunities.

Our language tells children what we believe and value.

Growth mindset praise:

'Good it's making you think – that's how your brain is growing.'

'Everytime you practise, you're making connections in your brain stronger.'

'You're good at things because you like them and you work hard at them.'

'You can use this mistake. Think about why it didn't work and learn from it.'

'You can't do it **yet!**'

Successful Learning means using the learning powers.

The learning powers

Concentrate	Manage distractions, do one thing at a time, plan and think it through, get lost in the task
Don't give up	Work hard, practice lots, keep going, try new strategies, ask for help
Be cooperative	Listen to others, say when you understand, explain things to help others, be tolerant
Be curious	Ask questions, notice things, ask 'What if...?'
Have a go	Have a growth mindset, don't worry if it's wrong, learn from mistakes, be excited to try new things
Use your imagination	Be creative, let your imagination go
Keep improving	Try to be better than last time, keep reviewing your work, improve one thing at a time
Enjoy learning	Feel proud of your achievements, imagine your intelligence growing, know you can do it if you have input and practice.

Further reading: Carol Dweck: <http://mindsetonline.com/howmindsetaffects/parentsteacherscoaches/index.html>
<http://www.mindsetworks.com/>

Breakfast and After School Club

We currently run our own breakfast club from 7.30am – 8.45am and after school club which runs until 6.00pm. If you are interested in booking your child a place please see Mrs Ford, Business Manager. For more detail please see the Parent Information section on our website.

End of Key Stage 1 Assessments

Children in year 2 will be completing End of Key Stage 1 Assessments in May. These are to show how much progress children have made during their time in Key Stage 1. There is a parents' information meeting on **Wednesday 21st February at 5pm.**

Spelling Workshop Year 3-6

We will be holding a Spelling Workshop for year 3-6 on Wednesday 21st February between 4.30 – 5.00pm. More information regarding this will be sent out after half term.

Wellies Needed

We are in need of wellies for our outdoor learning. If you have any unwanted wellies size 12 – 4 that you could donate it would be much appreciated.

Term Dates 2017-2018

Please see the Parent Information section on our website for our newly updated term dates.

Attendance and punctuality

Did you know?

- 95% = 10 days absent a year
- 90% = 20 days absent a year
- 85% = 30 days absent a year
- 80% = 40 days absent a year

'Every minute counts':

If your child is late every day:	In a year your child would lose the following days of education:
5 minutes late	3 days
10 minutes late	6.5 days
15 minutes late	10 days
20 minutes late	13 days
30 minutes late	19.5 days

We are working closely with the Attendance Team at Milton Keynes Council to monitor our attendance. Please ensure your child arrives at school by 8.45am. As you can see from the information above persistent absence or lateness can have a detrimental effect on your child's learning.

Communication

Communication is extremely important to us in helping to support your child. If you have any questions or concerns, please see the classteacher in the first instance. They are the adults who are working closely on a daily basis with your child and any concerns you may have can be quickly resolved. This can often be done at the end of the day at the classroom door. Should you require more time then please make an appointment via Miss Rambini in Reception. Please note that teachers have meetings straight after school on a Tuesday and Wednesday.

Following your appointment should you need further support then you can make an appointment with the Phase Leader appropriate to your child's year group. Again all appointments should be made via Miss Rambini. Our Phase leaders are:

Foundation: Mrs Mistry, Years 1 & 2 Mrs Hand, Years 3-6 Miss Coster, Assistant Headteacher.

In the unlikely event that your concern has not be resolved by the classteacher, the Phase leader or the Assistant Head, then you may wish to make an appointment with the Deputy Headteacher, Mrs Wiles. In the final instance you may wish to make an appointment with myself, which will need to be done via Miss Rambini.

We are really looking forward to an exciting and successful 2018 at Giffard Park Primary School and welcome your co-operation and support. At the end of the day the goal of staff, parents and governors is that our children are successful learners.