

**GEORGE FENTHAM ENDOWED SCHOOL
NEWSLETTER 1 AUTUMN 2020**

October 2020

Term Dates	
SCHOOL TERMS & HOLIDAY DATES	<u>2020/2021</u>
Autumn Term	Tue 1 September 2020 - Fri 18 December 2020
Half Term	Mon 26 October - Fri 30 October 2020
Spring Term	Mon 4 January 2021 - Thu 1 April 2021
Half Term	Mon 15 February - Fri 19 February 2021
Summer Term	Mon 19 April 2021 - Wed 21 July 2021 May Bank Holiday: Mon 3 May 2021
Half Term	Mon 31 May - Fri 4 June 2021
INSET DAYS	Tue 1 September 2020, Wed 2 September 2020, Fri 23 October 2020, Fri 12 February 2021 1 Further INSET Day to be advised

Dates for Diary	
	<u>2020</u>
Sat 31 October	Closing Date for Secondary 2021 Applications
Mon 2- Fri 6 November	Reception, Year 1 & Year 2 Telephone Parent & Carer Consultations - continued
Mon 9 - Fri 13 November	Years 3, 4 ,5 & 6 Telephone Parent & Carer Consultations - continued
Fri 13 November	BBC Children in Need
Mon 16-Fri 20 November	Anti-Bullying Week
Wed 18 November	Tempest Photography Class Photos
Tue 1 December	Closing Date for Nursery 2021 Applications
	<u>2021</u>
Mon 4 January	Reception Hearing Tests
Fri 15 January	Closing Date for Reception 2021 Applications
Sun 31 January	Nursery 2021 Offer Day
Wed 10 February	Years R & 6 National Child Measurement Programme
Monday 1 March	Secondary Offer Day
Friday 16 March	Reception 2021 Offer Day

COVID-19 Restrictions

UPDATE:

I would like to thank our children, staff, parents and carers for all their hard work this half term in keeping everyone safe in the current, very challenging times. Our children have adapted so quickly, demonstrating flexibility and resilience and are really enjoying being back with their friends and teachers. Our new systems and structures have been quickly adopted and have become second nature to our school community. I would like to thank parents and carers for their

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support with our staggered starts and pick up times. Children are arriving on time and there is a very calm and purposeful start to the learning day.

One of the challenges we are facing is that it is more difficult to meet with parents and carers and welcome them in to school. However, if you have any concerns, please contact the school office and a member of staff will arrange to contact you back. Please see our website and Parent Pay emails for our most up-to-date communications.

COVID-19 TESTS:

During this first half term we have had a number of families who have accessed COVID-19 testing. We would like to thank all of our families who have acted quickly to access these tests and then worked in partnership with school to keep us informed and updated of the results.

It is essential that children are not sent in to school if they, or anyone they live with, have any COVID 19 symptoms, e.g. high temperature, new persistent cough or a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell. Anyone with symptoms will be required to self-isolate, organise a test and inform the school of the result. If someone in your household has symptoms, all members of the household must self-isolate whilst the person with symptoms accesses a test. School should be immediately notified of the result.

CONFIRMED COVID-19 CASES IN SCHOOLS:

Please be advised we have very detailed response systems in place, should there be a confirmed case of COVID-19 within our school community. In consultation with Public Health England and Solihull Local Authority, decisions would be quickly made about any children, staff or class bubbles that would need to isolate and for how long. This would be clearly communicated with you in the first instance through our Parent Pay email system.

HALF TERM COVID-19 RISKS:

We would very much like to ask for your support in reducing the risk of the spread of COVID-19, over half-term, within our community. The GOV.UK website contains very clear guidance on what restrictions are in place if you live in an area where the local COVID alert level is high and can be accessed here <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-covid-alert-level-high>

We hope that all of our families stay safe and follow the guidance so that transmission is not increased within our school community after half-term.

Please be aware, any family traveling abroad over half term may be subject to quarantine restrictions when they return. We are asking all families to carefully check their travel arrangements and notify school immediately if these restrictions apply.

Thank you for your help and support in this matter.

Remote Learning

At George Fentham we have spent this half term identifying how, in the event of any future isolations or closures, we can ensure that children's learning can continue at home, closely aligned to the learning they would be doing in school. To do this, we sent out a survey, asking for your input and feedback about our provision during the original lockdown and your family circumstances regarding access to a computer/laptop/tablet/printer etc. This information has been invaluable in shaping how we will provide remote learning in future, helping us to better understand how to support our children and families and in looking at ways to cater for all.

We have produced a Remote Learning Policy and are currently putting together a Parents' Guide to support you, should the need arise. This week, children will be shown where and how they can

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access Remote Learning provision via our school website, using Purple Mash and TT Rockstars, along with being given their usernames and logins. We are now looking at how we can begin to incorporate other technologies to provide improved communication and contact.

Whilst our hope is that we will not need to use this remote provision, we are mindful that (given the current local and national scenarios) it is likely to happen at some point and, therefore, our aim is to be as prepared as possible to provide high quality materials for both you and our children, ensuring high standards of learning are maintained.

Thank You!

We would like to take this opportunity to say a huge thank you to Mr Bass as he continues, with the support of all of our staff, to lead and develop all of our work in this area!

COVID-19 Restrictions - Christmas Update

We have already had some queries regarding our Christmas Performances this year. Unfortunately, due to the current Covid-19 restrictions, we will be unable to present our normal EYFS & KS1 and KS2 Performances. As you are aware, class bubbles are unable to mix and we are unable to perform in front of any audiences. There are also some current restrictions on singing and performing in school in line with Government guidelines. We are now looking at alternative ways of celebrating Christmas with the children, but these arrangements will be kept under review in direct response to constantly changing Government and Local Authority guidance and advice. Please be reassured, our staff will be working incredibly hard to ensure Christmas remains a very magical time in school, but this year it is going to look rather different! We will keep you updated once our plans are confirmed.

Parent Phone Consultations

Thank you to everyone who has returned their Parent Phone Consultation booking form. Staff are currently scheduling these phone calls which will begin this week and continue after half term. Whilst we would much prefer to hold face-to-face meetings, we hope that a prearranged phone call will provide you with valuable information regarding your child's well-being and progress this half term. Please feel free to share any information with us that you think would be helpful for us to know.

Concerns and Complaints received by School regarding the behaviour of a small number of George Fentham Endowed School Pupils

Please be aware that over the last few weeks, we have received a number of concerns and complaints regarding the behaviour and activities of a small group of George Fentham children after school has finished.

These concerns and complaints include:

- Children from different class bubbles mixing when they play football on the field after school. There is a worry that this could lead to more than one class having to be sent home to self-isolate if there was a confirmed COVID-19 case in school.
- There has been significant damaged caused to some of the trees on the field where children have climbed trees and deliberately broken off branches.

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- A phone call at 3:45pm from a local resident in relation to a small group of children who were playing on the field and throwing sticks over the fence hitting the resident's property and causing distress.

Please can we ask for your help in all of the above matters. All children playing on the field after school must be fully supervised by parents and carers in order to ensure appropriate behaviour at all times. We would ask for your support in limiting the mixing of children from different class bubbles during the current Coronavirus Pandemic to minimise the risk to all of our children, staff and families.

Staffing Update

Lunchtime Supervisors:

This half term we are delighted to welcome our new Lunchtime Supervisor, Mrs Shabir, to George Fentham Endowed School. Our team of Lunchtime Supervisors has worked incredibly hard this half-term to implement our new staggered lunchtime system. The system is working really well and enables us to keep all of our children within their class bubbles over the lunchtime session.

Nursery Admissions September 2021

If you would like to apply for a Nursery place to start in September 2021 you should apply directly to George Fentham Endowed School by 1st December 2020.

All information, our Admission Policies and an application form are now available on our school website at <http://www.georgefenthamschool.co.uk/admissions.html>

You may make a late online application after the closing date, but please be aware, this could have implications should we be oversubscribed. Offers will be made on 31st January 2021.

Reception Admissions September 2021

The closing date for submitting your child's Reception 2021 application is 15th January 2021. If you have not yet applied and you live in Solihull, you must submit your application through the parent portal at www.solihull.gov.uk/pp. Applications submitted after the closing date will not be processed until after the offers have been made in April. Applying late is likely to affect the outcome to your application. If you live outside of Solihull, you should contact your home Council to apply.

Secondary Admissions- September 2021

The Admissions Team at Solihull MBC have asked all schools to remind Year 6 parents, if they have not already done so, the closing date for secondary applications is **31st October 2020**.

PE Updates

Physical Education and physical activity have faced a number of challenges this half term but we would like to say a huge thank you to all parents and carers who have been so helpful in remembering to send pupils in, on their correct days, wearing their PE kit and encouraging them to be physically active outside of school.

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The children across the school have really enjoyed engaging in the fitness activities we have been doing and all classes are taking part in a virtual games challenge against other schools across Solihull:

Year 1 & 2 - KS1 Athletics & Infant Agility

Y3 - KS2 Athletics

Y4 & 6 - KS2 Football Skills

Y5- KS2 Dance

We have until the 20th November to practise our skills and record our personal bests. The top 10 results from each class will then be entered. We wish all of our children the very best of luck and look forward to keeping you updated.

Music Updates

Despite the current situation we find ourselves in we are so pleased that Solihull Music Service instrumental lessons have now commenced in school within a COVID-19 safe environment. The music teachers are thrilled to be working with their pre-existing pupils again. We are looking forward to the New Year when we hope to open up instrumental lessons to new children who might be interested. Year 4 Whole Class Ensemble Teaching has begun on a Wednesday afternoon and it is lovely to see the children excited by their new instruments! Class music this half term has been focusing mainly on music appreciation, looking at a variety of musical genres and placing composers into historical context on a timeline.

Medicines in School

Please be aware that a medicine permission form must be completed and discussed with a member of the office staff if your child requires any medicine during the school day. It is extremely important that all medicine has the prescription label clearly displayed on the medicine, stating your child's name, dose and frequency. If this information is displayed on packaging, we will need this packaging to be supplied. This arrangement will also apply for Calpol, therefore, if your child requires Calpol during the school day the bottle must have a label with the above details.

Should you wish to discuss this in any further detail, please contact the school office. Alternatively, please see the school website for further information.

Medical, Dental & Optician Appointments

Following advice from CSAWS, we would like to ask for your support in organising medical, dental and optician appointments outside of the school day. Please note if there is no alternative, you may be asked to show a copy of your appointment letter or card to the school office.

Reception to Year 6 - Nasal Flu Vaccination Programme

Solihull Immunisation Team came into school on Thursday 15th October to give children in Reception through to Year 6 the Nasal Flu Vaccination. Take up of this vaccine was extremely high within school and we would like to thank parents for their support in this matter.

Dietary Requirements / Food Allergies

Please note it is the responsibility of Parents or Carers to advise the school office, in writing, of any dietary requirements or food allergies for each individual child. Please note this is not required

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for food preferences but for medical conditions such as allergies or Religious Beliefs. This information will be stored on the child's record throughout school.

Tempest Class Photos

On the morning of Wednesday 18th November Tempest Photography will be coming in to school to take **Class Photos** only. We have consulted with the company and they have provided us with their full COVID-19 Risk Assessment to ensure the full safety of our children and staff.

School Meals - Outstanding Debt

Parents of children in KS2

From 1st September 2020 School meals have increased to £2.20 per day.

Please ensure that you check your account regularly and credit your account with sufficient funds to pay for your child's school lunches. If a debt exceeds one week's school lunches a hot meal cannot be provided until the debt is cleared and the account is in credit.

Thank you for your support in this matter.

Please contact the school office if you think your child may be eligible for free school meals.

REMINDER: Attendance and Requests for Leave of Absence

To support us to secure good attendance for all of our pupils and to address concerns regarding any child's poor school attendance and punctuality, we will be continuing to work with Central School Attendance and Welfare Service Ltd (CSAWS) in 2020-21. Each half term, attendance registers are rigorously scrutinised to identify any attendance issues. This includes children falling below 95% attendance, children who are below 90% attendance and therefore at risk of becoming persistent absentees, children with any unauthorised absence and any punctuality concerns.

Your child may be referred to a CSAWS Attendance and Welfare Officer if their attendance and punctuality is causing concern. They will then contact you by phone, letter or home visit to discuss the school's concerns and how attendance and punctuality can be improved.

Please note, Head Teachers are only allowed to grant leave of absence in **very exceptional circumstances** and where the application has been made **two weeks in advance**. This does not include family holidays. Should you require any further information, or wish to discuss a leave of absence request please contact the school office.

The BASE

Please note that The BASE provides before and after school care and Nursery wrap around care. The BASE is not run by school, but by a completely separate Voluntary Management Committee. If you have any queries regarding this provision, please contact Mrs Tina Coley directly on 01675 443913.

And finally.....

We would like to take this opportunity to reassure you that, despite the challenges we are all facing today, George Fentham Endowed School continues to be a fantastic place to be. Our amazing and hardworking staff have continued to support our children in all aspects of their social,

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emotional and mental health well-being as well as in their academic learning. Our children have quickly settled back in to school life and are making great progress!

On behalf of everyone at George Fentham Endowed School, I wish you and your families an enjoyable half term break and look forward to welcoming the children back on Monday 2nd November 2020.

**Mrs J Gaughan
Head Teacher**