



Newsletter 6 - FEBRUARY 2024

GO GOMER! Well done to **ANNA-LUCIA DIGBY, AMELIA DYKE, SOPHIA DYKE, ELIZA GATERELL and CHLOE SMITH** who were awarded an array of dance awards at the recent Ker-Mel Dance School Awards evening. Several past and present Gomer pupils have their names attached to the trophies and also some staff members...can you guess who?

We love to hear about your children's success outside school. Please inform us so that we can record them here.

We will also continue to celebrate individual successes in our Friday Celebration Assembly.

DATES FOR FEBRUARY: The dates below are for your diary and are also included on the electronic calendar; occasionally they are subject to change		
Ongoing	<i>Arrival to playground from 8:40 am</i>	
	<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;"><i>Start of school day: 8.50 am</i></td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;"><i>End of school day: 3:10 pm</i></td> </tr> </table>	<i>Start of school day: 8.50 am</i>
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Mondays	Y5 PE Day - Pupils to wear PE kit to school Y6 PE Day - Pupils to wear PE kit to school	
Tuesdays	Y4 PE Day - Pupils to wear PE kit to school Y6 PE Day - Pupils to wear PE kit to school <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Service Club (all year groups): 12.00-12.50 ● Lacrosse Club (all year groups): 3.10-4.00 (4.15 after February half term) 	
Wednesdays	Y3 PE Day - Pupils to wear PE kit to school Y5 PE Day - Pupils to wear PE kit to school <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Football Club (Y5/Y6): 3.10-4.00 (4.15 after February half term) ● Netball Club (Y5/Y6): 3.10-4.00 (4.15 after February half term) 	
Thursdays	Y4 PE Day - Pupils to wear PE kit to school <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Choir practice (all year groups): 8.15-8.45 ● Multi-skills Club (Y3/Y4): 3.10-4.00 (4.15 after February half term) ● Girl's Football Club (Y5/Y6): 3.10-4.15 - 'Hopefully' (see below) starting after half-term ● Citizenship Club (Y3/Y4): 3.00-4.30 - This Club involves parental support to take and collect their child from different venues. Events emailed to participants separately ● GFM Pantry: 3.00-3.30pm on the blue playground (stock dependent) 	
Fridays	Y3 PE Day - Pupils to wear PE kit to school	
Tuesday 06 February	Internet Safety Day	
Thursday 08 February	FROGJS Disco - £3.00 Y3 & Y4: 4.15-5.15pm Y5 & Y6: 5.30-6.30pm	
Friday 09 February	INSET day - School closed to children	

Mon 12 – Fri 16 February	HALF TERM WEEK
Monday 19 February	Return to school
Thursday 22 February	Noon - Deadline for ordering Special Lady School Meal - See details below Link to order here
Upcoming dates for March	
Monday 04 March	Special Lady Lunch - See information below and booking link
Thursday 07 March	FROGJS Special Lady Gift Sale (Mothering Sunday - 10 March) - £3 per gift
Thursday 07 March	World Book Day - See information below

AFTER SCHOOL SPORTS CLUBS As the evenings are becoming lighter, the after school sports clubs will finish at 4.15 after the February half term. Children are strongly encouraged to ensure they have 'glo' clothing or attachments to bags so they can be seen when travelling home.

CALPOL supplies in school are for emergency use only. Please do not inform your child that they can just ask for this. If you feel your child may need Calpol during the school day, because of a known ailment, please send a named bottle or sachet, with your consent, to the school office - thank you.

FIELD FLAGS have been introduced to children. These identify the state of the field each day and whether children will be allowed on it at break and lunch times. Green flags in windows identify that the field is good for being one in all types of footwear. Amber flags identify that an additional change of footwear will be required if children wish to play on the field. Red flags indicate that the field is out of action. A 'change of footwear' helps us to avoid soggy feet, but also keeps puddles and mud out of the school building. A 'change of footwear' can include a different pair of sturdy shoes or trainers (PE trainers must be kept dry, and ready for the lesson) or wellies. These can be kept (if named) on the boot racks in classrooms, to save lugging them to and fro each day.

GCLUB, our wraparound child care offer, is popular for many of our families, which is why it is extremely important to book in advance to secure a place for your child(ren). Sessions start at 7:15am and 7:45am in the morning, and to maintain appropriate staff-to-children ratios children must arrive only at the time they have pre-booked in for. Any child attending GClub, without an acknowledged booking, will be charged an additional £10 per session. This will support the costs to pay for additional staff we will require, on the day, to support ratios for the session. Please also remember, that in the afternoon sessions, children must be collected by 5:45pm (Monday - Thursday and 16.30 on a Friday) as the club's staff do not work beyond this point. If you are late a 'late charge' will be paid in order that staff's time is paid.

GIRLS AFTER SCHOOL FOOTBALL CLUB We are hoping to offer this club to Y5/Y6 girls after school on Thursdays. However, this is dependent on volunteer helpers. We would love to start after half-term. We will update you accordingly. However, for this to happen we require some additional capacity from parents/carers to support the running of this club. If you feel you can help or know someone who can, please contact Mrs Lethbridge via the school office.

GOMER APP - (Replacing text messages). Text messages and emails are a significant form of communication for us. However, text messages are not free - unlike emails. Therefore, to reduce text costs, we have had to review our texting protocols. As per the October 2023 Newsletter, we are going to now be even more reliant on the Arbor App as a medium for 'text' communication. Therefore, if you have yet to download the Arbor Parent App you will not receive our 'text' communications and will need to rely solely on accessing your emails. For ease of access, [please follow these instructions](#) to download the Arbor App immediately. **Please note** - inbound replies to the school cannot be sent via the App. Therefore, to contact the school office, please use the email facility or telephone the school office.

GOMER INFANT PLAYGROUND and play equipment **must not** be used by Gomer Junior School pupils before and after the school day. This is at the request of the infant school which we fully support. Despite numerous requests via newsletter and in school children continue to ignore the 'rule' Please work with us to ensure your child is not using the play equipment at drop-off and pick-up times.

HEALTHY SNACKS PLEASE are recommended for our 10.30am morning break. Healthy snacks such as fruit and raw vegetables or low-fat savoury snacks, like pretzels, rice cakes and popcorn are permitted, and preferred rather than crisps or chocolate. Sweets are not permitted.

INTERNET SAFETY DAY helps us to reinforce our Online Safety approach and is something that we are passionate about teaching - empowering our pupils to manage their safety online. Next week, Tuesday 6 February, is Safer Internet Day, and to mark the day, we will be having a whole school assembly on Monday 5 February to remind our pupils why it is important to know how to keep themselves safe online. The online world is ever-evolving, and can be a truly fantastic tool, when used safely. Pupils will also take part in short activities in their classrooms, designed to encourage conversations and share experiences. Whilst it is important to us to educate our pupils, we endeavour to empower our parents and carers to be 'streetwise' about online safety. If you would like some more information, including lots of tips and conversation starters, then please visit the UK Safer Internet [website](#). Please also make sure you are reading and digesting the monthly online safety newsletter that is emailed to you at the beginning of each month.

KING'S GROUP ACADEMY is currently working very closely with the GFM in preparation for us joining their Trust. We were grateful to parents/carers who attended our information drop-in sessions in December. More information can be found [here](#) regarding the trusts merging. Please scroll down the GFM website and look to the right of our CEO's message. Our new Local Governing Body meets for the first time this month.

LATE TO COLLECT We are aware that life happens, which can sometimes see some children being collected beyond the end of the school teaching day. We are grateful for parents who inform us, by phone, that they may be running a few minutes late. When this happens we ask your child to wait in the School Reception. Please note, if the collection runs past 5 minutes your child is likely to be moved into GClub where they can be supervised and entertained to avoid worrying about your late arrival. Please note, you will be charged for this service

LINE UP is a system now also being used in our secondary schools, to ensure children are ready to enter school appropriately, and are ready for learning. Please support us to help pupils practise this process each morning, by encouraging them to stand behind their class cone in an orderly way on the blue playground. They can arrive from 8:40 and will be led in at 8:50. Children should not be running around on the picnic area or multigym, as they should not be using this time as play time. Thank you for your support with this.

MEASLES is not currently circulating in the south-east and this has been confirmed by UKHSA. However, it is wise to be vigilant and aware of symptoms. The NHS website can offer precise information on these. The best protection against measles for children and adults is to get both doses of the MMR vaccine. Children are offered a 2 stage vaccine free on the NHS between the ages of 12 months and 4 years. But you can catch up at any age – if you or your child haven't yet been vaccinated, you should contact your GP practice to book a free appointment.

MOMENTS MATTER, ATTENDANCE COUNTS you will have seen, in the news recently, the Government's national drive to improve school attendance. **Improving school attendance is everyone's business and, to tackle the challenge we face, we need to work together.** Did you know:

- In 2018/19, only 40% of those persistently absent (PA) children in KS2 achieved expected KS2 standards, compared with 84% of pupils who were regular attenders.
- And only 36% of PA children in KS4 got 9 to 4 in their English and maths GCSEs, compared with 84% of regular attenders.
- Regular school attendance can also facilitate positive peer relationships, which is a protective factor for mental health and wellbeing.

At Gomer, we support this drive! We are keen to maintain or increase our current annual school attendance of 96%! With thanks to families for valuing school and working with us at times of absence.

PARKING SAFELY & WITH COURTESY helps the whole community. We are aware that it can be tricky to park around the school site. A reminder please, that vehicles should NOT be parked over drives or non-parking areas. Wherever possible, please encourage children to walk, cycle or scoot to school. If it is not possible to walk or scoot all the way, please consider leaving home a little earlier so you can park a small distance away from school.

PASTORAL AND INCLUSION WEBSITE SUPPORT PAGE Exciting news! We have launched a dedicated Inclusion and Pastoral Team Support Page to enhance the well-being of our school community. This page features valuable resources, including links to mental health support for both children and families. You can explore resources curated to assist in navigating various aspects of mental health. Additionally, you can find links to external agencies that could offer specialised support where needed. Your child's well-being is our priority, and this page aims to empower families with the tools and information to foster a supportive environment. Please click here to visit the page. Go to the Homepage, click on the Our School drop-down menu and hover over the title Inclusion and Pastoral support to see the menu:

- [Our school approach](#)
- [Mental Health](#)
- [What we offer](#)
- [Professional Support](#)

SPECIAL LADY LUNCH has been scheduled for **Monday 4 March** so that children, if they wish, can share lunch with that 'special lady' in their life – grandparent, mother, godmother, auntie, family friend - whoever that special lady might be. These lunch events have been very successful in the past and we hope to see many special ladies joining us again this year. Special Ladies wishing to join this event should complete [this form](#) to take part, which includes further details regarding the process for ordering lunch. Please note that to take part in this event we must receive a reply **by Tuesday 22 February**, as the supply of food needs to be ordered in advance. Meals are charged at £2.80 and can be paid for on SCOPAY under PRODUCTS (or drop in the correct cash in a named sealed envelope). Please note that meal choices **CANNOT BE CHANGED** on the day once ordered. Once your child and their special lady have eaten, they are invited to stay and play outside if the weather is fine. However, if we experience a wet play, we may have to ask Special Ladies to leave after they have eaten due to limited space inside the school.

STAFF MATTER and we are delighted that Mrs Guyett-Smith is our new Year 3 Class Teacher, in the newly renamed class 3GS. We are grateful that she has been able to move from Year 6 in the long-term absence of the children's former teacher. Mrs Guyett-Smith was delighted to meet with parents/carers a few weeks ago. Aware of the positive impact she was having with Year 6 learners, we have enabled her to continue delivering 1-1 and small group tutoring in Year 6 on a Tuesday afternoon. Our Assistant Head Teachers are now also providing some additional Maths and English sessions for those children in Year 6 who require it during afternoon sessions in the week, so that children's learning is not affected by this staffing change. We will say goodbye to Charlie Clarke this half term, who is a member of our Service Support Team. She will be leaving the GFM to start a new job in early February. We wish her all the best in her new role.

STEM RETURNER PROGRAMME Opportunities to return to a career in Engineering, Science or Technology with the STEM Returner Programme. Have you taken a career break from an engineering or a technical sector and wish to return? Are you working below your experience in a different sector? Do you have an engineering or technical degree that you aren't using? Do you just wish to transfer sectors but don't have any experience? If so this could be the opportunity for you! After the success of our pilot programme with AWE we are currently sourcing candidates for their second 'STEM Returners' campaign. All candidates not only get to take a different route to finding a new role, they will also have the opportunity to obtain free support and advice from our career coach and industry Mentors who support them right from interview through to navigating the first 12 months in your role. No career break is too long, register to return to STEM today! For more information please visit [AWE - STEM Returners](#) or email jazmine.gouldbourne@stemreturners.com.

TIMES TABLES are really important. Memorising times tables makes it far quicker and easier for children to work out maths problems in their heads. Moving beyond using their fingers to work out answers, they'll be able to use their knowledge to quickly solve any multiplication questions. Please encourage your child to log into TTRS to practise their times tables weekly at least. This is particularly important for Year 3 and Year 4. Year 4 have a national assessment in June. The test requires them to answer each question in 4 seconds. TTRS is part of their weekly home learning tasks and can be found on the Gomer Portal. It has been proven that those children who practise regularly feel more confident in maths lessons in general.

WORLD BOOK DAY this year is on Thursday 07 March and as always we are keen to encourage the children to be enthusiastic readers, book owners and book borrowers. We have lots of exciting activities planned for WBD including a Big Booky Bake off where we would like to invite all families and staff on the day to create and bring in cakes and bakes with the themes of their favourite books. Money raised from selling these cakes for 50p each, will go to updating some of our classroom reading resources. If children would like to dress themselves or one of their dolls/teddies/characters as

a character from **a book** on this day then they are welcome to do so. Dressing up is not obligatory and school uniforms can be worn if your child does not wish to dress up. Year groups have adapted their timetable and will use the day to immerse children into the exciting world of books. Book tokens will be made available to your child on the day. More information to follow.

YOU SAID/WE DID Following an enquiry into smart watches we have revisited our approach to the wearing of jewellery. The uniform section of our website has been updated with the following (new wording in bold):

*'With the exception of a single or a pair of stud earrings in pierced ears or **a digital or analogue watch**, children should not wear jewellery to school. **Fitness trackers are welcomed for time telling and the tracking of 'steps'**. **Smart Watches, which are camera and internet-enabled are not permitted in school due to the possible distraction that these devices can pose. Any misuse (e.g. playing a game that some are enabled with) will lead to them not being permitted in school.** The school cannot accept any responsibility or liability for mislaid personal jewellery. To help keep your child safe, earrings **and watches** need to be removed for PE.' **Therefore, you may wish to advise your child not to wear these on PE days.'***