



# Garswood Primary School

Hamilton Road, Garswood,  
St. Helens WN4 0SF

18<sup>th</sup> December 2015

Dear Parent/Carer,

Once again I find myself at this time of year, wondering how time seems to pass us by so quickly. Looking back over the last 12 months really makes me realise how much can change and how important it is to treasure these special times with our families and friends. Today in our special assembly we talked about the true meaning of Christmas and the importance of giving the gift of time, to value each other, our families and friends.

It certainly has been a fun week with super parties and festive fun. All of the children enjoyed themselves and filled up on the generous donations from families - thank you kindly to those able to send in treats. Infant children also had a visit from the big man himself who gave a lovely gift to each child. Reception and nursery children also had a visit on Thursday from a Mischievous Gnome! She was spreading happiness and spreading silly string and wrapping paper! I was delighted to see so many parents join us at our carolling at the end of the school day - 'spreading Christmas cheer by singing loud for all to hear!' This year to be also joined by Kiera Weathers was a special treat! Thank you to Grace in Year 5 for writing and requesting her visit the school.

As the year draws to an end we can reflect on the successes. Garswood Primary School has much to celebrate and continues to achieve excellence in many different ways. I thank you for the support you show to the school and to the staff. The league tables are now available and I'm delighted and extremely proud that once again Garswood Primary School is near the top in every area measured. We have the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest Average Point Score in St Helens. We are 4<sup>th</sup> in the pupils attaining a combined level 4B in reading, writing and maths and the highest - **top of the tables** - for children attaining a combined level 5 in all subjects - above what is expected at their age. Out of more than 55 schools in St. Helens - this is an outstanding achievement.

However, results are easy to measure. More difficult to quantify are the achievements children have made personally. This last year I have seen this more and more. Our children show such courage and determination at times and I am so proud of their commitment and enthusiasm. Whenever our children represent our school at events, they do so with pride and exuberance, and exemplify the qualities that we value so dearly at Garswood.

I hope you join with me in recognising the wonderful opportunities that the children have had this year so far. We have launched Forest Schools across the school with children experiencing outdoor learning like never before. The children have had a performance from Key Strings in a special monarchy day developing their understanding of British values. We have engaged in commemorative events where the children have shown such respect and regard for our fallen heroes. We've also continued to develop our learning challenge curriculum, with new and interesting themes and topics and school trips and visitors to enrich learning. We have baked and cooked and we've raised an enormous amount for charity most especially during our Children in Need event. We've provided countless after school clubs and numerous events including, the Christmas Lights Switch on in the town centre, Sing it at Parish church, and other local concerts. In sport, we have even won an Archery tournament. The school continues to improve. Now offering a superb nursery provision we can provide more to the community of Garswood and opportunities to children at an even younger age.

Over the year, the staff have volunteered their time and given above and beyond to ensure our children have outstanding opportunities. We have a fantastic team who care for each and every one of your children and give such a huge amount. I have said it before and it's so true - working at Garswood is not a job - it's a lifestyle! I am truly privileged to lead such a superb team.

On a different note - over the last 16 months I have been supporting another local school, as Executive Head teacher at Ashurst Primary School - who over the year have moved from Ofsted grade 'Requiring Improvement' to now being judged a 'Good' school. As they move onto their next chapter and have appointed their new Head teacher I am now returning to dedicate myself solely to Garswood and continue to work towards our goal of being judged an outstanding school.

We have many events already planned for the New Year. I'm especially excited for the Harry Potter evening in February and the Shakespeare week in January. After Christmas I'm also delighted to welcome Mrs Lucy Myatt back from her maternity leave. Though as she is only returning part time at the moment she will be supporting Y6 children as they work towards their SATs in May before returning full time to teach Y4 later in the year.

We also welcome Mr Steven Baker who has joined us today as our new caretaker. He has been helping out recently and is soon to become a familiar face greeting the children on the gate in the morning. Thank you also to our Child Governors in Y5/6 who played a part in the interviewing process.

We have decided not to have homework over the Christmas holiday period as we recognise what a busy time it is. However, I've attached to this letter a challenge for the children - something fun to try over the festive period.

Finally, as we look back on our successes and look forward to further achievements in the coming year, on behalf of the staff and children, thank you for all your support and hard work - and for your kindness - your positive feedback is always appreciated and it's lovely to hear how you value the school and the staff. I would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and may 2016 bring you good health and happiness.

Kind regards,

*Pamela Potter*

Pamela Potter  
Head teacher

**Roots of happiness, branches to learning.**

Head teacher: Pamela Potter BA (Hons) QTS NPQH PQSI

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