

Great Easton C of E (Aided) Primary School
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Headteacher: Claire Jackman

Dear Parents/Carers

Governors' letter to parents: carpark and school day

Carpark congestion at drop off and pick up times, as many of you are aware, is a problem. Concerns have been raised by parents about safety in the carpark. These add weight to the continuing concerns staff and governors have about child and parent safety. The yellow 'safe' walk way continues frequently to be ignored and parked on.

Some parents are showing an ongoing disregard for the safety of others.

We have with Miss Jackman discussed this at some length and we wish to remind you of some points and to explore options to improve matters.

1. Parking should be in the allocated bays *only* and the yellow safe walk area *must* be left clear.
2. When using the carpark please leave as swiftly as you are able to allow others to enter.
3. Consider using the walking bus*, which leaves/collects from the village hall. The morning drop-off times have been extended (8.15-8.30) to make this a more attractive option.
4. Most significantly, we are making an adjustment to the school day (i.e. times), initially as a trial for the half-term until Christmas, with the intention of making it permanent in 2019.

From Monday 5 November, Reception and Key Stage 1 (Mrs Delaney/Lawrence's and Miss Wilson's classes) will finish at 3 pm, with Key Stage 2 remaining at 3.15. Therefore, R/KS1 parents collecting their children from the school will be able to do so at 3 pm, the intention being that those coming by car will then depart shortly afterwards and this will spread carpark demand.

Exceptions would be R/KS1 children (a) with siblings in KS2, (b) taking the vehicular or walking buses or (c) attending KidsClub/an afterschool club that day, who will remain in class until 3.15 and will continue with teacher supervised activities.

The expectation from Monday 5 November is that, aside from the above exceptions, R/KS1 children will be collected at 3 pm. If this presents difficulties for you, with regard to leaving work in time, then please advise the office.

The governors will review the trial on Monday 3 December. We invite your feedback by that date so we can make a decision on the permanency of the arrangement before the end of the term. Please send feedback to the main admin@greateaston.essex.sch.uk email, or catch me informally in the playground, I am there most mornings with the walking bus.

We encourage you to take advantage of the walking bus, to collect R/KS1 children at 3 pm and when using the carpark to do so responsibly.

If the situation does not improve then our ultimate recourse is to shut the carpark to parents. Schools are not obligated to provide parent parking and most of the local schools do not provide this facility. This is action we would regretfully, but necessarily, take.

I hope you will support the school in keeping all our children safe, which is our number one priority.

With regards, and on behalf of the full governing body.



Jeremy Toynbee
Chair of governors

*For those unaware and as a reminder, the walking bus is an excellent service run by a pool of parents and organised by Jo Badley. It escorts children to and from the village hall in the main village across the two fields behind the school. Drop off is between 8.15-8.30 am and collection is at 3.30 pm. Particularly useful for working/busy parents it allows you to drop off 15 mins earlier than at the school and to collect 15 mins later, and saves you from the hassle of negotiating the school carpark.

Look out for the team in yellow high-vis bibs at the village hall. In the mornings, there is no need to book a place, we wait til 8.30 and escort all who arrive. For home time, however, please do advise the school office if you change from collecting yourself so your child is directed to the walking bus at the end of the day.

It operates in all weathers, and so children need to be dressed suitably and will need wellies in the autumn/winter and to bring their shoes in the bags. Children needing a bit of help are assisted with changing in to their shoes by the walking bus team, who see them safely in to the playground. It is suitable for all ages, we currently have Receptions through to Year 6.

I am biased being one of the walking bus team, but I think it is an excellent way to start the day. The short walk in the fresh air wakes up those still sleepy (often me!), ensuring all are ready for a day of learning and fun.