

Every day in school is different. We do not know what is behind each door. While we understand the structure, the buildings and the general method of delivery (remote learning aside! how our everyday interactions play out is different. This is unlike many jobs. For the vast majority of our colleagues it is this variety that is essential in helping us through the term. The extra set of books to mark, the census details to return, the trips finance spreadsheet, these all take considerable personal energy and resolve to turn around. We are assisted by the variety and spark of school life. Many colleagues refer to this as one of the pleasures of the job.

As we progress through this academic year's advent calendar. Let us try to treasure every door. Each daily spark, often led by the children we serve, which helps add a little awe and wonder to our world. We all curse (under our breath) the trials and tribulations at times, but in truth we wouldn't have it any other way. These windows and doors into school life make our profession unique, demanding, exhausting... but ultimately rewarding. No day is like any other.. and that helps us to keep getting up. Keep providing our best. Keep providing our little piece of wonder into children's lives.

Actions for Governors and Trustees:

Trustees and governors are reminded that they have access to The Key [for school governors](#) and [trust leaders](#). The Key provides online resources and advice on the governance and the operation of schools. Of particular interest is The Key's [new governor induction online training](#).

School Improvement Update:

Mental health and well-being

There is an article which featured in the latest edition of the Confederation of School Trust's journals to which we would like to draw your attention. It is relating to the impact of the pandemic on well-being and what schools can do to support mental health. You can view this article [here](#). This is supported by an evidence-based framework for schools published by the Anna Freud Centre – [5 Steps to mental health and well-being](#).

There is also a toolkit available to help teachers and pupils reflect on 2020 and manage any end of term anxieties, produced by Mentally Healthy Schools. Please [click here](#) to access and download. Included in this toolkit are resources to support the wellbeing of staff and parents and carers during this time.

Congratulations

We would like to congratulate Loseley Fields, who will be marking the completion of their newly built Field Study Centre (funded by SCA) by holding a day of science.



They have been working with George Abbot's Science Learning Partnership to organise a day of both virtual and physical science workshops for all the children across the school. Many local organisations such as the Royal Grammar School, University of Surrey, Surrey Wildlife Trust, Roots for the Future, local STEM Ambassadors and WWF-UK are contributing to the day. The programme is jam-packed with inspirational and engaging activities.

Congratulations also to the pupils of Guildford Grove Lighthouse Specialist Centre and to Ella Anderson-Bassey, a year 8 student from Fullbrook who won the Christmas card competition. They will be presented with prizes next week and will have their designs featured on the GEP Christmas card.

School Operations:

Network Team Update - December Teams Training

As stated in the bulletin sent out on 9th November we are progressing well with the implementation of Microsoft Teams and last week the GEP invested in an automated Teams system that will export the timetable from Sims and populate Teams groups of staff and students for our secondary schools. If you would like your school to receive virtual training from a member of the Network Team please let me know on bsayers@gepacademies.com. Two of our schools have already signed up to have training on the January inset, please let me know if your school would like to join in.

Primary School Safeguarding Monitoring

Over the last month we have improved the internet monitoring in our primary schools by extending the current web filtering setup to provide enhanced monitoring and reporting. The system works by monitoring students on a computer and analyses their searches and web access - this is normal web filtering and has been in place for some time. In addition to this, the new system monitors for two blocked categories and once the rule is triggered, two members of the Network Team are alerted. We can then inform the member of teaching staff and the safeguarding team. This is an excellent safeguarding feature that will allow us to monitor if a student attempts to access inappropriate websites or searches for something from a predetermined keyword list and will function similarly to the Securus systems we have in place in our Secondary schools.

Cyber Security

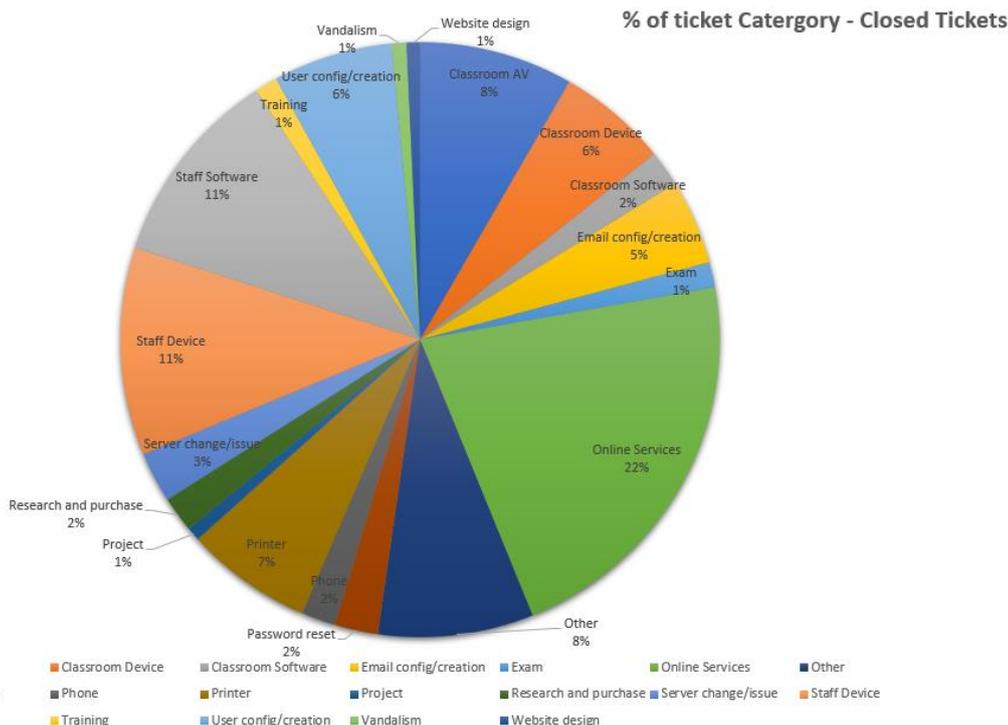
Due to the increased number of scam emails, we have put together a monthly cyber security update. This is incredibly important for all staff to please review and watch out for, please see the below PDF and keep a watchful eye out for scam emails.

<https://www.gepacademies.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Cyber-Security-GEP-Dec20.pdf>

Helpdesk update - December

In November, the Network Team had an increase of 16% in the number of tickets opened over October, with 1060 tickets opened. The Network Team have worked hard and closed 1241 tickets, many of which have been projects taking multiple months to finish, which is an increase of 26% over November's closed tickets.

Moving forward with our helpdesk updates we would like to provide further information into the breakdown of the type of tickets closed by the team, creating ticket categories helps us understand where common issues and trends can be found so we can understand where the team needs to provide high quality technical support to assist teaching and learning.



During lockdown, Online Services requests have increased dramatically. This is due to the increase in home learning and further use of more online systems within our schools. Next month we are splitting the Online Services category to provide further understanding of the challenges we face and allow us to spot trends quicker.

As always, we please ask that you log any issues or queries in helpdesk by emailing: networkhelpdesk@gepacademies.com

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Jack's visits and meetings this week:

AST/GEP Joint executive meeting	07.12.20	10:00 – 11:00
Audit committee	07.12.20	16:00 – 18:00
Kings school visit (virtual)	08.12.20	08:30 – 09:30
SuMS working group	08.12.20	11:00 – 12:00
SuMS project meeting	08.12.20	14:30 – 16:00
Kings GLAC meeting	08.12.20	16:00 – 18:00
Loseley Field Science event	10.12.20	09:00 – 10:00
Guildford Grove school visit (virtual)	10.12.20	11:00 – 12:00
Meeting with RSC	10.12.20	12:00 – 13:00
MAT leaders event	10.12.20	13:30 – 15:30
Fullbrook school visit (virtual)	11.12.20	08:00 – 09:00
Exec team meeting	11.12.20	10:00 – 12:00
SCC Admissions team	11.12.20	13:00 – 14:00