



West Dean CE Primary School

We do our best in all we do, with God's love.

'Love one another. As I have loved you, so must you love one another.' John 13



Newsletter 4 25.09.26

Our whole school attendance this week is **96.8%**.

Don't forget to check out Rev Sarah's Rector's Rambling this week, which can be viewed by [CLICKING HERE](#).

*This week's winning
House Team is
Kestrel
with 156 points
Well done everyone
Great effort!*



It was lovely to celebrate Harvest together in church this morning and to give thanks for the plentiful food we enjoy and the wonder of creation.

Thank you for joining us if you were able and thank you to everyone for your generous donations in support of Chichester Foodbank.

Earlier this week I shared some figures from our local foodbank with the children and I think it surprised them. Between April 2025 and March 2026, 5721 people were fed by the foodbank, 39% of whom were children. The children were astonished at the level of need in our local area, as so often we are all guilty of thinking that food poverty is something that happens on the news, elsewhere in the world. Thank you again; your donations, not just this week, but every time we have a Foodbank Friday, really do make a difference to people's lives.



Please could we politely request that you find alternative parking for the afternoon of **Monday 28th September**.

There is a wake at The Selsey Arms and their car park will be full. Thank you.



Our good manners in school also extends to our lunch time provision and we would like to ask, when you sit down

together at mealtimes, you gently remind your children about their table manners and practice using cutlery with them.



Don't forget, you can follow us on Instagram. [@westdeanceprimary](#)



'Squishies' in school

You may or may not be aware of the current popularity of soft malleable toys known as 'squishies' amongst children. We have seen an increasing number of these coming into school and need to raise a potential safety concern with you and request that you do not allow your children to bring these in anymore.

Some of these toys, particularly the "Squeezy Dumplings" that come in the small brown/basket-style containers, have been product recalled from the market due to being hazardous and potentially carcinogenic.

The official product recall information on these particular Squeezy Dumplings (product recall reference 2606-0196) shows that they were recalled by the Office for Product Safety and Standards in June 2026 because they were found to contain an excess concentration of benzene in the outer layer. The recall classifies the product as presenting a serious chemical risk, and the official advice is for owners to stop using the product and keep it out of reach of children.

'The UK Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) issued a **serious-risk recall on 25 June 2026** for *Squeezy Dumplings* sold by Samsons Cash and Carry. Testing found **20 mg/kg of benzene in the outer layer**, and the product does not meet the Toys (Safety) Regulations 2011. The official advice is to stop using the product and keep it away from children.'

We know that some children love 'squishies' in general but they are *all* actually quite dangerous in terms of chemicals, and, as we have seen in school have a tendency to burst without warning, causing distress for the child, a mess and releasing unknown chemicals.

Please do not allow your child to bring any type of these toys into school. I also advise that you check the safety rating and source of your child's toys if they have their own squishies. If your child has an acknowledged need for a fiddle toy, agreed with their class teacher, the teacher will advise on an alternative for use in class.

After School 'Stay & Play' - please help us to help you.

Over the past few years, it has been really lovely to see an increasing number of families opting to stay for a little while at the end of the day to enable their children to play together and enjoy our lovely school grounds. We are truly blessed with a spacious school field and natural surroundings and are entirely supportive of 'stay & play' remaining in place.

As a school, we have a number of measures in place to ensure that your children are safe each day, throughout their time in school, including whenever they are outside, there being appropriate adult supervision and dare I say it, intervention, where play becomes a little too rough or unsafe.

Unfortunately, we are unable to provide this supervision at the end of the school day, as staff will have either reached the end of their working hours or will be engaged in meetings, training, running clubs or the important job of preparing for your child's return the next day.

For stay & play to continue, this supervision responsibility falls to you as parents. Please keep the following in mind if you are remaining on site to play with your child:

- All use of the trim trail must be supervised by an adult close by who is actually watching the activity.
- The top field can be used for ball games only and again must be supervised by an adult who is actually on the top field with the children, rather than half observing from a distance.
- Children should not be allowed to climb gates, fences or trees - this is not permitted during the school day and the children know this!
- Unless part of an organised and supervised club activity, bicycles should not be ridden on site - it is too busy and there are too many little bodies around for this to be completely safe.
- Any play equipment used should be tidied away by the family who has used it, not discarded on the floor.
- Dogs must be on a lead and under adult control at ALL times and any mess is hygienically cleared immediately and taken off-site.
- Please leave promptly when the bell is rung at 3.20pm. We have a safeguarding responsibility to lock and secure the site for children staying for clubs and after-school care.

We really want everyone to feel welcome to enjoy play in their school and for families to enjoy the opportunity to connect, but ask that you respect our professional role in keeping everyone safe whilst on the school site. Thank you.





Friends Meeting

Wednesday 23rd September, 2.30pm

Our first 'Friends' meeting of the year was held this week. We have some new year group reps who will be in touch with you very soon, through class 'WhatsApp' groups to the rest of the school community.

We have made a good start with our event planning for fundraising for the coming year.

One of the topics for discussion was our school participation in the West Dean Christmas Market. This proved to be an extremely valuable fundraising event for our school last year, but to run a stall over two full days again this year, we will need significant help from parents and families.

Please see the Christmas Wreath banner on this page for details of this year's **Friends wreath making event on Monday 30th November**. Please do sign up for this now if you are interested. There are 25 spaces available, to us at the moment, but it will be advertised to our wider community and on social media.

Friends Film Night - Wednesday 4th November

Friends Christmas Disco - Thursday 17th December



Apple Class Plea

We are desperately in need of some spare pants in Apple Class, just in case of little accidents! Boys and girls, any pants very gratefully received. Thank you!

Create a beautiful Wreath to take home

Enjoy Festive drinks

Mince pies and Biscuits

A wonderful Christmas atmosphere

£45 per person

Booking open on Arbor to our West Dean Families

CHRISTMAS

Wreath Making Workshops

MONDAY 30TH NOVEMBER

11am & 7pm

Brought to you by
West Dean School PTA & Friends

Book here



11am Session

**FARBRIDGE
BINDERTON
CHICHESTER
PO18 0JT**

Book here



7pm Session



*West Dean CE Primary School
Acorn Awards
Thursday 24th September 2026*



- Year R - Jackson for being such a kind friend, being kind, helpful and showing love to all.*
- Year 1 - Hettie for a fantastic week of learning. You have worked so hard and completed some excellent writing, showing real joy in your learning.*
- Year 2 - Zephryn for your wonderful enthusiasm with everything we do. You try very hard with your Learning and produced some great writing about Hamish the cat this week. You are super helpful and thoughtful to others.*
- Year 3 - Delilah for being passionate and excited about our Stone Age topic. You have written a beautiful diary entry as if you had woken up in the Stone Age. it was an engaging read and your ideas were spectacular!*
- Year 4 - Freddie for showing joy in Beech Class. You did an amazing job as our first prayer monitor and you are always showing such excitement and enthusiasm in your learning.*
- Year 5 - Holly you are always spotted for being kind to others and supporting them in their learning as well as always giving your best in all you do too!*
- Year 6 - Conran for stepping up and being a Year 6 role model - what a great start. Keep it up!*





Let's Talk About Our Kids & Their Tech

This session, Let's Talk About Our Kids & Their Tech, offers parents and carers clear, research-backed insights and practical strategies for managing children's mental health and tech use. It covers the impact of smartphones and social media, helping families set healthy boundaries and make informed choices. The session is non-judgmental, open for honest discussion, and for adults only.

**ONLINE workshop on
Wednesday 21st October at 7.30pm**

Link to be circulated closer to the time!

Papaya have already been to Fishbourne to lead both a children's and parent workshop – this workshop is appropriate for parents of children of all ages.

"The talk is so relevant, full of insight and eye-opening. You will walk away inspired to connect, reflect, and find out more. I highly recommend it."

Claire Curtis, parent and SFC volunteer.



**To the children and families
of West Dean and Singleton schools,**

The Valley Parish welcomes all pupils back to school after what we hope was a FUN-FILLED summer! We particularly welcome all new families, whether joining in Year R or later in the school.

As pupils of Singleton and West Dean Schools, you are a part of the Valley Parish Church Family and we would LOVE to see you at one of our Sunday services.

The pattern of services is:

First Sunday (6th September)

10AM, East Dean, Worship + Communion

Second Sunday (13th September)

10AM, Singleton, Worship + Communion

Third Sunday (20th September)

10AM, West Dean, Worship + Communion

Fourth Sunday (27th September)

11AM, West Dean, Children's Church

Every Fourth Sunday, we host Children's Church at West Dean which is 30 minutes of worship, games, stories and songs. There is also cake and coffee before the service to chat and get to know the Valley Parish community.

In September, we will be celebrating the Harvest Festival at Children's Church and thanking God for all we have. We hope you can join us and would LOVE to see you there.

Rev. Sarah Manouch
priestvalley.parish@gmail.com

Bookfest visiting authors

We have been lucky enough to secure dates with visiting authors, as part of Bookfest 2026. Wednesday 7th October for Apple and Maple: Gareth P Jones with the book 'Chicken Vs Egg' and Thursday 8th October for Beech and Chestnut: Kieran Larwood with the book 'Jed Greenleaf'. In addition to an exciting author visit each child will receive a copy of the book.

In the past we have been able to fund this through school but this year, as finances are so squeezed, we would like to request a donation from parents towards the cost of this. A payment will be set up on Arbor to enable parents to make a suggested contribution of £4.20 per child.

Thank you for your support with this, we know that this will be a valuable experience for our children.



CHILDREN'S BOOKFEST

Mrs Anstee's Lunch Time Choir:

In preparation for a performance at West Dean Christmas Market Mrs Anstee will be running a lunch time choir club. Dates will be every Thursday lunch time between 1st October and 26th November. If your child would like to take part, come along and join in. The children will be learning Christmas songs and Carols.

Christmas Markets Choir slots:

Friday 27th November:
3.30-4.00.

Saturday 28th November:
2.00-2.30.





**THE VALE
BALLET
CLUB**

Where little dancers grow in confidence

A fun and friendly ballet class designed especially for children aged 4–11 years.

2 AGE GROUPS | EVERY MONDAY

4–6 YEARS	7–11 YEARS
16:00 – 16:45 (45 MINS)	17:00 – 17:45 (45 MINS)

£50
FOR 6 WEEKS

EARLY BIRD OFFER
£45
UNTIL MONDAY 31ST AUGUST

USE CODE: BALLET5

STARTS
MONDAY
14TH SEPTEMBER

6 WEEK TERMS
BUILD SKILLS
AND CONFIDENCE

LIMITED TO
15 SPACES
PERSONAL
ATTENTION

PARENTS CAN
RELAX IN
COMFORT IN
OUR CAFE

Book your place online!
BOOKING ESSENTIAL
www.thevalecafestudio.co.uk/ballet-club



SCS
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Trusted services,
quality coaching

**WEST DEAN CE PRIMARY SCHOOL
AFTER SCHOOL CLUB**

MULTI SPORTS | Y2 - Y6
FRIDAYS 3PM - 4PM

BOOK ONLINE: www.southcoastsports.org.uk OR via iPAL

Caterlink

We have had a good start to the term with our new catering provider, Caterlink. The meals are freshly cooked each day and delivered in for lunch time. The system is running smoothly and the children are enjoying the new choices of food. Please do have a look and give it go, meals can be ordered through ParentPay. You will have been sent a welcome message inviting you to set up an account for your child.

UFSM

Children in Apple and Maple class are entitled to UFSM. This means that they may have a free school meal each day. These meals do need to be ordered through ParentPay, in advance. Please be aware that if you have ordered a meal school will be charged for it. If your child brings a packed lunch please remember to cancel your ordered meal. This will save waste and will save the school money.



Dear Parents and Carers,

The government recognises the benefits of providing a healthy school meal to the most disadvantaged pupils.

From the start of the 2026 to 2027 academic year, all children attending school, from households in receipt of Universal Credit will be entitled to receive a free meal.

There will be two categories of benefits-based free school meals:

- **Targeted FSM**, which continues to be based on the existing threshold, covering pupils in households in receipt of Universal Credit with annual household earnings of £7,400 or less.
- **Expanded FSM**, a new category covering pupils who do not qualify for targeted FSM, but who are in households receiving Universal Credit.

Who is eligible for benefits-based free school meals?

From the start of the 2026 to 2027 academic year, FSM eligibility has been expanded to all children from households in receipt of Universal Credit regardless of household earnings. Free school meals are available to pupils in receipt of, or whose parents are in receipt of, one or more of the following benefits:

- Universal Credit
- support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

A pupil is only eligible to receive a free school meal where both:

- a claim for this support has been made
- their eligibility has been verified by the school where they are enrolled or by the local authority

Households may also be entitled to a meal if they:

- are in receipt of income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- receive the guarantee element of Pension Credit
- meet criteria set out in separate guidance for [families with no recourse to public funds](#)

If you think this applies to your child, you can apply on-line:

<https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/education-children-and-families/schools-and-colleges/free-school-meals/#how-to-apply>

If your child is currently in receipt of FSM, they will continue to receive this but you will need to re-apply to be eligible for either targeted or expanded FSM. Please do let us know if you need any assistance with the application process.



CHICHESTER CITY

18 73

FOOTBALL CLUB

CHICHESTER CITY

GIRLS U11s

(CURRENT YR 5/6)

WE'RE LOOKING FOR A

GOALKEEPER



KEEN GOALKEEPER

IDEALLY WITH PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE



TRAINING:

TUESDAY EVENINGS

6-7PM

AT CHICHESTER FOOTBALL CLUB



GAMES:

SATURDAY MORNINGS



MESSAGE SEAN FOR MORE INFO:

07971 824541



Pirate Day Lunch



Thursday 1st October 2026

~ MENU ~

Crispy Coated Chicken or Veggie Dippers

Chips, Baked Beans, Peas & Tomato Ketchup

Mini Doughnuts & Fruit

Also available: Jacket Potato with Fillings, Salad Bar, Homemade Bread & Yoghurt







Get more out of what you're into!

Writing Workshop

For ages 11-14



Join an award-winning YA author, Nicola Garrard, for two hours of dedicated writing time, publishing insight and discussion.

Bring your ideas, poetry and stories and get personal feedback, next steps and encouragement.

Free, but places are limited. Please book your place online.



Scan to find out more!

The Novium Museum

Saturday 14 November | 10.15am - 12.15pm

Tower Street, Chichester, PO19 1QH

GO ALL IN.




INSET Days in 2026/27:

Autumn: Tuesday 1st September 2026 (school closure), Wednesday 2nd September

Spring: Monday 4th January 2027, Friday 5th February 2027 (NB: not aligned with the half term break)

Monday 22nd February 2027 (aligned with half term break)

Summer: Wednesday 21st July 2027



Autumn Term 2026: Thursday 3rd September - Friday 18th December 2026

Half Term: Monday 26th October - Friday 30th October 2026

Sunday 27th September	11.00, Harvest Service in West Dean Church. Monday 28th September Open the Book, whole school assembly
Monday 28th September	Open the Book Assembly in School
Tuesday 29th September	6.30-7.15, Westbourne House Swim (selected children)
Thursday 1st October	Bishop Luffa whole school worship
Thursday 1st October	3.00-4.00, Matt Horstead's Football Club, Dance Club with Ellie Holder Lunchtime Choir
Tuesday 6th October	6.30-7.15, Westbourne House Swim (selected children)
Wednesday 7th October	Bookfest Author visit, Apple and Maple. Gareth P Jones, 'Chicken Vs Egg'
Thursday 8th October	Bookfest Author visit, Beech and Chestnut. Kieran Larwood 'Jed Greenleaf'
Thursday 8th October	3.00 - 4.00, Dance Club with Ellie Holder (no football club) Lunchtime Choir
Monday 12th October	Flu Vaccination Sessions in school for all children (Closing date for consent 08.10.26)
Thursday 15th October	3.00-4.00, Matt Horstead's Football Club, Dance Club with Ellie Holder Lunchtime Choir

Friday 16th October	Foodbank Friday (please bring in donations for Chichester Foodbank)
Monday 19th October	Open the Book, whole school assembly
Tuesday 20th October	Perform Drama Workshop, Apple and Maple in school
Tuesday 20th October	3.00 - 5.30, Parent Consultation Evening - whole school
Wednesday 21st October	3.00 - 6.00, Parent Consultation Evening - whole school
Thursday 22nd October	Chestnut Class visit to The Royal Courts of Justice in London
Thursday 22nd October	3.00-4.00, Matt Horstead's Football Club, Dance Club with Ellie Holder Lunchtime Choir



Monday 26th - Friday 30th October - Half Term

Tuesday 3rd November	Hugo Van Driel - whole school assembly
Wednesday 4th November	3.00 - 5.00, Friends Film Night - Details tbc
Thursday 5th November	3.00 - 4.00, Matt Horstead's Football Club (Team selection only) Lunchtime Choir
Thursday 5th November	'Raise your Voice' - Beech Class Music Project, details to follow
Thursday 5th November	Bishop Luffa Worship in School
Monday 9th November	Open the Book, whole school assembly
Tuesday 10th November	Chestnut Class visit to Bishop Luffa for TED Talks
Wednesday 11th November	Remembrance Assembly in school
Thursday 12th November	Yellow School Photographs (Individual and Sibling)
Thursday 12th November	3.00 - 4.00, Matt Horstead's Football Club (Team selection only)
Thursday 19th November	Bishop Luffa Worship in School
Friday 20th November	Children in Need (details to follow) - Whole School Wellbeing Walk to West Dean Gardens
Friday 27th/Saturday 28th Nov	West Dean Christmas Market (Friends stall and choir) Details to follow
Monday 30th November	'Friends' Wreath Making event at Farbridge, 11.00am and 7.00pm. (See poster for details)
Monday 30th November	Open the Book Assembly in School
Thursday 3rd December	Christingle Making in School
Thursday 3rd December	Bishop Luffa Worship in School
Friday 4th December	Christingle Service in School