



West Dean Church of England Primary School
West Dean, Chichester, West Sussex, PO18 0RJ
Telephone: 01243 811247



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 8 03.11.23

Don't forget Rev Sarah's 'Rectors Ramble' which can be found at: <http://thevalleyparish.org/from-the-vicar>

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back, I hope that you enjoyed some quality family time during the half term break. Thank you for your patience during the unsettled weather this week. It is always challenging to predict what the weather is going to do and make the right call in ensuring everyone's safety, but thankfully the impact of the storm in the Chichester area was not too serious and we were able to remain open and keep learning!

I hope that you will have already seen the report from our recent church (SIAMS) inspection, which was sent to you yesterday. If you missed it, a copy is now available on our school website: https://www.westdean.w-sussex.sch.uk/web/church_siams_inspection_report/252851

We are delighted with the outcome of the inspection, which celebrates all that we are as a loving, child-focussed Christian community and acknowledges all that we do to actively live the words of our Christian vision from John 13, 'to love one another. As I have loved you...' I am very proud of our community and of the recognition of the good work it does in this report, and I cannot thank you all enough for the incredible support you all give to this school family.

As you know, I recently had the incredible privilege of travelling to Mexico, to visit Xilitla and meet with members of the local community, including the leadership team of the local primary school, Escuela María Concepción Villegas or Escuela MACOVI for short.

It was a remarkable trip that I will never forget. Mexico is such a vibrant and colourful country and everyone I met was so welcoming and keen to teach me about their culture. Las Pozas, the garden built by Edward James, is simply extraordinary; a truly unique, spiritual space where Edward's surreal artistic vision sits within the majestic, lush jungle, just on the edge of Xilitla town. Having only previously known half of the Edward James story, the part of his life spent in West Dean, it was fantastic to experience this magical place where he spent the second half of his life. Hopefully you will have seen some of the pictures from my trip on Google Classroom. If you haven't, do ask your child to login and show you.

So, a lovely trip for me is all very well, but what does all of this mean for the children? Well, I spent a considerable time with the teachers in MACOVI school, discussing and planning how we can develop our unique link further and get our children communicating and learning from each other. Charitable funding is in place to support further teacher exchange, so hopefully, in the not too distant future, we will be welcoming teachers from Xilitla to spend some time with us in West Dean, and in time someone else from West Dean to Xilitla.

We had hoped to get MACOVI school using a special Google Classroom that we have set up, and to an extent they will be able to, but unfortunately IT and technology is not so developed in schools in Mexico, so initially at least, we will be relying on the teachers to upload the children's work and ideas to the shared classroom, rather than the children in Xilitla doing this themselves. It just goes to show how fortunate we are to have such extensive digital resources here in UK schools. It will be possible for our children to work collaboratively with the children in Xilitla in some form though, and the teachers at MACOVI are certainly excited to get started.

My trip to Mexico coincided with the 'Día de Muertos' or Day of the Dead festival, which is a very important and much celebrated time for families. Commonly misunderstood in the UK as being related to Halloween, the Día de Muertos is in fact a very joyful festival where the lives of departed family members are celebrated and fond memories shared. Despite the appearance of skulls and skeletons everywhere, this festival is actually extremely colourful and not at all spooky. Brightly coloured and highly decorated altars are common place in homes and public buildings, in honour of family members past, often including a cross in thanks to God for their lives.

So keen were the people I met to share their culture with the children in West Dean, that they packed me off home with everything I needed to create a Día de Muertos altar here in school. So I did just that this week and placed a picture of Edward James at the top. Each class has been to look at the altar with me and the children have had the opportunity to discuss ideas and ask questions. It won't surprise you to hear that their questions were excellent and their ideas profound.

Whilst I feel personally privileged to have been on this amazing trip, I also think that we are tremendously fortunate as a community to have such a unique link with this incredible place, culture and people in Mexico.

Next week, we will turn our thoughts to remembrance of a different kind, as we prepare for Armistice Day with a special Act of Remembrance during our Acorn Assembly next Friday.

Pupil Parliament will be selling poppies and other symbols of remembrance throughout next week, so do send your child in with some spare change if you would like them to make a donation and wear a poppy.

I wish you a peaceful weekend, hopefully with slightly more settled weather.

Chris Williams



Chestnut Class Pre-Loved Toy Sale.

If you're thinking of having a clear out over half term, please keep any toys that are in good condition. Chestnut Class are hoping to raise money by holding a pre-loved toy sale, and we need your toys!

Further details to follow



BBC Children in Need

Friday 17th November

Children will be invited to dress in a SPOTacular way—with as many spots or colours as possible. In return, donations for children in Need can be made as a shop item on schoolmoney.co.uk



Apple Class Business Enterprise

Thank you to everyone who supported Apple Class Dinosaur Museum and Bake Sale. The money they raised has helped towards the purchase of their new woodland rug, which arrived in school this week. Doesn't it look fabulous!



Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal

Children from our Pupil Parliament will be available on the playground in the mornings, during next week, if you would like to purchase a Poppy or a wrist band.



Next Sunday 12th November, Rev Sarah would like some children & families to attend the 10am morning church service at West Dean, to participate in the Act of Remembrance. If you are available and would like to take part, please contact Mr Williams.

Flu Vaccination Programme

Information has been sent out regarding the Flu Vaccination Programme which will take place in school on Tuesday 21st November.

You still have time to sign up if you wish your child to receive the vaccination. The deadline is Friday 10th November.



Chestnut Class visit to The Natural History Museum, London

Chestnut Class had a fantastic trip to London on Tuesday when we visited the Natural History Museum.

We travelled by train and used the London Underground, which some of us had never been on before.

We were able to learn more about evolution and adaption in an interesting workshop and explored many areas of the museum bringing our learning to life!

I really enjoyed feeling small amongst the huge dinosaurs suspended around us. It was a fabulous day.

Emily - Year 6



After School Clubs and Wraparound Care

Our club programme is now running for this half of the autumn term, for 5 weeks. There will be no clubs during December, the last two weeks of the term.

We still have some spaces left in some of the clubs, if you would like to sign up.

Breakfast Bears is available Monday—Friday 8.00-8.30am

Care Bears is available Monday—Thursday, 3.00-4.00.

Please book places on schoolmoney.co.uk.

PTA Movie Night - Elemental Thursday 9th November, 3pm-5pm

Children can bring either a small cushion or blanket.

Please book **before Wednesday 8th November, 12 noon**. Tickets are available as a shop item on schoolmoney.co.uk, priced at £5, to include a drink, popcorn and a snack.



West Dean's very own Lionesses roar into action!

Some of our Year 3 to 6 girls enjoyed a great football coaching session today with Dan from **Graylingwell Girls Football**.



WEST DEAN

WEST DEAN
BONFIRE NIGHT

FREE ENTRY

Friday 3rd November 6pm - 8pm

Join us on the 3rd for our annual family friendly fireworks display and bonfire night.

Fireworks display at 7:15pm
Entry & BBQ from 6 pm
Car parking on site in the visitor car park



GRAYLINGWELL GIRLS

www.graylingwellgirls.com

Our All Abilities session (ages 4 - 10) is on a Sunday 9.30am-10.30am on the fantastic green space opposite The Pavillion at Graylingwell Park, Chichester. We have toilets, a coffee shop and a park on site meaning any family members coming along to watch will always be entertained!

Our Development Centre (ages 8-12) aimed at older girls is on a Thursday evening 6pm - 6.45pm at The Bishop Otter Campus/Chichester University. Meaning we have flood lights to play in all weathers and levels of light through the winter.

Don't forget, you are all invited to the West Dean Bonfire Night and Firework display at West Dean College tonight,
Friday 3rd November.

Where: West Dean Visitor Centre - enter via Gardens Entrance

Fireworks display at **7:15pm**

Entry & BBQ from 6 pm

Car parking on site in the visitor car park

* Please bring a torch for travel between the car park and event.



- Yr R Raffy** - for your fantastic drawings where you are using your imagination and creativity. Brilliant!
- Yr 1 Jack** - for consistently giving your best! What a brilliant role model in class. Well done!
- Yr 2 Ettie** - for your brilliant grid referencing when we plotted how far the fire spread in the Great Fire of London. Well done!
- Yr 3 Frank** - for the extraordinary Lego house/den you spent so long carefully building. Such creativity!
- Yr 4 Maxwell** - for a brilliant week in Beech Class. You have focused well and tried your hardest in all you have done.
- Yr 5 Jake** - for showing resilience in our problem solving mental maths starters, it is great to see your positive attitude towards these challenges.
- Yr 6 Leo** - for your enthusiasm and boundless knowledge about all things related to Darwin on our trip to London.



Diary Dates 2023/24



2023/24 INSET Days

Friday 1st September 2023

Tuesday 2nd January 2024

Monday 19th February 2024

Monday 22nd & Tuesday 23rd July 2024

Autumn Term 2023 - Monday 4th September - Friday 15th December 2023

Spring Term 2024 - Wednesday 3rd January - Thursday 28th March 2024

Summer Term 2024 - Monday 15th April - Friday 19th July 2024

Tuesday 7th November	Yellow School Photographs, Individual and Sibling
Tuesday 7th November`	1.00-3.30, SSP Mixed Football, Chi Uni, (Selected Year 3/4)
Thursday 9th November	3.00—5.00, PTA Movie Night— Elemental
Friday 10th November	8.45, Remembrance Assembly
Tuesday 14th November	Parents' Evening
Wednesday 15th November	Parents' Evening
Thursday 16th November	8.45, Beech Class Collective Worship
Friday 17th November	Children in Need
Tuesday 21st November	Flu Vaccination programme in school
Wednesday 22nd November	Maple Class visit in school—West Sussex Fire and Rescue
Thursday 23rd November	1.00-3.30, SSP Small School Football (Yr 5/6)
Friday 24th November	Food Bank Friday
Monday 27th November	Bookfest Author, Jenny McLachlan, in Beech and Chestnut
Tuesday 28th November	Hugo Van Driel Collective Worship
Thursday 30th November	8.45, Chestnut Class Collective Worship
Thursday 30th November	Full Governing Body Meeting
Friday 1st December	8.45, Christingle Collective Worship
Tuesday 5th December	2.00—2.45, Mrs Anstee and Choir to Marriott House for Carols (details tbc)
Wednesday 6th December	KS1 Christmas Production—The Landlord's Cat (details to follow)
Wednesday 6th December	1.00-3.30, SSP Sportshall Athletics at Bishop Luffa—Chestnut Class
Thursday 7th December	Christian Youth Enterprises (CYE) Collective Worship
Tuesday 12th December	Whole School visit to West Dean College
Tuesday 12th December	6pm, Carol Service at West Dean Church
Wednesday 13th December	Chartwells Christmas Lunch
Thursday 14th December	PTA Disco KS1, 5-6.30, KS2, 5.30-7