



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 1 08.09.23

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 to West Dean CE Primary School for the beginning of another exciting year. We hope that you enjoyed some quality family time over the summer, with fun and relaxation in equal measure, even if our wonderful British weather did not exactly enhance the summer vibe!

Looking back on the end of the summer term, I know I speak on behalf of the whole team when I say sincere thanks for your support of the many special end of term events and celebrations, as well as for your extremely kind words and gifts of thanks. I know I have said it before but I will repeat that these are never expected, but are always very much appreciated.

The long summer break is always a good opportunity to get various jobs done that are not possible whilst the school is full of your little people. This year the flooring throughout the main school corridor, staircase and library has been replaced as phase two of redecoration designed to bring a sense of our natural environment into school. This new green 'turf' carpet looks brilliant. Phase one, which happened earlier in the year was the redecoration of the library in a woodland theme – phase three will be extending this theme along the walls of the main corridor in the coming months.

In addition, we have a fantastic new hall floor, which not only looks more modern, but will be much easier to clean at the end of lunchtime each day in readiness for PE lessons and assemblies too.

Due to some careful cost savings on our original purchase of 20 new Chromebooks earlier in the summer, we have now been able to buy an additional 10 laptops to create a full class set of 30 in readiness for the new school year. With the very helpful support of PTA fundraising, we also now have a full class set of 30 iPads, meaning that a class teacher can book these out for a lesson and your children will get the benefit of learning with a device each, rather than needing to share. This will really help to embed our Computing curriculum, as well as enhance many other areas of learning.

As teachers, we are so grateful for the privilege of longer holidays, but I am also grateful to our teaching team for the time that they give up during this period, to ensure that classrooms are ready and looking great and welcoming for your children at the start of term. There has been a buzz of activity around school for some weeks now, and I know that all of the team are really excited to be welcoming their new classes back to school for the new year.

Now, I apologise for the lengthy list of information to follow at this point, but it is all important stuff, so please do take the time this week to read it carefully.

Communication

Children's learning and wellbeing is best supported when there is honest and effective communication between school and home. We strive to achieve this in a number of ways; face to face conversations (which are always welcome), messaging using eSchools and email and newsletters. The new school year is a good time to clarify our means of communication and expectations, so that we can work together to make it as effective and manageable for all. Please take careful note of the following guidelines:

- Teaching staff are always happy to have a brief face to face conversation with parents and carers at drop off or pick-up time on the playground. However, if your need is for a more detailed, lengthy conversation, please use this time to alert your child's teacher to this, so that a more appropriate and convenient appointment time can be arranged. We are all only too happy to speak with you, but teachers must be available to take their children into class at 8.35am.
- Most communication that relates to all children in the school or all children within a particular class will be sent to you via eSchools. This includes things like trip information or details about future learning events. We try to limit the number of messages being fired off to you on any given day or week, but please try very carefully to monitor these, so you do not miss the information.
- If your child is ill and therefore going to be absent from school, please either telephone or email the school office – office@westdean.w-sussex.sch.uk, 01243 811247, as soon as you are able on the day of absence. It is a legal requirement that we enter the correct code in our school registers, so we must be informed please if your child is unwell.

- **Email** – in order to be most efficient, but also to be mindful of everyone’s health and wellbeing, I am politely requesting that everyone in our school community respects the following email timings and guidelines.
- If you need to send an email to school for anything other than in extremely urgent and exceptional circumstances, **please only do so between the hours of 7am and 6pm, Monday to Friday**. I do not expect any member of staff to be checking email outside of these hours and it would be preferable if the ‘delay send’ function (available on most email systems) is used if you have a need to compose your email outside of these hours or at the weekend.
- In exceptional circumstances, such as a medical emergency for example, where a message is needed at the weekend or during the evening, please only email the school office address or me, the headteacher, directly – head@westdean.w-sussex.sch.uk
- If you need to send an email regarding your **child’s learning or wellbeing**, please **always email your child’s class teacher in the first instance**. Teachers will make every effort to respond within 24 hours and the most likely outcome is that they will be able to provide a straightforward answer to your query via email, or will liaise with you to arrange a meeting to discuss the matter further.
- Email addresses for your child’s class teacher(s) will be shared at the ‘Meet the teacher’ sessions (details below) next week.
- **WhatsApp groups** – no member of school staff monitors any WhatsApp group created by parents or members of the school community outside of the staff. Whilst I acknowledge that these groups are an effective way of both communicating snippets of useful information and on occasion offering reassurance to a fellow parent, I should like to remind everyone that these groups should not be a forum for the discussion of any complaints or concerns about the school. Where these occur, and I sincerely hope that they are rare, such matters should be addressed directly to me as headteacher, rather than discussed on social media in a manner which could adversely affect our school’s good reputation. Thank you.
- If at any point you are unsure about how, where or when something has been communicated to you, please do come to the school office and ask us.

Meet the teacher

In follow-up to the Class Curriculum Letter and Termly Overview Grid that will be sent out to parents today, parents and carers have the opportunity to meet their child’s class teacher(s) and ask any questions they may have about the learning ahead this year, at the following times next week:

Apple (**Year One only**) – Wednesday 13th September, 2.30pm

Maple – Wednesday 13th September, 2.30pm

Beech – Thursday 14th September, 2.30pm

Chestnut – Tuesday 12th September, 2.30pm

Absence, Punctuality and Holidays

I hope that parents and carers will agree that in the wake of the COVID pandemic, I took an understanding and compassionate approach to periods of holiday taken during term time. During that exceptional period of time, many families had missed seeing relatives for many months and in some cases years. In other cases, holiday companies were applying a degree of pressure to customers to take holidays within a specific timeframe in order to avoid losing out financially.

Thankfully, that period has now passed and we must now make every effort to ensure that our children do not miss learning during term time. This is a legal requirement. During the last academic year I wrote to families to explain that all of the schools in this locality would be taking a combined approach to this matter, following a locality wide policy, which itself aligns with policy from both local and central government.

In **all but exceptional circumstances** (such as a family bereavement), periods of holiday taken during term time that **exceed 10 school sessions (5 days)** are likely to result in a referral to the local authority for a **fixed penalty fine**.

Where a family intends to take a child out of school during term time, an absence request detailing the reason should be made in writing (email is acceptable) to the headteacher.

Punctuality – we have an established system of timings designed to make arrival at school and the start of learning as smooth as possible for the children, as well as for parents and carers who are dropping –off and in many cases then needing to commute to work themselves.

Our playground is supervised by school adults from **8.20am** and the bell rings for the start of the school day at **8.35am**, by which time all children should be present.

We are understanding, realistic and have busy family lives of our own and therefore understand the pressures of the early

morning routine, which, every now and again can all go wrong. However, these instances should be a rare exception, rather than an accepted near daily occurrence. Please make every effort to ensure that your child is on the playground by 8.35am every day, as lateness really disrupts the beginning of their day of learning and the children really do not like having to walk into class late. Where repeat lateness occurs, I will be contacting individual families for a discussion.

Uniform and PE Kit

Our uniform policy is clear and is communicated to new parents and by the teachers at the beginning of each year. Again, if in doubt please ask at the school office.

Every child should have a West Dean School sweatshirt and/or cardigan. This should be worn for learning time, unless it is too hot or the children are doing PE. Uniform sweatshirts should not be used for PE, as they get dirty and children are left without clean, dry clothing to wear after the lesson. When the cold weather arrives, children may wear an alternative (ideally plain) hoody or track top to keep warm during PE.

Shoes only, should be worn in school during learning time, not trainers. Trainers are for PE and break time.

Where additional items of uniform are introduced, such as Year 6 Leavers' hoodies, specific guidelines on the wearing of these will be given, but they too are likely to be for PE and special events and trips, rather than as replacement uniform.

PE Kit should now consist of a blue West Dean T-Shirt and plain black or navy blue shorts. If your child still fits in their yellow, green or red T-shirt, that is fine until it needs replacing. There are plenty of plain shorts available across a range of brands to suit all budgets. Please avoid large branding / logos in colours other than black or navy blue, as this not only looks inconsistent when we play as a group / team, but it also draws attention to the cost of an item, which is something we endeavour to avoid. Thank you.

I am mindful that the above is a lot of information to digest, but these are all common themes about which a number of parents and carers have asked for clarification over the past year, so it is really important that I do just that as we start a new year.

Next time I write, I will have fewer guidelines and much more uplifting content to share, I promise! Your children have made a really happy start to the school term – watching friendships rekindled after the long summer break and new ones formed out on the field at break time this week has been a real joy. It is great to see the school come alive again.

Welcome back everyone – here's looking forward to an exciting term and year ahead!



After School Clubs and Wrap Around Care Provision

We are really pleased to be able to offer our after school care bears provision again this year. Due to staffing difficulties, we are currently only able to offer this on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, 3.00-4.00pm. £5 per child, per session.

We are also offering our Breakfast Bears provision, every day, 8.00-8.30am. £4 per child, per session (including breakfast)

Please make your bookings on schoolmoney.co.uk.

Please see attached information regarding our after school club programme for the first half of the autumn term.

Bookings will go live on Wednesday 13th September.

Are you green-fingered or know anyone who is?

During the long summer break, our wonderful school grounds are relatively undisturbed and, despite the very best efforts of Mr Goacher, who keeps our grass so beautifully mowed, things grow very quickly and we arrive back to an abundance of weeds.

We really want to keep our school looking lovely, but really need your help, or the help of somebody you know who might be prepared to do a few hours of gardening every now and then.

We are happy for this to happen during or after school hours, as suits that green-fingered person.

If you think you or a friend could help, please contact the school office or Mr Williams.



Foodbank Friday 29th September

We would like to introduce our 'Food Bank Friday'. This is an opportunity for us all to support Chichester Food Bank, a project founded by local churches and community groups, working together towards stopping hunger in our local area.



Non-perishable, in-date food is donated to a foodbank. Volunteers sort food and pack it into boxes ready to be given to people in need. Over 40,000 people give up their time to volunteer at foodbanks. Foodbanks partner with a wide range of care professionals such as doctors, health visitors, social workers and police to identify people in crisis and issue them with a foodbank voucher. Foodbank clients bring their voucher to a foodbank centre where it can be redeemed for three days' emergency food. Volunteers meet clients over a warm drink or free hot meal and are able to signpost people to agencies able to solve the longer-term problem.

Your help would be greatly appreciated, if you are able to donate an item please bring it in on Friday morning, there will be a 'Foodbank Station' on the pavilion decking ready for your donations.

Thank you for your support.

URGENTLY NEEDED FOOD ITEMS

- TREATS KIT KAT, MUESLI BARS ETC
- DEODORANT
- SQUASH
- TINNED VEGETABLES
- KITCHEN ROLL
- JAM
- SPONGE PUDDINGS
- TOOTHBRUSHES AND TOOTHPASTE
- WASHING POWDER, LIQUID DETERGENT
- HOT CHOCOLATE
- PACKET SOUP
- SHOWER GEL
- WASHING UP LIQUID
- SHAMPOO AND CONDITIONER

WE'VE GOT PLENTY OF

- COFFEE
- BAKED BEANS
- PASTA



*West Dean CE Primary School
Acorn Awards
Friday 8th September 2023*



- Yr 1** *Charlie* - for sharing your fantastic knowledge about David Attenborough and fossils. Brilliant enthusiasm!
- Yr 2** *Holly* - for your successful start to Year 2. You've approached every new challenge with positivity and a big smile, well done!
- Yr 3** *Indigo* - for a wonderful self-portrait. You took your time to study your features before drawing with such attention to detail. Amazing work Indigo!
- Yr 4** *Jack* - for some brilliant maths this week. You counted up in hundreds with confidence. Well done Jack!
- Yr 5** *Matilda* - for an amazing, independent 'can do' attitude in your maths this week! What a great start to Chestnut Class, well done!
- Yr 6** *Humphrey* - for being a fantastic role model. Always ready to listen and learn, with great manners and a positive attitude to match. Thank you Humphrey!



Diary Dates 2022/23



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



Autumn Term 2023

Monday 11th September	School starts for Year R (Tea and Tissues for parents in the pavilion)
Tuesday 12th September	2.30pm - Chestnut Class, Meet the Teacher
Wednesday 13th September	2.30pm, Year 1 and Year 2, Meet the Teacher
Thursday 14th September	2.30pm, Beech Class, Meet the Teacher
Thursday 14th September	5.30pm, Full Governing Body Meeting
Thursday 21st September	9.55, Bishop Luffa Worship
Tuesday 26th September	9.55, Hugo Van Driel Assembly
Wednesday 27th September	2.30pm, Year R, Meet the Teacher
Friday 29th September	Food Bank Friday
Tuesday 3rd October	Bookfest Author in School, Beech and Chestnut
Wednesday 11th October	GAS Maths Enrichment Event (details to follow)
Wednesday 18th October	GAS Enrichment Day at West Dean (details to follow)
Tuesday 31st October	Hugo Van Driel Assembly
Tuesday 21st November	Flu Vaccination programme in school
Friday 24th November	Food Bank Friday
Tuesday 28th November	Hugo Van Driel Assembly

After School Clubs
Autumn Term 2023

Autumn 1
First half of Autumn term

x5 weeks

Day	Adult Lead	Max	Club	Cost	Year Group	Description
Monday	Miss B Evans	14	Choir	£25.00	Yr 3,4,5,6	An opportunity to come and have a sing-a-long and explore music and singing in a group.
Tuesday	Mrs A Chilton	12	Arts and Crafts	£25.00	Yr R, 1, 2	An opportunity for the children to experiment with different art materials, primarily junk modelling, age appropriate.
	Mrs S Johnson/ Mrs S Goacher	20	Swimming WBH	£25.00	Yr 3,4,5,6	Children must be able to swim 25m of any stroke (not all strokes!) and want to work towards competing in galas. Rather than swimming lessons, this club will be focussed on building stamina and preparation for competing in Galas.
	Mr C Williams	20	Sports	£25.00	Yr 3,4,5,6	A variety of different sports activities, learning new skills, competitiveness and sportsmanship.
Wednesday	Ms J Boxall and Mrs S Muggieridge	8	Cookery	£30.00	Yr 3,4, 5, 6	Making a variety of recipes, teaching kitchen and knife skills with tea to bring home.
Thursday	Mrs E Holder	14	Dance	£25.00	Yr 2,3,4,5,6	A structured dance club for children to explore music and movement in a variety of dance styles.
	Mrs L Plackett	14	Board Games	£25.00	Yr 1 & 2	Come and play a selection of different board games each week in small groups, age appropriate.
Friday	AAA Coaching Mr B Johnson	14	Multi-sports	£25.00	1,2,3,4,5,6	A variety of different sports activities, learning new skills, competitiveness and sportsmanship.

We are delighted to be able to offer a varied programme of after school clubs for our children again this term. We are also pleased to be able to offer this provision with no increase to the cost again this half term. The cost of our clubs will remain at £5 per child, per session, with the exception of Cookery Club which is £6, towards the cost of ingredients.

Dates: W/C 18th, 25th September, 2nd, 9th, 16th October 2023.

In addition to our after school club programme our **Care Bear** provision is available on the following days **Tues/Weds/Thurs**, 3.00-4.00pm. Our **Breakfast Bears** Club is also available, Monday to Friday, 8.00 – 8.35, £4 per child (including breakfast). Please make sure that you book in. All clubs run from 3.00-4.00, apart from cookery which will finish at 4.15pm and Westbourne House swimming, which is at 6.30pm.

For all clubs, breakfast and care bears, you can make your bookings on-line at Schoolmoney.co.uk. Please contact the school office if you require a reminder of your log-in details.

Places for clubs are limited and will be allocated on 'first come, first served' basis. If there is insufficient numbers to make the club viable, we reserve the right to cancel this provision and make a full refund of any monies paid. Clubs will go 'live' on Wednesday 13th September at 7.30am.