



West Dean Church of England Primary School  
West Dean, Chichester, West Sussex, PO18 0RJ  
Telephone/Fax: 01243 811247  
Headteacher: Mrs G. Moss  
Newsletter 7 23rd October 2020



Dear Parents and Carers,

Thank you for your unwavering support for our school this half term. We have navigated the troubled waters of Covid and provided some exciting learning, whilst bringing our children back to the classroom in a positive and happy way.

We have also kept **everyone safe**, with lots of measures in place behind the scenes. Once again, the situation is changing locally, nationally and globally. Please see the important information overleaf regarding some **changes for after half term** and **some photos** of our learning this week.

Our **project for after half term** is all about the life of a tree..... we will tell you more about it soon, but it is a chance to study historic events, people in history and the timelines of our school, a very special tree and ourselves. Chatting about this over the holiday and into the next half term will help to warm children's brains up for the next chapter at West Dean!



Please see attached information regarding our Christmas Card



#### Bookfest Mascot Competition

Details are attached of the Mascot competition for the Children's Bookfest. This is a really worthwhile reading project.

You will have received information regarding the new NHS Track and Trace app.



Please do keep up to date with news and advice, and act accordingly, to keep us all safe.

<https://www.covid19.nhs.uk>

#### PTA Bubble Film Night

We had a lot of fun yesterday as most of the children stayed to watch a film with their bubble friends. Thank you to our PTA volunteers for organising this and to our staff for their support.

We are lucky to have been able to do this together and we loved the popcorn!



#### Ben Johnson AAA Coaching

We would like to congratulate Ben Johnson for his achievement of **Best Sports Club Award** in the Small Business & Community Awards 2019/20.

We are proud to have Ben as part of our team and grateful for all his efforts to innovate and work with us to keep us active, learning and safe.

#### Forest School News

Y4 will do Forest School activities each Tuesday afternoon for the coming half term, but we are kicking the topic off with:

#### Beech Class Forest School Stone Age Day Tuesday 3rd November 2020 (Y3 and Y4)

We are looking for a Pestle and Mortar for use in our Forest School. We will use this for Forest School work, and particularly for beech Class as they launch their history topic. If anyone has one that we could have we would be very grateful. A few would be even better than one!

Please see attached information regarding the **Chichester Priory Rotary Christmas Shoebox Appeal 2020**. Please bring your filled shoeboxes into school on Monday 2nd November 2020. Additional dedication labels are available from the school office; please

Please could we ask that **one parent or carer only** comes onto the playground at drop-off and pick-up times. This will help us to adhere to social distancing

**Parking** Please could you all remember that the school car park is reserved for parents and carers of Apple Class pupils only, and for those transporting very young pre school children.

*This will help us to keep the area safe for all our families.*

## What will school be like after half term?



There is a possibility that the government will require us to close partially or completely, to support a national **circuit-break/fire-break**: in this case we will use the school **website and Zoom sessions to support you all in some home learning**. I anticipate that this would be for one additional week, but I do not have any other information apart from keeping up to date with news and DfE information. As I type, this is merely being discussed as a possibility.

We will still be able to **communicate** by email and by telephone if this is necessary. Please make sure we have up to date contact details for anyone with parental responsibility.

We really hope that we will be able to remain **fully open** throughout the duration of this pandemic. We are relying on your support in this. Please do not relax your behaviours - **HANDS - FACE - SPACE** . Use some common sense if you are **travelling over half term** and please ensure your family are tested immediately if you suspect you have symptoms. This will help us all to stay safe and help the school to stay open. Our staff team are all following this advice and taking everyone's safety very seriously indeed.

One **key message** which I am keen to make loud and clear is that no-one must develop a '**blame mentality**' over this. We are all minimising risks with our actions. Everyone is taking precautions and we are grateful for you all **keeping a distance in the playground**, for example. However, this is a tricky virus - many other organisations have experienced positive cases despite taking precautions. I will encourage our children to understand that catching Covid-19 is like catching a cold - we can all do things to avoid it but it **can still spread without us being at fault**. Please do support us in this, as it would be very unhealthy and unhelpful for any children, or adult, to feel shame about this unfortunate situation.

**There will be some important changes for the coming weeks**, as we are anticipating a growing risk of a positive Covid case. It is almost inevitable that our school will be affected. Other very local schools, including Singleton, have already experienced this.

The likely **impact of a positive case** is that the whole 'bubble' will close whilst we, and you, isolate and get tested. In some cases, where schools can guarantee that a child has only mixed closely with a small number of others, then the local Public Health England advisors *could* advise us to keep a bubble open and only those few pupils would need to be tested. This is not what I expect to happen at West Dean: I fully **anticipate closing a whole bubble if and when we have a positive case** in our pupil numbers. In order to maintain a high standard of education, our younger children are collaborating and interacting for a large part of each day. Our older pupils are seated and move around less, but are still near to one another.

If we need to temporarily close a bubble, then we will do all we can to **welcome children back** as soon as it is safe, and we will do all we can to support you with home learning.

**I am now wearing a visor** when I am in the classroom, corridors and staff room - this will enable me to be in the classrooms more safely with children whilst communicating clearly. (We already have stringent measures in place for visitors to school and our two 'catch up tutors' wear visors too.) Staff will wear face coverings when they are not in their own bubbles.

Our **morning routines** will remain similar but with some small amendments:

**Beech and Chestnut** - arrive between 8:30 and 8:35 - we ask families and children to wait on separate sides of the playground as usual. The children will continue to be taken into school in their separate classes, at 8:35 am.

**Apple and Maple Classes** - arrive between 8:35 and 8:40 - Maple Class should wait near their door and Apple Class on the playground. We will bring them into school once the older pupils have cleared, in groups as they arrive.

Please be as close to these times as possible so that we can manage our staffing to maintain safety and routines.

Once our staff are on the playground, you are welcome to leave your children with us, but you are also welcome to wait, at a safe distance from other parents and other children, in the usual zones.

**At the end of the day**, we will bring **Apple and Maple** children out at 2:55, to avoid families having to wait as long on the playground.

**Beech and Chestnut Classes** will leave separately between 2:55 and 3pm, to maintain distances between them and the younger pupils.

Please support us in arriving and leaving promptly, without queuing near the gate. Please practise social distancing and stay safe in the car parks too.

We will do a Zoom **assembly** in school on Monday afternoons, but will not sing indoors due to added risks. On other days, we will bring the **whole school together outside**, for our assemblies: we will be spaced out, and we will learn about Christianity, bible stories, Aesop's fables, and Christmas as well as celebrating achievement. We will also sing songs together and move around to keep warm. Singing and playing together outside is considerably safer than indoors, so we will do this whenever the weather and timetable allow.

**Learning at home:** how you can help your children.

One of the **main barriers for children** now that we are back is **regaining high expectations** - in **presentation, attention to detail**, using **precise and correct vocabulary**, for example. You can help by keeping an eye on the **maths words of the week**, to support with good use of vocabulary, as this really helps us all to think our learning through and to understand concepts. (Try, for example, describing how a flower works if you don't know the subject specific vocabulary 'leaf, petal and stalk'. If we cannot explain things clearly, we cannot think about them clearly.)



It is more important than ever to **support with homework** and to ensure that your expectations at home match the teachers' expectations, as closely as possible.

For some children, **handwriting and presentation** are not as strong as they would usually be at this time in the children's schooling. You can help by practising letter formation, if you are confident with this: however, it may be just as effective to encourage fine motor activities such as **lego, hamma beads, playdough/plasticine modelling, threading beads, sewing, cutting and sticking, weaving wool/string around cardboard shapes, pegging out the laundry, chopping and grating food, jigsaw puzzles, painting, drawing and colouring, using chopsticks (!) etc.** There are numerous websites and pinterest sources for activities. Climbing on play equipment and developing the muscles in the arms and upper body really helps children control their pencils too - this is called developing the '**shoulder girdle**'.

Most **children would benefit from more talking**, believe it or not! If you are watching TV, talk to them about the storyline and characters - encourage them to **express their opinions fully and in full sentences**. When they are a 'captive audience' in the car, depending on their age, you can talk about a subject where they have to give their opinion and explain themselves. You can do quick fire mental maths, sing rhyming songs, play guessing games and think of as many objects of one type as you can (eg: types of car, colours, adjectives for the weather, adverbs which describe how people or animals move/eat/talk etc).

**Let's do all we can, together, to build our children's learning skills & boost their confidence.**



Here are Chestnut Class again, dissecting hearts to find out more. They were fascinated and approached this in a very grown up way.

Chestnut Class have been learning about our cardiovascular systems..... They know lots of fascinating facts about hearts! They have also been learning about how to stay heart healthy... and practising this by running around the school field, being very active. And eating healthy pumpkin soup. If you look carefully on this lovely Autumn photo, you will be able to spot some of them!



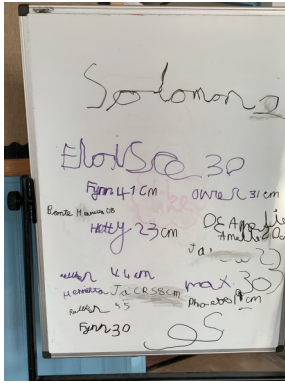
**Did you know.....** Chestnut Class were so fascinated by the heart and by their visitor, Dr Goodband, that they were late to start watching their movie!



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15 is the **total**



## APPLE AND MAPLE CLASS

Have been building towers, to see who can make the **tallest**. They have been **counting and measuring**: the tallest was 80cm tall! What do you think is the **total** number of bricks they used?

Beech Class have made superb progress with their reading, writing and maths this half term, and we have a stunning piece of art to share with you after the holiday.

They are excited to be embarking on a Stone Age project after the holiday, moving onto the Iron Age and then learning about life in more recent times.



## WELLY SWAP STATION

Please bring in  
your children's wellies

when they have grown out of them.

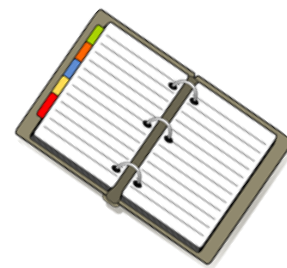
We will have a welly swap station so that you can select a pair which fit from one of our welly tubs, for a small donation to school funds. We will do this in the first week back after the holiday.

## PRAYERS, WELLIES, COATS AND SINGING!

Never has there been a better time to invest in some wellies for your children. A waterproof warm coat is essential too, as we will continue to play out whatever the weather, and we will also do our assemblies outside unless the weather is really gruesome.

Today, you will be amused to know, we had The Carpenters playing 'I'm on the Top of the World' as we came outside and whilst we were playing (some of you may not know this song!).

It drizzled and then rained on us and your wonderful children simply zipped up their coats and joined in the singing and celebrations of our Acorn Awards. **Well done everyone!** Make sure you all have warm waterproof outdoor gear for after half term please!



## Diary Dates 2020

**Autumn Term 2020 :** Monday 7th September—Friday 18th December

**Half term holiday:** October 26th—30th

**Spring Term 2020:** Monday 4th January

## 2020/21 INSET days

**Thursday 3rd September and Friday 4th September 2020**

Thursday 21st October, 3.00 - PTA Film Bubble Afternoon

Monday 2nd November - Return Shoeboxes to school—Pavilion

Wednesday 11th November—Remembrance Assembly—time tbc

Friday 13th November—Children in Need

Monday 16th November, 8.30 - Yellow School Photographs - Individuals and Siblings

Thursday 19th November - Hugo Van Driel, Whole School Assembly

Thursday 26th November, 5.30 - Full Governing Body Meeting

Tuesday 8th December - KS1 Drama Workshop—Fairytale and Fables

Wednesday 16th December - Chartwells Christmas Lunch (details to follow)

## DIGGING FUN AT PLAYTIMES

We are building an outdoor 'informal' **digging area** where the children can play and explore, use a variety of tools and materials and generally get stuck in the mud! This is simply another exciting playtime resource which we know the children will enjoy.

Sleepers are arriving next week and Mr Staples will be busy on construction.

We would like to ask if anyone has any old garden tools, trowels, forks etc. that we could use and/or any construction toys, dumper trucks etc.

Thank you for your support.



## AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS

Please see attached information regarding AAA Coaching after school club provision, starting after half term.

Lots of children have already secured their places and we are confident that this will be viable for Mr Johnson and will be able to go ahead.

Please log-in to [schoolmoney.co.uk](https://schoolmoney.co.uk) if you would like to book a place for your child, there are still some places left.

**NEED CHILDCARE FOR A SIBLING OF A CHILD ATTENDING** Mr Johnson's club? Mrs Moss has kindly agreed to run a 'care bear club' after school on a Friday, for siblings of these children only. Numbers will be restricted and the two 'bubble' groups will be kept separate in the hall.



## BOOKFEST 2021

It's nearly time for half term and we thought we would celebrate our new website ([www.childrensbookfest.com](http://www.childrensbookfest.com)) and our new mascot with a little competition. We are asking children to name and write a story for our mascot. Our cheerful lion mascot was very kindly drawn for us by author Matt Carr ([Matt Carr Books](#) ).

He will be a sign post for children to access the child friendly parts of our website. I have attached a flyer with all the details on and a picture of our lion.

The winning name and story will win a £10 book token and have their chosen name and story published on our website. There will also be 2 runners up prizes of £10 book token. Email your entry to [hello@childrensbookfest.org](mailto:hello@childrensbookfest.org) by 11:59pm on 30.11.20. T&Cs: Open to children aged 5-11 Winner chosen by select panel. Full details and T&Cs at [www.childrensbookfest.com](http://www.childrensbookfest.com)

Kind regards

Ali Totman

BookFest Director



## *Acorn Awards*

*Friday 23rd October 2020*

***Nella** - for your super powder paint artwork outside and growing in confidence in Apple Class*

***Jack** - for your enthusiasm in everything and your observations about the world around you*

***Finley** - for being such a caring and thoughtful member of Maple Class. You are keen to help and such a supportive friend!*

***Leo** - for your amazing improvement in getting started with your work. Mrs Johnson is very proud*

***Henry** - for your brilliant Black Rock story writing. Your creative mind never stops buzzing!!*

***Alice** - for your super independent learning behaviours. You are a great example of someone who knows how to help out and support their learning using the resources in the classroom. Amazing!*



***Tallulah** - for your awesome learning behaviours. You listen carefully, ask questions and use resources effectively to enable you to be an independent individual in Chestnut. Amazing!*



## Current Useful Information and Reminders:

September 2020

Thank you to everyone who supported us with donations to the **Chichester District Foodbank**; we continue to have a box in the Reception area to collect any items that you would like to donate and Mrs Jen Rogers has very kindly agreed to make regular deliveries of our goods.



**Every Wednesday 3.00-3.15** - Pop in and see your child's classroom and have a look at their work. Teachers will be available every Wednesday for informal chats - do pop in. We would love to have the opportunity to share your child with you.

**This is currently unavailable but we will be available in the playground each afternoon—Wednesdays remain a good day to 'catch us'.**

### School Money on-line donations.

We have been asked to set up the facility for people to make donations to the school if they would like to. This is available on Schoolmoney.co.uk and will show on your account as 'School Donation' with the amount of £1. There is absolutely no obligation to make this donation and if you wish, you can alter the figure to select the amount that you would like to pay.

Any donations to the school are very much appreciated and we thank you for your support.

**Schoolmoney.co.uk on-line payments** enables you to book for trips and clubs etc. and make payments on-line.

Please do log in regularly and check for 'live' visits and events.

Please log-in to your account to make sure any outstanding balances are settled.



### PTA News:

If you would like to get involved in the PTA in any way please to contact [westdeanpta@outlook.com](mailto:westdeanpta@outlook.com) or contact the school office ([office@westdean.w-sussex.sch.uk](mailto:office@westdean.w-sussex.sch.uk))

### Governing Body News:

Our team of governors continue to work together to help steer the school and support staff and the community.

We are currently recruiting for two new parent governors—see above for details—we would love to have you on board!

For information about our Governing Body, to find out who we are and what we do or how to contact us please email Mrs Pasha Delahunty, Clerk to Governors - [pdelahunty@westdean.w-sussex.sch.uk](mailto:pdelahunty@westdean.w-sussex.sch.uk).

### Lost Property

Don't forget to check the lost property 'bin', on the pavilion decking, for any items that you might be missing.

Please make sure that school uniform is clearly named to enable us to return clothing that has been found.