



# West Dean Church of England Primary School

West Dean, Chichester, West Sussex, PO18 ORJ

Telephone: 01243 811247

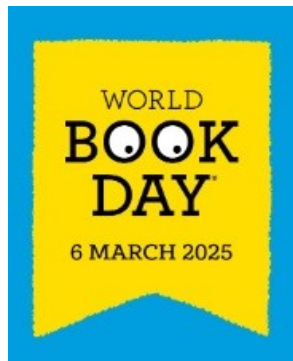


*We do our best in all we do, with God's love.*

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

**Newsletter 22 28.02.25 Our overall attendance is at 96.7% this week.**

**Don't forget, Rev Sarah's 'Rector's Rambling' can now be found by [CLICKING HERE](#) Always an interesting and inspiring read.**



Don't forget, it is World Book Day next Thursday. As in previous years, we invite the children to dress up as a book character if they wish and encourage them to bring their favourite book into school to share with others (typically we buddy up the older and younger children in groups or pairs for shared reading).

Costumes don't have to be elaborate and certainly not expensive. Please do not rush out to buy anything specifically for the day, we simply encourage the children to have a bit of creative dressing up fun in a way that suits them

## Wellbeing Walk

We will, once again, have our whole school wellbeing walk at West Dean Gardens next Wednesday 5th March, 1.00-3.00, hopefully enjoying signs of spring bursting into life, weather permitting. Please ensure that your child has suitable footwear and a warm coat.



The walk will not affect lunchtime arrangements, so there is no need to alter plans you already have in place for packed lunches or Chartwells meals.

## Ash Wednesday and Lent

As next week sees the beginning of the season of Lent, with Shrove Tuesday and Ash Wednesday, Rev Sarah will be joining us for worship in school next Friday for a special 'Ash Friday'.

During this worship, the children will have the option of receiving the sign of the cross from Rev Sarah, marked in ash on their forehead. Traditionally, the ash comes from the burning of the previous year's palm crosses.



If you are unfamiliar with this practice, I offer you this article and explanation, passed onto us by Austen Hindman, Head Teacher at Bishop Luffa School (FYI—the date refers to Ash Wednesday last year):

<https://capuk.org/news-and-blog/a-reflection-on-ash-wednesday>

Of course the 'ashing' is an invitation, and no child is ever made to participate, but we were pleasantly surprised last year by the number of children who wanted to join in.

## A crucial time for our PTA

Later in this newsletter you will read a communication from our Parent Teacher Association (PTA), and I want to draw your attention to it and request that you commit to reading it in full and consider its contents carefully.

It is not too strong a description to say that our PTA is at critical point. Its future is uncertain unless we can muster a suitably sizeable group of volunteers to take over the reins and run it, albeit collaboratively, rather than relying on one or two very dedicated individuals.

The letter explains the situation clearly, so all I wish to add are two points. Firstly, please do not underestimate the tremendous significance of the financial support that the PTA provides for your children's learning. In increasingly challenging times, financially, there are many events and resources that we simply could not have without PTA support.

Secondly, a HUGE thank you for all you have done for our school, to the small group of very dedicated PTA members who have decided it is time for them to step back. I personally am immensely grateful for all you have done for the PTA, and in turn for the children in our school. You have provided many memorable events for them and enriched their learning and lives in all manner of ways. Thank you.

**(continued overleaf)**

## Goodwood School Drama enrichment at Singleton School

Two members of Beech Class spent a brilliant morning yesterday at Singleton School, taking part in a drama workshop run by Mrs Smyth, the Head Teacher of Singleton.



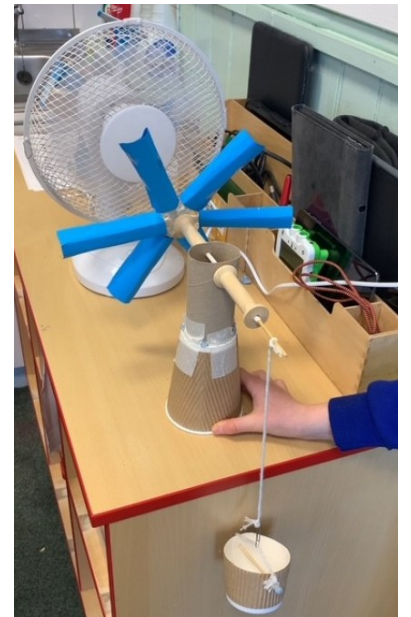
All schools in the Goodwood Area Locality Group share the provision of enrichment activities throughout the year in each of our schools. This provides opportunities to come together in collaboration with children from other schools, to share learning, usually based on a particular passion or subject within the curriculum.

On returning from Singleton with beaming smiles, the children said, “we loved meeting children from the other schools and playing some funny and exciting drama games!”



In Chestnut Class, the children have been putting their engineering skills to good use, designing and making windmills capable of raising a payload on a winch. Inspired by the brilliant and powerful story [‘The Boy who Harnessed the Wind’](#) by William Kamkwamba and Bryan Mealer, this STEM project was a fantastic conclusion to the recent class learning journey, ‘Curiosity’.

Equally fantastic was the explosive art on display in Beech Class, as they began their new learning journey, ‘Earth Shattering Events’. The children used a really clever straw blowing technique to create some vibrant volcano paintings.



Elsewhere, there’s been a lot of talk about animals and more importantly, how some are endangered along with their habitats. Continuing their ‘Don’t let them disappear’ learning journey, Maple Class children have switched their focus from endangered species abroad, to those in need of our help in Britain and particularly in the South Downs. Important work Maple Class—keep it up!

Apple Class were also working hard yesterday, trying to match animals to their habitat. I was posed a tricky question about whether a jaguar lives in the jungle or in the savannah. My instinct told me it is the Jungle, but I’m afraid I had to consult Google just to be certain. I am pleased to say I was correct, but it also enabled me to report back to the children that one place that jaguars actually inhabit is the tropical forests in the larger region in which our friends’ school in Xilitla, Mexico sits. Every day is a school day that’s for sure!

Have a restful and enjoyable weekend everyone.

Best wishes,

Chris Williams



Don’t forget, we love to share special events and learning highlights wherever possible on Instagram. Follow us [@westdeanceprimary](#)





**Year 1 and 2 Art Club** with Mr Williams—spaces are still available., Please follow the link below to secure a place, Please note, this club will run for 5 weeks, starting Monday 3rd March.

We are keen to ensure that there is some extra-curricular opportunity for our younger children. In this club, the children will work with Mr Williams, exploring a range of art techniques and hopefully developing their creative skills. There will be a maximum of 12 places available and there will not be a charge for this club.

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=sLZc2gfsH0KaYMnfWDbeyJKur07hBRxIk7WejCGvR5lUNIVHMVRIRk9KNFdQUlpSUDAYUVFXS1IFOCQIQCNjPTEu>



### Sickness Absence:

Sadly, a number of children have been suffering with sickness recently. Please could we remind all parents to keep their children off for 48 hours after the LAST bout of sickness and/or diarrhoea to help to stop the spread. Thank you for your support.

### Car Parking at The Selsey Arms Pub.

We are really lucky to have access to parking at The Selsey Arms but sadly, there have been reports, once again, of inconsiderate parking by our families and an element of verbal rudeness when individuals have been confronted. Please, please make sure that you park sensibly and DO NOT block fire exits.



If you are confronted, please be polite. We do not want to lose this valuable partnership and we want to be neighbourly and welcoming to all in our community.

Thank you for respecting that the pub car park was closed this afternoon, due to a large function.

Please note that the car park will be also be closed to our families next Friday, 7th March for a private function — please respect this again and find alternative parking. Thank you.

**Scouts**  
Chichester District  
**OPEN EVENT**  
Sunday 23rd March

**Open to all**  
Tired of dull evenings? Want to try something exciting, learn skills leadership, teamwork, and become one of the Volunteers in Chichester? Come and see what we have to offer!

**Can you help?**  
We can't do it without volunteers! Whatever time you can spare, whatever skills you can bring to the table - find out about how you can get involved!

**Come along to our FREE open event**  
Join us for skills, challenges, crafts, games, and fun

Sunday 23rd March 2025  
10am - 15:00  
Bosham village hall, Walton Lane,  
Bosham, PO18 8QF.  
Recruitment@chichesterscouts.org.uk

Please register your interest using the QR code, or send an email.

Join the adventure and learn **#SkillsForLife**

### A feast of family fun awaits you

The **Good Food Festival** returns to **Goodwood Racecourse** from 15-17 August! This year's festival will be packed with exciting new experiences and plenty of fun for all the family, with the **NEW Move It Dance Academy** to get your all dancing, plus **very special guest Bluey!** Don't miss the chance to meet Bluey and snap a photo, or get crafty in the **Bluey Magazine Arts & Crafts Tent**.

What's more, don't miss the **NEW Good Food Kitchen stage** where you'll be able to watch interactive family sessions, get tasting in the brand-new **Fabulous Food Finds Tasting Workshops**, and munch your way through a stacked line-up of **incredible producers in Street Food Village**. And no-one is left out as your **four-legged family member** is invited too!

**Save 20% on Family Tickets!** Use code **FAMILYFUN** at checkout to grab **20%\* off** family tickets and make your summer one to remember!

<https://www.goodfoodshow.com/good-food-goodwood-festival-family/>



## An important letter from our PTA—PLEASE READ

Dear West Dean Parents and Carers,

**We expect that some of you reading this will see the mention of 'PTA' and stop reading. Please don't. There is crucial information in this message.**

The Annual General Meeting of the West Dean Parent Teacher Association (PTA) will be held on **Monday 17th March 2025** immediately after school at **3:00pm**. All are welcome and encouraged to attend. As many of us will have children in tow, we expect this to be a **brief**, but important meeting as the **PTA is at critical junction**.

While all of you are already part of the PTA by virtue of having a child at school, the constitution of the charity requires that a core committee of members oversee the operations. **The current group of committee members and charity trustees are stepping down from their roles**. Many have been involved for a number of years (one no longer has a child at the school). This has opened up the opportunity for a **new generation** of parents/carers to step in and take the reins (we already have one volunteer willing to take on the treasurer duties). This would also be an opportune time to look at restructuring, with a proposal to have 'class representatives' take on more manageable one-year terms, having been suggested.

The PTA is a really important link with the school. Not only does the group help to support school events, the funds raised go directly to **supporting our children** and allowing them to take part in special and enriching activities they might not normally get to do.

For those of you who do not know what goes on behind the scenes, the PTA have traditionally supported the school with a whole host of activities and events. *\*Please see the list of examples attached to this letter.*

As most previous PTA members can attest, primary school is over before we know it. For this reason, the PTA changes year on year as people leave and new parents join the school. Everyone is a volunteer so it is appreciated that at any moment, time to dedicate to the PTA can change.

Because we are at this **critical point**, we need any parents and carers, especially those in Apple or Maple classes, who may be interested in getting involved to come forward and have a chat about how you can help. We know that many are happy to help with ad hoc duties as they arise, and we are grateful for that help, however the future of West Dean PTA is relying on you to take the plunge! **There is a real possibility that if volunteers are not found now for key roles, the charity will need to be closed with the remaining funds allocated when the trustees step down.**

If you would like any more information, please speak to Mr Williams, grab any member on the playground or send us an email to [westdeanpta@outlook.com](mailto:westdeanpta@outlook.com).

The PTA plays a very important part in supporting your child's time at the school. Come and be part of that journey!

With best regards,  
**The West Dean PTA**

**Overleaf, is a (non-exhaustive) list of things that the PTA support, host or fund.**

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**Tea & Tissues** – for new parents to meet and mingle while their reception aged children set off on their first day in Apple Class.

**Bookfest** – supporting children's reading through the Chichester Bookfest and author visits to the school.

**Music Lessons** – the PTA is very proud to be able to support music lessons in school through the 1 term 2 learn programme. Children in years 3-6 all take part in instrumental music lessons each autumn term.

**Uniform Sales** – held termly, the sale of good condition used branded uniform give parents an affordable alternative to purchasing new school uniform.

**Film Nights** – normally held a couple of times per year, children can enjoy a movie complete with popcorn, drinks and snacks. Bringing pillows and onesies to school is always fun!

**Wreath Making** – this pre-Christmas event has been hosted for a number of years and brings parents together for an evening of crafting fun, complete with mulled wine and mince pies.

**Father Christmas** – the PTA work as honorary 'elves' and buy and wrap the gifts that are distributed by Father Christmas each December during the annual visit to West Dean College.

**Christmas Lunch** – the PTA decorate the hall and serve up a special Christmas dinner to the pupils, teachers and governors. There are crackers and games too.

**Evening of Song** – held in December 2024, brought together families for an evening filled with music, warming drinks and treats.

**Discos** – the school and PTA aim to host 1-2 disco events each school year (Christmas and end of year). A professional DJ supplied the tunes, smoke, snow and giveaways with some teacher dance moves also on display.

**Swimming Transport** – the PTA contribute annually to the cost to transport KS2 children for swimming lessons.

**School Pool** – the West Dean swimming pool is a unique feature of the school and is used by all children. The PTA pay towards the running costs each year.

**Easter** – the PTA have in the past hosted Easter hunts, races and games with chocolate eggs also supplied for all pupils.

**Fiestas, Fetes and Sizzlers** – numerous different social fundraisers are held throughout the year. These events are important to bring families together, and to raise funds for the charity.

**Plant Sales** – the plant sales are usually a bit hit with parents/carers as well as our local neighbours. With generous donations of plants via a local grower, this has traditionally been a popular and profitable part of the PTA fundraising.

**After-School Swimming** – the PTA support the organisation of volunteers to oversee after-school swimming during the summer term.

**School Productions** – the PTA have supported the school during the wonderful summer productions they put on.

**Year 6 Leavers Tea** – the families of each child who leaves the school are invited to the Year 6 Leavers Tea. It is a special event to say goodbye to their primary school days.

**Sport Day** – the PTA supply frozen treats to cool down the competitors after the events. Raffles and drink sales for observers are also held.

**Treetop Library Renovation** – the PTA donated the funds and time to transform the upstairs library into a Treetop masterpiece. Children are able to enjoy all the pleasure of reading in the unique and amazing space.

**Laptops and iPads** – the PTA have donated significant funds to school to help buy new IT equipment that is essential for children's learning.

**Social Events for Parents/Carers** – many fun and social events have been hosted by the PTA over the years, including quiz nights, casino nights, art auctions and special dinner events. No children allowed for these ones!

And much more....



- Yr R **Beatrix M** - for your super collaborative play with others. A real team member! Well done!
- Yr 1 **Raffy** - for always having a positive attitude to your learning and putting in 100%!! Well done!
- Yr 2 **Edith** - for your amazing acrostic poem in literacy. Well done!
- Yr 3 **Keanu** - for your determination in getting to grips with fractions this week.
- Yr 4 **Ned** - for showing resilience and perseverance in many areas of the curriculum. Well done!
- Yr 5 **Bronte** - for showing creativity and a lot of perseverance during our windmill sail investigation.
- Yr 6 **Beatrix D** - for applying taught strategies effectively in your independent work across all areas of the curriculum.



## 2024/25 INSET Days

Tuesday 22nd April

Monday 21st and Tuesday 22nd July 2025



**Spring Term 2025 - Monday 6th January (INSET) - Friday 4th April**

**Half Term - Monday 17th February - Friday 21st February**

**Summer Term 2025 - Tuesday 22nd April - Friday 18th July**

**Half Term - Monday 26th May (Bank Holiday) - Friday 30th May**

### Spring Term 2025

Tuesday 4th March	1.00, Chestnut Class visit to Bishop Luffa production of Bugs Malone
Wednesday 5th March	Westgate Swimming—Beech and Chestnut
Wednesday 5th March	1.00—3.00, Whole School Wellbeing Walk at West Dean Gardens
Thursday 6th March	World Book Day—dress as book character and bring favourite book
Thursday 6th March	Bishop Luffa Worship (in school)
Friday 7th March	Selsey Arms closed for Car Parking, please make alternative arrangements
Wednesday 12th March	Westgate Swimming—Beech and Chestnut
Wednesday 12th March	SSP Arun Swim Gala
Thursday 13th March	3.00, Beech Class Showcase (details to follow)
Wednesday 19th March	Westgate Swimming—Beech and Chestnut
Wednesday 19th March	Apple Class visit to Goodwood Motor Circuit
Thursday 20th March	Bishop Luffa Worship (in school)
Friday 21st March	Comic Relief
Wednesday 26th March	Westgate Swimming—Beech and Chestnut
Wednesday 26th March	2.15, Apple Class Exhibition
Thursday 27th March	1.00-3.00, SSP Future Flyers at Westgate (selected)
Thursday 27th March	5.30pm, Full Governing Body Meeting
Friday 28th March	Foodbank Friday
Tuesday 1st April	Hugo Van Driel Assembly (in school)
Wednesday 2nd April	Westgate Swimming—Beech and Chestnut
Tuesday 22nd April	INSET—school closed
Wednesday 30th April	Music Festival at Chichester Cathedral (details tbc) Beech and Yr 5
Wednesday 30th April	Dance House, rehearsal and performance (details to follow)
Thursday 1st May	1.00-3.00, SSP Future Flyers at Westgate (selected Chestnut, date change)