



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 23 07.03.25 Our overall attendance is at **96.8%** this week.

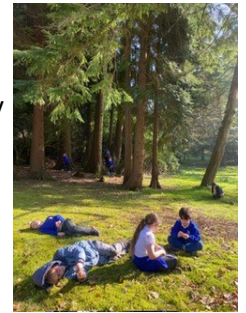
Don't forget, Rev Sarah's 'Rector's Rambling' can now be found by [CLICKING HERE](#) Always an interesting and inspiring read.



We are super proud of our brilliant Corporate Challenge runners who gave it their all on Wednesday evening in the first of this year's three races. The corporate challenge seems to be even more popular than ever this year, with a huge number of schools represented and a large field of runners in each of the Year Five and Six races. Our West Deanies absolutely smashed it with some great times and performances to be proud of. So much so, after the first race, our combined girls team are currently sitting in 4th place overall out of 55 teams—incredible! Well done everybody—see you in two weeks for the next exciting race.

Wellbeing Walk

The whole school set off on a super sunny afternoon to enjoy their Wellbeing Walk in West Dean Gardens and Arboretum on Wednesday. Apple and Maple Class children stuck to the lower gardens, exploring examples of plants and wildlife that feature in their class book 'Lost Words', as well as looking at habitats for various creatures.



Chestnut and Beech took to the higher ground and climbed to the arboretum, where they enjoyed some peaceful time of reflection and, staying as silent as possible, absorbed the soothing sounds of nature all around them. We are so lucky to have such a wonderful space on our doorstep. Do check out our Instagram feed @westdeanceprimary for more images of a wonderful afternoon.

Ash Wednesday and Lent

Lent began this week, with Shrove Tuesday and Ash Wednesday, and Rev Sarah joined us for worship in school today for a special 'Ash Friday' act of worship.

During this worship, the children had 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.

It was a lovely calm and peaceful way to begin our day together and to mark the start of this special time in the Christian community.





Maple Class enjoyed the sunshine by the side of our new pond this week. They used different musical instruments to make 'bird song' sounds inspired by the book they have been reading and studying in class, 'The Lost Words'

After School Play, 3.00—3.20pm.

Now that the weather has improved it is lovely to see so many of you staying to play after school. This is a reminder, however, that children **must** be supervised by adults at all times, as school staff are unable to be present at this time and we are still responsible for your children's safety whilst they are on site.

Our Forest School area is out of bounds for health and safety reasons, so please remain on the lower field and / or trim trail area.

Finally, if Activ8 or an after school club are using the outside spaces, please ensure that your child plays in a different area. We would ask you to respect these guidelines to enable everyone to enjoy this time and play safely. Thank you

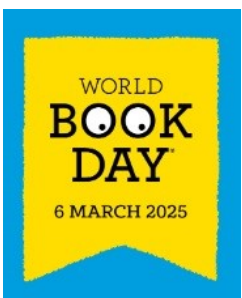


Healthy Eating and packed lunches.

We offer hot school meals from Chartwells, our catering provider, for those that want this option.



Alternatively, you are able to provide your child with a packed lunch. We have noticed a slight decline in the nutritional value of some items in some lunch boxes. The children are working hard to research some healthy options for their own lunches and to share with others. Watch this space for further information from our Pupil Parliament but in the meantime we would ask you to refrain from adding things like chocolate bars, sweets and treats etc and to encourage fruit and vegetable choices where possible. Remember too, that due to significant risk of allergic reaction for some in our community, we are a nut free school and it is vital that we respect this for everyone's safety!



We had a whole host of characters who joined us for World Book Day. It was wonderful to see older and younger children working together during the day, sharing their love of reading.



News just in... Whilst pond dipping at Forest School this afternoon, Year One discovered that the first new resident has moved in and set up home in our lovely restored pond. Frog looked very impressed with it's new surroundings, so we wonder if some frog spawn will appear soon—fingers crossed!



House Team Rebrand Following the recent consultation with the children, run by our Pupil Parliament we announced to the children that our new House names are Buzzard, Hawk, Kestrel and Kite, inspired by ideas of 'soaring high' and being 'fearless and courageous'. We are now delighted to reveal these stunning new house emblems, and are very grateful for the graphic design talent of Mr Plackett (Mrs Plackett's husband) who listened to our ideas and created these for us. The colours correspond to the old North, South, East & West colours, so children, you can now work out which is your new house badge. We'll talk about this more in school next week. Hmmm, maybe each house needs a special motto too?



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.

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....



WEST DEAN WAC CLUB

Physics Week

DAY	CRAFT / ACTIVITY	PHYSICAL ACTIVITY
Monday 17th March	Make your own balloon car	Obstacle course
Tuesday 18th March	Make a robotic arm	Obstacle course
Wednesday 19th March	Make a water mill	Obstacle course
Thursday 20th March	Beam challenge	Obstacle course
Friday 21st March	Child choice	Obstacle course

Please bring safe plastic bottle tops and plastic bottles.
The Activ8 activity hub runs daily after school, with a new theme each week! Next week, we'll be focusing on "Escape Room."



WEST DEAN WAC CLUB

Music Week

DAY	CRAFT / ACTIVITY	PHYSICAL ACTIVITY
Monday 10th March	Making musical instruments	Physical activities with different types of music
Tuesday 11th March	Karaoke singing, playing your instrument	Outdoor music with hoops
Wednesday 12th March	Karaoke	Dance to different types of music (folk, ballroom, classical, pop)
Thursday 13th March	Musical games eg- Musical chairs	Outdoor sports
Friday 14th March	Karaoke	Children can choose

We kindly ask you to bring your musical instruments if possible!
The Activ8 activity hub operates daily after school, next week will be dedicated to Physics week.

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

Wednesday 12th March	Westgate Swimming—Beech and Chestnut
Wednesday 12th March	SSP Arun Swim Gala
Thursday 13th March	2.30-3.30, Beech Class Showcase
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)
Thursday 20th March	Chestnut Class VE Day Coffee Morning (details to follow)
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	West Dean Academy Conversion Day
Tuesday 1st April	Hugo Van Driel Assembly (in school)
Wednesday 2nd April	Westgate Swimming—Beech and Chestnut
Summer Term 2025	
Tuesday 22nd April	INSET—school closed
Thursday 24th April	9.00-12.00, Chestnut Class visit to Bishop Luffa—TED Talks
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)
Thursday 8th May	VE Day Celebration (details to follow)
Thursday 22nd May	5.30, Governing Body Meeting
Monday 9th June	9.00, Yellow School Photos, Classes & Year 6 Leavers.
Friday 20th June	Foodbank Friday
Friday 20th June	NHS Healthy Child Programme—Year R (in school)
Monday 23rd June	1.00, Year 6 Leavers' Service—Chichester Cathedral. (details to follow)



Don't forget, we love to share special events and learning highlights wherever possible on Instagram. Follow us [@westdeanceprimary](https://www.instagram.com/westdeanceprimary)

