



West Dean Church of England Primary School

West Dean, Chichester, West Sussex, PO18 0RJ

Telephone/Fax: 01243 811247

Headteacher: Mrs G. Moss

Newsletter 1

11th September 2015



Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back to the start of a new year in school. The teachers have had a really great time to prepare for the children, with our INSET days, when we planned and prepared for this term's learning. As you know from our communications last week, there will be an opportunity for all parents to come to information sessions with the class teachers next week: please see the calendar overleaf for details. You should have, by now, received the class information letters detailing this term's learning and routines etc. We will, as soon as we can, inform you of dates and costs of visits etc, including Beech and Chestnut Class' visit to the theatre, Chestnut Class' visit to the Cathedral, Apple Class visit to Portchester Castle and Maple Class visit to Chichester Planetarium.



We have fifteen new pupils this week, with a full cohort of fourteen children in Apple Class and Chiara new to Y5, which means quite a few new families for us all to get to know. We welcome you all! A fabulous opportunity to get to know the school, and one of our main fund raising events is looming - **The Apple Affair** at West Dean College. This will take place on the weekend of the 3rd and 4th October: please do get involved and offer your support to make and bake etc before then and for the weekend too. This really is a super weekend and one of the many benefits of joining us to help on the day is that you gain free access to this exciting family event if you are helping with the school. Next PTA meeting date tba.



I have included a lot of information on this newsletter about how you can become even more involved in your children's learning: we will explain more about this as the term goes on. We are also opening up the classrooms from 3:00 - 3:15pm every Wednesday for conversations with the teachers. These should be focused around learning and homework etc, and we hope that you will find this useful. Following your suggestions, we are looking for class parent representatives to aid with communication and logistics, as explained in the class letters - I hope that this can be set up very soon and that it will help in lots of ways. There is an open morning and evening, where we will show you some of the things we are doing in school, and offer ways in which you can support at home: I hope this will be as well attended as last year and as positively received - we really do value your working with us and the children to ensure they all flourish and make the best progress in school that they can. As always, please do let us know if you have any queries: Mrs. Bailey and Mrs. Shears in the office are always keen to help, and all the teachers and myself are available informally on the playground after school. I am also available informally, most mornings, on the playground before school.

I wish everyone, once again, a happy and successful start to the new year.



School Gardener Vacancy

We are looking for a reliable, hardworking and effective gardener for a small number of hours per week, to be worked flexibly depending upon seasons, weather etc. Please ask in the office or see Mrs. Moss, Mrs Shears or Mrs. Canning if you are interested.



Pre-School Vacancy

We are looking for a new member of staff to work with the young children for Monday mornings, 8:45 - 1:15. Ideally, a successful applicant would be super enthusiastic about young children's learning: formal qualifications are not required. It would also be helpful if you were available occasionally to cover for staff absence on other mornings. Call Paula for an informal chat on 811423

Reminders:

- **Uniforms and belongings** should be clearly named
- **No jewellery** should be worn, although we will allow earrings: these should be limited to very small, plain studs
- **Shoes** should be flat, enclosed and black, blue or brown
- **Hair** which is long enough to be fastened up should always remain tied up/back, with bands/clips which are plain or fit in with the school uniform (ie: blue gingham/plain black etc)
- **PE shorts** should be white or navy blue - we will phase out white shorts for Sept 2016



All After School Clubs

Monday 14th Sept - Friday 16th Oct

Monday 9th Nov - Friday 11th Dec

I am delighted to say that our Care Bear Club has had its first birthday and is now a much valued part of our everyday provision for after school provision. Our thanks go to Mrs. Muggeridge for leading this and for organising all our other after school clubs. As you are aware, Care Bear Club will take place *every school day*, and the timetables for clubs have already been sent home: these clubs will begin next week. In addition to this, the AAA Sports coaching has been very successful and has provided super active care for children during the school holiday and for INSET days. Thank you for the feedback we have received, we are hoping to be able to offer this again in October half term. Please ensure you support Mrs. Muggeridge with this complex task by paying on time!



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West Dean CE Primary School Website: <https://west-dean.eschools.co.uk>

Getting Involved With Your Children's Learning

Over the last few years, there have been many developments with the curriculum and how we assess and communicate, nationally, locally and in school. We are really proud of how we have improved by working together and feel that we have some 'tweaks' for this year which will respond to your feedback whilst building on areas we are keen to develop. Some of you asked us what are the expectations for a child in a particular year group, as set out in the national curriculum and at West Dean. Some of you asked us how we 'track' and define progress. Some of you were interested to find out how our target work is set and how it links to learning in school.

We have devised a method of linking these aspects and using them to help us plan and evaluate children's learning. The class teachers will be able to explain this in a little more detail in the class information sessions next week. Your children will bring home a folder which we hope will last a few years and will be kept in school during the week, to be brought home at weekends. It will contain some introductory and explanatory information and a summary of the expectations for your child for their year group. (For some aspects, the expectations span two years, so they will run for a child's time in Beech or Chestnut Class etc)



There are a large number of expectations and they are written in educational language: some of the statements take quite a bit of deciphering and we are working together to make sure we all understand them in the same way, so please don't worry if some of them seem a little overwhelming or complicated! We hope that we can make sure everyone can understand them enough to contribute. Alongside each statement/expectation will be four boxes. During the school year, we will give the children lots of opportunities to apply the knowledge, skills and understanding they have learnt and when we see this, we will make a note in the children's files. Our notes will be brief, dated, and written in pen. We would like to invite you to make similar brief notes when you witness your child doing or saying something which shows their learning, but we will ask you to write in pencil, so that we can develop a clear understanding of who has seen what, when!

These comments will help us to get to know the children and to plan the learning for their next steps. We hope that the document will also show progress. Our definition of 'progress' is not, however, the speed at which boxes are filled in! Progress will be shown by the children developing the ability to apply or use their skills, knowledge and understanding in increasingly complex scenarios and at a greater depth, with greater independence. So, it is possible that a child has demonstrated that they know their 2 X table really well by answering some questions on four occasions: this would not demonstrate progress and we would not view this expectation as being met. Children know their 2X tables when they can apply their learning: for example a child may tell you that rolling two dice and scoring six on both will give you twelve because two sixes are twelve. They may show you that they need 14p to buy two sweets if each sweet costs 7p. They may be able to count matchsticks in twos to 100, accurately, as a quicker way than counting in ones. They may know that a return train journey might cost £24 if a single ticket costs £12 (this could show a good understanding of the links between doubling, halving the two times table and other multiplications, if explored a little by some adult questioning: 'how did you know that? If you know that, what else do you know? Etc)

The concept of progress being more about children's ability to dig deeper, understand fully, remember and apply is a key concept. Teachers will use these documents to inform their assessments of the children but they will not be the only form of information. In fact, the teachers will know the children very well without the documents, but the information will help with planning future learning, tracking 'progress', spotting gaps in learning/opportunity to demonstrate learning, as well as communicating with you. Whilst we will make sure the children are aware of what is in their files and we will use them to set the children's learning targets, children themselves will not write in them. We will ensure children have lots of opportunities to evaluate their learning and that they know what is in the files, particularly as their targets will be recorded there, by means of colour highlighter pen and a date.

Our targets will be generated by the teacher and usually last for a few weeks, with children taking part in a range of activities to learn and practise skills, before a new target is set. The children's target work will be done in a similar way to our previous years, and teachers will explain this in the parent information sessions.



Our expectation is not that you complete lots of boxes each weekend! This is not how learning happens and we are not looking for children entering a race to fill every box - this is unlikely to result in the deep learning we are aiming for. A reasonable expectation would be that you complete one or two a weekend, and some weekends there will be none to fill in, as your child may not say or do anything to fulfil this, or you may just have a busy week!

For anyone who would like to pop into school to discuss this, to complete a box upon discussion with the class teacher and/or find out exactly what a certain statement means, school will begin a drop in session with class teachers from 3-3:15pm every Wednesday. We hope that this is useful in lots of ways and that many of you are able to come in. For those of you who are not able to pop in, the usual channels of communication remain: catch the teacher after school on the playground, telephone or email, arrange an appointment or talk on parents' evening. We really do value your input: very often, you see things at home which we do not see in school and you know your children well! The shared information will help us to build a fuller picture of the children's learning and next steps.

Dates for 2015/16

Autumn Term Monday 7th September - Friday 18th December

Half Term Monday 26th - Friday 30 October

Spring Term Monday 4th January - Thursday 24th March

Easter Holidays Friday 25th March - Friday 8th April

Summer Term Monday 11th April - Friday 22nd July

Half Term Monday 30th May - Friday 3rd June

Inset Days: Friday 12th February, Wednesday 6th July 2016

Tuesday 15th September - Maple parent Information Session 2.30

Wednesday 16th September - Apple parent Information Session 2.15

Thursday 17th September - Chestnut parent Information Session 2.30

Friday 18th September - Beech Parent Information Session 2.30

Monday 21st September - PTA Craft Workshop 1.00

Tuesday 22nd September - Maple Class Visit to Planetarium

Thursday 24th September - Harvest Assembly - all welcome, 8.45

Wednesday 30th September - Apple Class Visit to Portchester Castle

Saturday 3rd/Sunday 4th October - Apple Affair

W/C Monday 5th October - Parent Evening appointments (see website) 3.00 -

W/C Monday 5th October - 2nd Hand Uniform on sale in the hall, 3.00 -

Monday 12th October - School Friends Service, Chichester Cathedral (Yr5/6) 10.30

Friday 23rd October - Community Café 10.45-11.30 (info to follow)

Inhalers in school

If your child uses an inhaler, please could you arrange to have a spare one, named, that we can keep in school. Please could you ensure the inhalers are in date!

Building Plans

The governors, staff and I have been working on a plan to improve the school building for some time now. Many of you will remember our consultation a couple of years ago. Our aims for the developments are to improve the toilet provision for the children (including giving us an accessible pupil loo), to improve the flow of people through school (particularly children from the current Chestnut classroom), to generate a covered outdoor learning area for Maple Class, to improve the cramped office space and to provide us with a welcoming and more light, spacious but secure entrance area.

These plans are very much in draft format but will be ready for people to see soon, and we hoped they can be a focus of the fundraising at the Apple Affair, along with the many other competing PTA and school priorities. The work will cost a lot of money and may only be feasible in a couple of years' time, requiring significant fund raising, but it would make a huge difference to the safe and effective running of the school.

Our recent improvements have been to install control valves on the hall radiators, enabling us to regulate the temperature in this large space where the temperature fluctuates greatly and at different times to the classroom temperatures: the sun shines full on this room and it heats up quickly with over 100 bodies in it!

We are very proud of the school environment and work hard to keep it stimulating, safe, clean and appropriate for the children. We hope that you will be able to support us in our next steps to bring West Dean into the present/future, whilst retaining all our important traditions and features which make the school feel so special.

ACORN AWARDS

Friday 11th September 2015

Apple Class: - Amelie for being so helpful and caring for our new Reception friends

Maple Class: - Flora for settling in so well into Maple Class and being such a great new West Deanie

Beech Class: - Ashton for being so smiley and confident in his first week of the new School year

- *Katrin for being a really mature role model for our Year Three pupils*

Chestnut Class: - Sophie for your enthusiasm and readiness to share your thoughts and ideas with classmates

- *Summer for being so polite and friendly. You have lovely manners.*

Uniform Reminder

Girls: White blouse or polo shirt

Royal blue sweatshirt with school logo (available from school)

Grey skirt/ pinafore or tailored trousers

Blue/white check Summer dress

White socks/ black or grey tights in winter

Blue/black/brown/ low heeled shoes/ **closed** sandals - no trainers.

Boys: White shirt or polo shirt

Royal blue sweatshirt with logo (available from school)

Grey trousers (long/short)

Black/grey socks

Black/brown/blue shoes/closed sandals - no trainers.

P.E. (Girls and boys)

- Royal blue T-shirt (available from school)
- Navy shorts (white shorts are acceptable for this year but are being phased out)
- Trainers Football boots (optional - no studs)
- Each child will also need a PE bag and their PE kit **must be in school every day**
- A swimsuit and towel will be needed daily for the Summer term and for Key Stage two only weekly swimming lessons in the Spring term.
- We provide an overall or painting apron.



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