



# 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 19 30.01.26 Overall attendance for the year has remained at 96.3% this week. Well done everyone.**



**Please keep Rev Sarah in your thoughts and prayers.**

**She is not writing her weekly 'Rambling' at the moment, as she is still recovering from a broken arm. Sending you our love and best wishes very, Rev Sarah.**

## Magic Moments

As parents I am sure you will have wondered on many occasions whether anything you say and try to instil in your children is actually heard by them. As the father of two teenage boys I ask myself this question on a daily basis, as I do as a headteacher, as I regularly stand leading worship in front of 102 faces, trying to communicate life lessons on how to be a good citizen.

Here's the good news; every now and then there is a moment of magic that proves that our children are in fact listening, and these positive messages that we are all trying so desperately hard to convey are sinking in.

I had the privilege to witness one such magic moment as I accompanied our cross country runners to the Chichester locality races at Bishop Luffa School this week.

We've been talking about teamwork, resilience and perseverance a lot in school lately, using various metaphors including 'running life's race'. These real races on real grass (well, mud mostly) with a hundred or so real competitors lining up next to you are no metaphor; they feel very real and very daunting.

Our team members were not intimidated in the slightest.



With smiles on their faces throughout, they ran their shoes off (quite literally in some cases—Reuben!). The grit and determination on show from each and every one of them around the entirety of the 2.5km course was phenomenal.

Some of our runners achieved really good placings as they crossed the finish line, with Max and Ned both qualifying to represent West Sussex West area at the Sussex County Championship races. Congratulations and well done to them. Some of our runners were near, or at the back—but that's not what matters. What matters is the attitude that they applied throughout. They never gave up, they enjoyed every moment and they felt a sense of personal achievement regardless of their finishing position.

But even that is not the magic moment I'm talking about. This came when one of our runners, who may well have been at the very back of the pack, rounded the final bend as was joined by the whole team, all of whom had long since finished their own race. They jogged alongside him, smiling, clapping and cheering him on as if he was about to win an Olympic Gold. And in his own way he did, because he never gave up and he never stopped smiling.

So take comfort parents, I think they are listening to us. I think they know what to value most and they definitely know how to work as a team and support each other. Well done runners—you made me a very proud headteacher on Wednesday.



## Poetic Perfection

Chestnut Class joined Year 5 and 6 children from all of the Bishop Luffa Learning Partnership primary schools for a morning of poetic inspiration on Tuesday. They watched some poets perform their work live on stage in the Bartlett Hall at Bishop Luffa and then worked with them to begin creating their own poetry. This event launched the latest BLLP joint learning project which will continue throughout the term, culminating in a poetry sharing event just before Easter.

The poets clearly had the desired inspiring impact on the children too and definitely ignited a spark for some. Here is a stunning 'Headteacher Award' worthy example by Tilly MacLean, which she wrote after listening to the poets on Tuesday. Truly fantastic writing, Tilly—well done, we are bowled over by this!

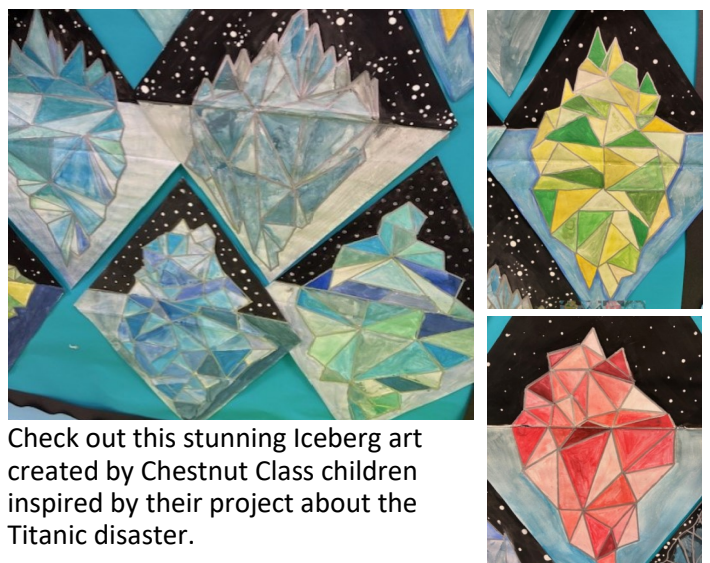
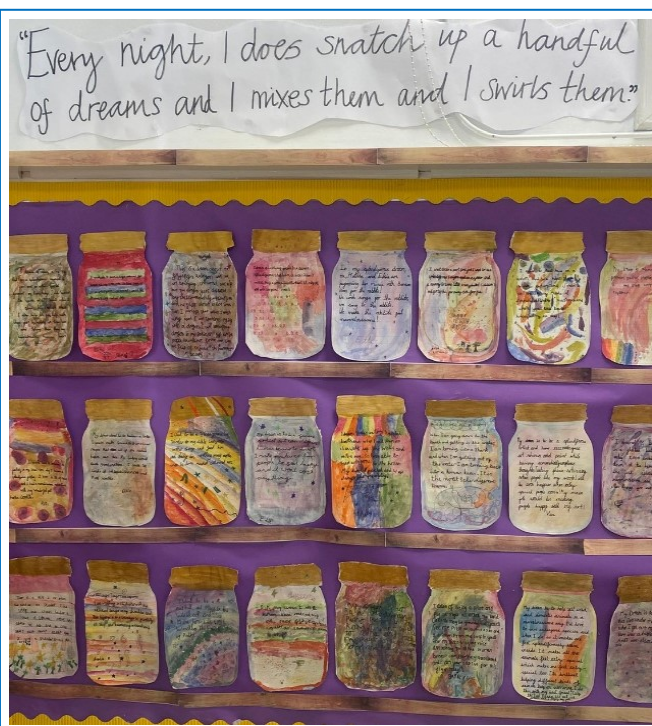
I am an acorn,  
I am a caterpillar,  
I am a cub,  
I am a spark.

I am not yet an oak,  
I am not yet a butterfly,  
I am not yet a tiger,  
I am not yet fire.

I am an idea without limits,  
I am beautiful potential,  
I am wild possibility,  
I am a blaze of imagination.

I am a poet in the making,  
I am me!

By Tilly MacLean



Check out this stunning Iceberg art created by Chestnut Class children inspired by their project about the Titanic disaster.

Beech Class children have dived into the world of dreams with the BFG this creating their own dream jars. What beautiful creations—well done Beech Class!

Our first Foodbank Friday of 2026 will be on Friday 6th February. Please do support us if you can. Our 'Donation Station' will be set up on the steps of the pavilion to receive your donations.

**Please see below, message from Chichester District Foodbank:**

On behalf of the Chichester District Foodbank team, I want to say a huge thank you for your amazing support over the past year. In 2025, you generously donated **102** kg of provisions - that's around 255 meals! Your kindness really does make a difference, and means so much to us and the people we support across Chichester District.

Thanks to you, we can continue offering essential support to families and individuals in crisis across the Chichester District. And it's not just about the food. Your generosity frees up resources that let us provide extra help, like practical guidance and a caring, listening ear when it's needed most. As a largely volunteer-run charity, every donation makes a real difference, and yours is truly appreciated. Last year, we were able to provide emergency food parcels to over 6,000 people, with 38% of them being children. These numbers show just how important your support is to our community.

Thank you again for your generosity and for being such an important part of what we do. You truly help make a real difference, and we hope to work with you again in 2026!

### Universal Free School Meals

Thank you for supporting us with your careful meal ordering. Since the beginning of the Spring term we have had significantly reduced the number of meals ordered but not taken. Other than when there has been illness we have had x1 at a cost of £3.20.

This is a huge improvement and helps us both financially and in terms of food waste.

We are aware that there has been significant discussion lately about Chartwells school meal provision. The Chartwells contract will be coming to an end this coming July and we will soon be in a position to share more details about a new provider for September 2026.

### Calling all Runners!

It will soon be time for some of our Year 5 and 6 runners to compete in the annual Chichester Corporate Challenge races.

Encouraged by our friends at Lavant Primary, who entered an adult team last year, there was some enthusiasm for West Dean to do the same this year. We have decided to join forces and enter one combined Bishop Luffa Learning Partnership Team. Mr Williams and our Chair of Governors, Edward Younghusband have promised to run, but we're sure there are more keen beans out there who would like to join us. Anyone interested should contact Mr Williams.

The three races are on the evening of **25th Feb, 11th & 25th March** and is 4.5km in length for adults.



### News from West Dean 'Friends'



**Spring Term Events: Save the Dates!**

**Wednesday 11th February—Film Night, 3.00-5.00. (details to follow)**

**Booking is now open on Arbor, £5 per child (to include a drink and snack)**

**Wednesday 18th March—Save the Date.**

**Quiz Night** at The Selsey Arms with host, Ken Jones.

**6.00—9.00pm. £15 to include quiz ticket and meal option.**

**Poster with full details to follow.**



**'Pre-loved Uniform: westdeanuniform@gmail.com.** If you have any specific requirements from our pre-loved uniform, don't wait for the next sale, you can email us to see if we have what you need! Thank you to everyone for all that you do to help and support our 'Friends'. **Our next sale is Wednesday 25th February at 3.00pm.**

**Even though Christmas is over there are still lovely West Dean gifts available!** These are available to purchase from school. They are a shop item on Arbor, Tea Towels £5 each and bags now at the reduced price of £4.00. These will make wonderful gifts for friends and family and also







*'There is only one you in this great big world...  
...make it a better place.'*



## **Learning Support Assistant**

### **Permanent Contract (term time only) - 32.5 hours**

**Starting date: Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> March or as soon as possible thereafter**

We have an exciting opportunity to join our fun, creative and innovative learning community where all children are championed to be the best they can be! At Fishbourne CE School we strive to make learning irresistible and for children to be nurtured to become effective learners.

We are looking for a flexible, reliable and enthusiastic person to support all children with their learning. This support will be within the classroom, over break times, and at lunch break. We would be particularly keen to hear from a candidate who has the Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) qualification.

#### **We are looking for someone who is:**

- \*Passionate about **every** child's learning and progress
- \*Able to work closely with a strong, collaborative team, including external agencies
- \*Positive and determined to make a difference to the community at Fishbourne Primary

#### **In return, we can offer you:**

- \*A skilled, enthusiastic and dedicated staff team
- \*A positive and supportive school family – children, parents, staff and governors
- \*A fun, creative and innovative learning community

We are committed to safeguarding and all applicants must be willing to undergo screening including checks with past employers and the Disclosure Barring Service.

**We warmly encourage a school visit prior to application. Please phone to book a visit. Our website has a wealth of information about our vision and values, please explore it. If you would like to phone to discuss any elements of school life, we would be delighted to answer any questions.**

**All applications MUST complete the application form and submit to [office@fishbourneprimary.co.uk](mailto:office@fishbourneprimary.co.uk) by the closing date below.**

**Closing date: Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2026**

**Notification of interview: Friday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2026**

**Interview date: Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> February 2026**

**Wraparound Childcare Survey** - West Sussex County Council's Early Years and Childcare team has launched a new survey to understand families' experiences of wraparound childcare. Wraparound childcare provides families with care for school aged children before and after the school day. The survey is open to all families with primary school-aged children, whether they currently use wraparound childcare in West Sussex or not. It asks about what is working well, what could be improved, and how childcare outside of the school day can better meet the needs of local families.

**Why your support matters** - Schools play a key role in reaching a wide range of families, including those who may not be in regular contact with childcare services. This survey will ensure the team gather a full picture of what families need and where they may require more support. The survey is anonymous, and your feedback will contribute to countywide planning and development. Please share [this survey](#) with parents and carers within your setting. The deadline to complete the survey is **23:59 on Sunday 22 February**. Thank you for your support in helping us gather meaningful insight from families across West Sussex.



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## Wellbeing Month



### Live Well For Longer

**Slipper Swap** - pick up a new pair of slip-free slippers  
No need to bring us your old ones!

Chichester Community Wellbeing-Blood Pressure & Weigh ins  
Carewise  
RNID Hearing Checks  
Age UK West Sussex, Brighton and Hove  
Chichester Food bank  
Carers Support  
Fire and Rescue  
Social Prescribers



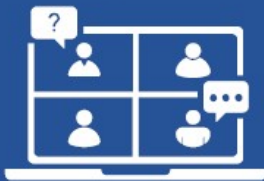
**Thursday 12 March  
10.00am-2.00pm**

No need to book,  
just drop in!



Chichester Library  
Tower Street, PO19 1QJ  
01243 777351  
[chichester.library@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:chichester.library@westsussex.gov.uk)

## TRAINING SPRING TERM 2026



**Making Sense of Anxiety in  
Adolescence**

**Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> February**

**7.30 - 9.30 pm**

**Making Sense of Personal  
Independence Payment (PIP)**

**Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> February**

**7.30 - 9.30 pm**

**Making Sense of Annual Reviews**

**Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> February**

**10.30 am -  
12.30 pm**

**Understanding Attention Deficit  
Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)**

**Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> February**

**10.30 am -  
12.30 pm**

**All of the above training will be delivered on Zoom**

For further information visit our website or email: [outreach-training@reachingfamilies.org.uk](mailto:outreach-training@reachingfamilies.org.uk)



SCAN ME

All our workshops are free of charge. For more information or to book a place, please visit our Eventbrite page or scan the QR code.

**[reachingfamilies.eventbrite.com](https://reachingfamilies.eventbrite.com)**



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- Yr R** *Rosa* - for your amazing creative ideas and enthusiasm in your learning.
- Yr 1** *Harry* - for the care and attention you put into your writing. A super star!
- Yr 2** *Raffy* - you have worked so hard learning about money, making different amounts and reasoning and discussing money problems in paired work. You always make the right choices and are consistently ready to learn when you come into the classroom.
- Yr 3** *Seb* - for being such a polite member of Beech Class, showing thoughtfulness to others. Keep it up!
- Yr 4** *Ettie* - for the quiet determination you have in all your learning, well done!
- Yr 5** *Indigo* - for your mature attitude and approach to life in chestnut Class, a reliable pair of hands and someone who is really taking responsibility for her learning—well done!
- Yr 6** *Martha* - for keeping going until that light bulb moment came in maths! Keep on asking questions, it's what makes you a great learner.





## 2025/26 INSET Days

Monday 23rd February 2026

Wednesday 22nd July 2026



## Spring Term 2026

**Tuesday 6th January—Friday 27th March**

**Half term break—Monday 16th to Friday 20th February**

Monday 2nd February	Tom's Talking Reptiles—Apple Class
Wednesday 4th February	8.30, Westgate Swimming, Yr 3,4,5
Thursday 5th February	1.00-3.00, SSP Stinger Netball Event (selected Chestnut)
Friday 6th February	Foodbank Friday
Week beg. 9th February	2 x Year 10 Bishop Luffa Students in school on work experience
Monday 9th February	Open the Book Worship in School
Tuesday 10th February	Safer Internet Day
Tuesday 10th February	Hugo Van Driel Assembly
Wednesday 11th February	8.30, Westgate Swimming, Yr 3,4,5
Wednesday 11th February	'Friends' Film Night (details to follow)
Thursday 12th February	1.00-3.00, SSP Future Flyers at Westgate (selected Chestnut)
	No Dance Club on this day.
Friday 13th February	Amelie Burton—Headteacher for the Day
Friday 13th February	Final day of half term
Monday 23rd February	INSET Day (no children in school)
Tuesday 24th February	First day back to school for all children
Tuesday 24th February	Pete Watson—Drumming Demonstration
Wednesday 25th February	8.30, Westgate Swimming, Yr 3,4,5
Wednesday 25th February	2.45—3.30, Pre-loved Uniform Sale
Wednesday 4th March	8.30, Westgate Swimming, Yr 3,4,5
Thursday 5th March	World Book Day—children are invited to dress up as their favourite book character
Thursday 5th March	Bishop Luffa Worship in School
Monday 9th march	Open the Book Assembly in School
Wednesday 11th March	8.30, Westgate Swimming, Yr 3,4,5
Wednesday 11th March	ESSA Swimming Gala, Horsahm (details to follow for selected children)
Wednesday 11th March	2.00-3.00, Choir visit to Marriott House for Spring Singing (details to follow)
Thursday 12th March	1.00-3.00, SSP Future Flyers at Westgate (selected Chestnut)
Wednesday 18th March	8.30, Westgate Swimming, Yr 3,4,5
Wednesday 18th March	2.30, Apple Class Exhibition in Hall
Wednesday 18th March	2.30, Maple Class Exhibition in classroom
Wednesday 18th March	'Friends' Quiz Night at The Selsey Arms (details to follow)