

NEWSLETTER AUTUMN 2023

Whimble Primary School

Issue 2

15.09.23

We have had another great week and the majority of our children have settled in well and are getting used to new mixes of children and routines. The cooler weather has helped as well.

School Day

All children are expected to be in school between the hours of 9am and 3.30pm. We appreciate that sometimes appointments are unavoidable during school hours - just be clear in the reason for the appointment so we can record absence correctly. Registers close at 9.10am and after this time absence is recorded as unauthorised unless contact has been made with the office and we are aware of the situation. Please help us, to help you.

Sickness

Unfortunately, we have already had a few children go down with a sickness bug. This often happens at the start of a term. Please remember that if a child has been sick they have to be off for 48 hours after their last bout of sickness. When you contact the office to report the absence please be clear about this and then we will not need to ring you on the second day. If reporting absence by email please put the name of child and absence in the header. This helps us to quickly go through the many emails received. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

We have attached a guide for when to keep your child off school, or when you can send them in in relation to common illnesses.

Packed Lunches and Snacks

We continue to have a few issues with staffing for school meal service, despite this children are being well fed and helping out where required. Hopefully, this will improve next week.

Attendance

Schools are required to send a letter about attendance from Devon County Council twice a year. This letter was attached with last week's newsletter, but unfortunately had one date error. Not all of our dates are aligned to the federation this year - we have Monday 3rd June instead of Friday 24th November as our non-pupil days (see last page).

Parent Information Sessions

After the positive feedback from those who attended last year we have decided to hold these sessions again. This is an opportunity to meet with the class teachers and discuss the routines and expectations for the year - it is a really useful session so please try to attend. (times to be confirmed next week)

Monday 25th September	Beech Class
Tuesday 26th September	Willow Class and Ash Class
Wednesday 27th September	Oak Class and Elm Class

Federation News from Mr Jolliffe

The leaders and governors of the Exe Valley Federation are committed to supporting other schools in their development and from time to time we are asked to help support school leaders in other parts of Devon. This is always a valuable experience and we learn a lot from working with colleagues in other schools, which benefits our teachers and children in turn. A few years ago, we did some work with Chulmleigh Academy Trust, which enabled us to work alongside primary leaders there and share our learning journey with them. Earlier in the year we were asked by Devon Education Services to support the three schools in the Moorsway Federation, which is located on Dartmoor, close to Ivybridge and this year we will be continuing this work under a Management Partnership. This means that colleagues from Moorsway will be joining us for training days and undertaking school visits alongside EVF staff. I will be working with the senior leaders for one day each week, which will usually be a Thursday. I am looking forward to sharing our development journey with the Moorsway team and gaining from sharing good practice with them.

Co-opted Governor

There is currently a vacancy for a Co-Opted Governor on the Exe Valley Federation (EVF) Governing Board. If you are interested in becoming a Governor or think you know someone who would be then this is a perfect opportunity to do so. Our Governors are absolutely vital to providing the level of scrutiny and lived experiences that EVF needs to be the successful, thriving federation that it is.

As a Governor you are responsible for the strategic direction of the schools that make up the EVF as well as promoting the high standards of educational achievement we all wish to see. In particular this Governor post will have a responsibility for the PE and Sport Premium Grants that we receive, so if you have a particular passion for PE and sporting success, then this opportunity would be right for you. This Governor role will give you the opportunity to ensure that the resources and spending we receive are making the most positive impacts on our children and communities, and will play a direct role in ensuring that the provision we receive from Lords Meadow Leisure Centre is achieving the best results. There is also the opportunity to attend competitive sporting events across the EVF and see these positive results in action.

Life as a Governor is always interesting and offers a genuine chance to improve the educational achievements of our children, as Vice-Chair of the EVF Governing Board, James Edlin-Benwell says; "I joined the EVF Governing Board in April 2022 as a Governor after my child started at Newton St Cyres. I wanted to make a genuine difference to the school and the community it serves and by being able to volunteer a few hours a month, I am able to do that and see for myself how our children's education is shaped. I feel proud to have stepped forward as a Parent Governor and happy that my experience is valued by the professionals we have in the EVF".

If you would like to stand for election please contact Heidi Last, our Business Manager and Clerk, for more information [hlast@exevalleyfederation.org.uk]

FEDERATION DEVELOPMENT PLAN

A summary of this year's Federation Development Plan is attached to this week's newsletters. This plan outlines our development priorities for this year under the six aims that are part of the federation's overall strategic plan. Please do take a few minutes to read through it so that you are aware of the development priorities for the federation. Each school also has a School Development Plan that reflects the development priorities that are specific to each member of the federation.



French Day
Tuesday 26th September is European Languages Day.



We have decided to celebrate this day by focusing on French, which is our chosen MFL at Whimble Primary School. Each class will be taking part in a variety of activities across the day to support their learning of the French language and in broadening their knowledge and understanding of the country and culture. We would like to invite all of the children to wear red, white and blue (the colours of the French flag) on this day.

Safer Devon and South Devon and Dartmoor CSP

A chance to join three sessions to hear about the challenges faced by 9-12 year olds and how you can support them.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/lets-talk-pre-teens-september-2023-tickets-680101400597?aff=ebdsoporgprofile>

Dates for your diary

September

Friday 22nd Year 1 children (in both Ash and Elm) Forest School

Friday 29th Year 2 children Forest School

October

Thursday 5th Flu Immunisations

Friday 6th Year 2 children Forest School

Monday 30th Vision Screening - Reception only

November

Tuesday 21st Individual photographs

Term dates for pupils - 2023/24:

AUTUMN TERM 2023

6th September to 15th December 2023

Half term - 23rd to 27th October 2023

SPRING TERM 2024

4th January to 28th March 2024

Half term - 12th to 16th February 2024

SUMMER TERM 2024

15th April to 25th July 2024

May Day holiday - 6th May 2024

Half term - 27th May to 31st May 2024

Non-pupil days (i.e. staff only): 4th and 5th September, 3rd January, 3rd June and 28th June 2024

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