

# NEWSLETTER SPRING 2024



## Whimble Primary School

Issue 3

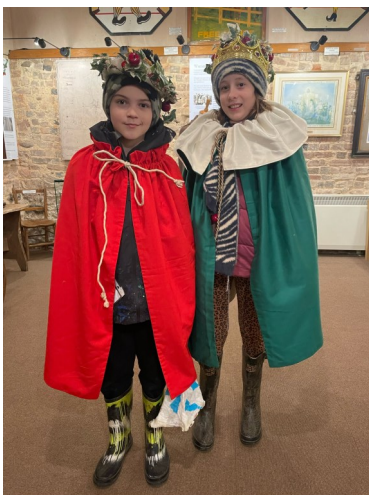
19.01.24

Another cold week, the children have enjoyed seeing some frost and ice. As an adult, I think we forget the excitement that this brings as we are always thinking about the practical things!

Despite the cold mornings, there has been a significant improvement with punctuality in the mornings. Thank you for your support with this and please keep it up. This also applies to the end of the school day as well.

### Whimble Wassail

Whimble held its annual wassail this week and after our own the week before, Jack and Bea did a brilliant job of being King and Queen. Well done, and thank you for representing the school so well.



## Federation News from Mr Jolliffe

At the beginning of every month, the Heads and I hold an attendance clinic as part of our weekly team meeting. This enables us to review the attendance at each school and identify any patterns in absences. At this time of year, there are inevitably a lot of childhood illnesses around and we are not concerned about children who are away from school because of unavoidable illness. Our focus is on children who are not attending school but this could be avoided. However, at our meeting this week, I was really encouraged to see that the majority of federation schools have attendance above the Devon average of 95%, which is fantastic. The schools that were slightly below the county average are close and there are good reasons for this, so a huge thank you to everyone who has made sure their child is in school every day that they can be, we really appreciate your commitment to education and to working with us to make every day count.



### FOUNDATION GOVERNOR

Following last week's note in the newsletters about Foundation Governors, we have had a new Foundation Governor come forward. If you are still interested in finding out more about this important role, please do contact Mrs Last via your child's school office.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Campaign supported by Fresha for School Dinners

If you are a school or parent and value your children having a healthy school meal, this is your chance to ask for change. I'm asking the government for free school meals across the country. The benefits for children, their families and their education cannot be ignored. I support the call for Universal Free School Meals for children in all primary and secondary schools - but that's not all.

You may have seen the good news that free, hot meals for all primary children in London has been extended for another year. Scotland already has free meals for all primary, and Wales too by the end of this year.

Firstly, let's secure Universal Free School Meals for the whole of the UK. Sign the petition, tell the government its time here <https://freeschoolmealsforall.org.uk/take-action>

There are many petitions, many organisations calling for this - Show your support in asking the Gov for a free school meal for every child in school you can share a picture like this



& use hashtag [#goodfoodforchildren](#)

Something you may not know - the London scheme that is changing lives and schools - allows £3 per meal. Everywhere else it is just £2.53. This has to change. School meal funding has increased by just 3% in 3 years, whereas the living wage has increased by 27% in the same time.

To meet high standards - we also need the standards, but I'm working on that! - I need to be able to buy local and fresh produce ensuring that food fuels kids through their day, supports the local economy while meeting environmental targets. It simply isn't possible to provide great, tasty food for thousands of children every day without paying for quality ingredients and employing knowledgeable staff.

So I'm asking for free school meals for all but secondly, let's have good free school meals for all. It has been recognised and proved in London that nutritious and filling meals fuel children to learn and thrive, let's secure these benefits for all of the UK.



[#goodfoodforchildren](#)

See more evidence, reports and calls to action in the comments.

<https://www.itv.com/news/2024-01-16/health-experts-call-for-universal-free-school-meals-to-tackle-food-poverty>

<https://www.laca.co.uk/news/faculty-public-health-report-calls-expansion-free-school-meal-programme>



## Supporting Children's Mental Health

There has been a notable change in children's expectations and anxieties. As part of our PSHE curriculum, supported by Skills Builder sessions, we encourage children to talk about things and provide them with strategies to manage and cope with a variety of situations. We also deal with things as they arise, should we need to.

As adults, we know these are essential skills to have, and as educators and parents we all have a role to play in this. It is important that we understand that much planning and preparation goes into activities and events with the main outcome usually being enjoyment whilst keeping all participants safe. Trying new things or going to new places can provoke an anxious response - this is perfectly normal and it is important we have these responses to help keep ourselves safe. However, it is vital that as much as possible, we do not allow this natural response to stop us trying new things or going to places we haven't been before.

This was visible yesterday, with our Year 5 and 6s going to listen to the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra at the Great Hall. Children were prepped well and we gave them information in stages and once there, they were all fine. Coming back, we could have not foreseen being stuck in a traffic jam for 20 minutes, but it didn't matter, we were going to return late, but we were all together and safe. This in itself was good learning about what we can and cannot control.

"Anxiety is an uncomfortable emotion often fuelled by uncertainty". As parents, you have a role to play too - you don't have to solve everything. Things may take time to sort. Some information is good, starting with a few key points then followed up again before adding in any new things. Children often want lots of information and ask many questions, but unlike adults do not have the capacity to cope and manage all that information, which can then fuel anxiety. If we all look back in our life, we have all had anxieties (and still do), but it is surprising how much of these things we can deal with and work through. We can all be stronger and more capable than we think we are.

The right amount of anxiety can improve performance and definitely builds resilience. All skills we need in our personal suitcase of life.

It is important to note that there are different levels of anxiety, and where this is causing more of a concern, it can be useful to seek some more advice and support.

**The YoungMinds Parent Helpline** is a helpline that provides information and advice to parents/carers who are worried about a child or young person's wellbeing/mental health.

The service is available 9.30am–4.00pm, Monday to Friday.

Call: 0808 802 5544

[Send a message](#)

There is a lot of support out there to help too. See our school website for more information.

# Dates for your diary

## January

22nd/29th Beech Class Swimming—Oak Class year 4's

## February

5th/19th/26th Beech Class Swimming—Oak Class year 4's

21st-23rd Year 5 residential to Bristol/Bath

## March

18th Year 5 Showdown at Barnfield Theatre

## Term dates for pupils - 2023/24:

### SPRING TERM 2024

**4<sup>th</sup> January to 28<sup>th</sup> March 2024**

*Half term - 12<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> February 2024*

### SUMMER TERM 2024

**15<sup>th</sup> April to 25<sup>th</sup> July 2024**

*May Day holiday - 6<sup>th</sup> May 2024*

*Half term - 27<sup>th</sup> May to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2024*

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

Headteacher: Mrs. Carole Shilston

Telephone/fax: 01404 822584

Email: [admin@whimpleprimary.co.uk](mailto:admin@whimpleprimary.co.uk)

Website: [www.whimple-primary.devon.sch.uk](http://www.whimple-primary.devon.sch.uk)