

NEWSLETTER AUTUMN 2023

Whimble Primary School

Issue 3

22.09.23

It feels very British to talk about the weather all the time, however, it does seem like we have experienced all extremes this week. I even overheard a child saying, 'it will snow next!' Like many of you, I really hope not in September!

Coats are an essential item of clothing to have all the time, this enables children to access the outdoors regularly. Please remind them to bring them in.

Just to remind you that within the school gates is a no smoking area, including vapes.

Parent Information Sessions

Just a brief reminder that these sessions are next week All sessions will be held in the relevant class (start times below). For KS2 this will only be for about 15 minutes, for KS1 it may be a little longer in order to cover the systems for teaching reading and phonics and the support you can help with.

Monday 25th September	Beech Class 4.30pm
Tuesday 26th September	Willow Class 4.30pm and Ash Class 3.40pm
Wednesday 27th September	Oak Class 3.40pm and Elm Class 3.40pm

Please sign up [here](#)

Willow Class Swimming

Swimming starts on Monday 2nd October for all children in Willow Class. An email was sent out yesterday with all the relevant forms/permissions - please complete these as soon as possible. Children will be unable to go without them.

Parent Consultations

These will be held week commencing 16th October. More details in next weeks newsletter but to help diary arrangement the dates for each class will be:

Elm - Tuesday 17th and Thursday 19th
Ash - Tuesday 17th
Oak - Tuesday 17th and Wednesday 18th
Beech - Tuesday 17th
Willow - Monday 16th and Tuesday 17th

Homework

We have been delighted to see children getting back into the swing of learning in school, and enriching this at home too. Don't forget, the most important thing you can do with your child is to listen to them read, or read to them every day. [Harry in Willow Class has been busy this week and independently created this Scratch project](#) - we thought it was worth sharing. Well done Harry!

Residential visits are an important part of the wider curriculum development that we offer to all our children in Key Stage 2. The details of the programme for 2024 will be given to parents nearer the time but in principle, the visits will follow the same pattern as last year, with Year 3 and 4 staying for one night at Okehampton YHA between 17th and 19th April 2024. The Year 4s in other Federation schools have already stayed there last year but will be returning with younger members of their class and Whimble pupils, and will be taking part in a new and more challenging range of activities. Year 5 will be visiting Bristol and Bath [including seeing 'Wicked' at Bristol Hippodrome] from 21st to 23rd February and staying at the YHA in Bath. For this school year. The Year 6 residential for Whimble children will take place from 8th to 12th July and we will be staying at Pixie's Holt on Dartmoor next year. Some of the venues and activities have not yet confirmed prices for next year but the cost is likely to be in the region of £350 to £380 for Year 6, £190 for Year 5 and £85 for Year 3 and 4.

Residential visits give children a great opportunity to learn in a different environment and gain a wide range of experiences away from home. Children often identify residential visits as the highlight of their time at primary school and their experiences create lifelong memories. I hope this information helps you to plan ahead and prepare your child for their residential visit; more information will be sent out to parents well in advance of the visits taking place.

EVF GOVERNING BOARD REPORT

On Tuesday 19th September, the EVF Governing Board came together for the first time this academic year at Newton St Cyres. Chair Jackie Enright welcomed a number of new faces following the Federation's decision to re-federate with Whimble School now joining. Former Whimble Governors Digory Smith and Sarah Butler were welcomed along with Head of School, Carole Shilston.

At the start of the new year, it seemed an ideal opportunity for the full governing board to reflect on how we can achieve the vision of "challenge, discover, succeed" and Executive Headteacher John Jolliffe led a reflection on how we are able to be rejuvenated and reinvigorated in this new school year. The reflection served to remind all present of how we are able to nurture and encourage our children to grow.

As the board incorporated our Annual General Meeting, the annual "housekeeping" business of appointing chairs, vice-chairs and lead governors was completed as well as providing assurance that governors had agreed codes of conduct, declarations of interest and new policies.

Once completed, the governors held a session with Educational Consultant and EVF parent Juliet Corbett around the strategy and visions for the federation as a whole between 2022 and 2029. We reflected on how, with our growth to date we have undertaken significant collaboration with other similar sized schools which are all at the heart of their local communities.

The remainder of the meeting saw the board working in groups to discuss the EVF strategy and culture in depth and how we can continue to deliver excellent education and outcomes for our students and communities. Despite the relatively long session, we all came away still rejuvenated and reinvigorated in tune with John's original message, and ready to tackle the coming year.

OUTDOOR LEARNING

Mr Nichols, who is the lead teacher for outdoor learning for the Exe Valley Federation, completed his Moorland Leader Camping Award last weekend, spending two nights on Dartmoor in the torrential rain. Congratulations to him for achieving this qualification, which is part of the development work he is doing with outdoor learning.

Other Important Updates

Applications now open for 2024 secondary school places

September 2024 may seem a long way off but if your child is currently in Year 6 of primary and due to start secondary school next year, you need to start the application process now.

We are taking applications from families whose children are due to start secondary school in September 2024.

The deadline for secondary school applications is Tuesday 31 October 2023.

Applications along with more information regarding the process is available on this link:

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/educationandfamilies/school-information/apply-for-a-school-place/apply-for-a-secondary-school-place/>

Each school now has its own admission criteria, so it's important to look at the information relating to specific schools on their websites.

Please make sure that you choose more than one option otherwise you risk the possibility of your child being allocated in any secondary school in the area.

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

Dates for your diary

September

Friday 22nd Year 1 children (in both Ash and Elm) Forest School
Monday 25th Parent Information Session for Beech Class 4.30pm
Tuesday 26th Parent Information Session for Ash Class 3.40pm, Willow 4.30pm
Tuesday 26th French Day - wear red, white and blue
Wednesday 27th Parent Information Session for elm and Oak at 3.40pm
Friday 29th Year 2 children Forest School

October

Thursday 5th Flu Immunisations
Friday 6th Year 2 children Forest School
w/c 16th Parent consultations
Monday 30th Vision Screening - Reception only

November

Tuesday 21st Individual photographs

Headteacher: Mrs. Carole Shilston

Telephone/fax: 01404 822584

Email: admin@whimpleprimary.co.uk

Website: www.whimple-primary.devon.sch.uk