



NEWSLETTER 7

01404 812599 Friday 23rd October 2020. Website www.west-hill-primary.devon.sch.uk

Dear Parents,



ATTENDANCE

Last week (week 6) the whole school's attendance was 99% which is above our target of 97.5%. Well done everyone.

THANK YOU

This half term has passed so quickly and I cannot believe it is half term already. I would just like to thank you all for your support since returning to school in September. We appreciate that the staggered starts and collection times have inconvenienced some of you (particularly those with more than one child). Everyone has been so accommodating and accepting of the restrictions including the changes to parents' evenings and parents being prohibited into the school etc. I would also like to thank those of you who have had to self-isolate whilst waiting for COVID test results for any family members exhibiting symptoms.

After seven weeks of being back at school, the children (and staff) are extremely tired and exhausted and I hope everyone can enjoy some rest over half term.

DON'T TURN HALLOWEEN INTO A NIGHTMARE ON YOUR STREET (MESSAGE FROM DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL)

The Halloween season is fast approaching, and families may be wondering whether trick or treating is worth the risk this year. It's really not. Please just stay at home and don't turn Halloween into a COVID-19 "nightmare on your street". There are plenty of ways to enjoy Halloween safely at home, from spooky window dressings to ghostly film nights. This year public health teams in Devon are asking families to forget the usual trick or treat plans and instead celebrate safely indoors. [We've got some 'low risk' celebration ideas on our website](#), along with a list of things to avoid doing this Halloween.

PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE

We usually send out a parent questionnaire in the summer term at the end of the school year to gauge parental feedback. Obviously this year, COVID-19 put a stop to that idea! We would therefore really appreciate you completing our questionnaire via the attachment or via the paper copy sent home tonight in your child's book bag. Please return all completed questionnaires to the school office via the letterbox by **Friday 6th November 2020** (to allow 2 weeks for completion).

SOCIAL DISTANCING/COVID

Please can we remind you of the importance to adhere to the COVID-19 rules and maintain a

distance of 2 metres when dropping off in the morning, collecting at the end of the day and particularly when talking to members of staff.

Last week saw 5 cases in the Ottery St Mary/West Hill area and we are aware of local schools such as Willowbrook Primary School, Payhembury Primary School and St. Peters in Exeter where classes have had to close in the last week due to cases of COVID. We are trying our best to avoid this happening at West Hill but need your support with this.

We would also ask you to observe the staggered drop off times in the mornings to avoid queueing. Up to half of Year 6 pupils are arriving at school on their own between 8.45am and 8.50am but their allocated arrival time is between 8.55am and 9.05am. This means they are then in the way of the Year 5 pupils who arrive between 8.45-8.55am.

COVID case numbers across the county are rising overall, in line with the national trend, but they remain below the English average. There was a total of 478 confirmed cases from 14th-20th October in Devon. "[When we look at those people who are testing positive for COVID we are seeing an increase in the age profile.](#) So we're now seeing working age and older adults who are testing positive for COVID-19," said Mr Steve Brown, the Deputy Director for Public Health Devon.

"Again that's similar to what we see across the country. While the numbers are low in Devon at the moment, it's really important that we do all we can to maintain that," he said.

"We want to make sure that we stay in the medium tier, so it's really important that everyone adheres to those key guidance and messages:

1. "Keep your social distance - ideally to a minimum of two metres
2. "Make sure that you wash your hands properly and regularly
3. "And wear face coverings where required and appropriate."

LETTER FROM THE HEAD OF EDUCATION AND LEARNING AT DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL

Please see the attached letter which outlines some key messages.

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/coronavirus-advice-in-devon/children-education/letter-to-schools-to-relay-to-parents-ahead-of-half-term-holiday/>

ONLINE RECORDER CLUB

For those who miss the recorder club, you are invited to have online recorder sessions starting after half term. These will be short individual 15 min slots, after school, of fun and music! If interested, please contact Vanessa Tyrrell via e-mail vjetyrrell@hotmail.com

TRANSFER TO SECONDARY EDUCATION 2020 - ATTENTION YEAR 6 PARENTS

There are only 9 days left to apply for your child's secondary school place. If you have not already done so please ensure that you apply before the deadline of **midnight on 31st October 2020**. Please apply on-line at:

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

NEW AUTUMN/WINTER DINNER MENU

The new school dinner menu has now been issued and will start on Monday 2nd November. Please see the attached document for further details.

READER HELPERS NEEDED

Would you like to be a Reader Helper at West Hill? The following classes need help:

Reception - Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday (preferably morning)

Class 1 - Monday, Wednesday and Fridays (preferably morning)

Class 2 - Tuesdays and Wednesday morning



Class 3 - Tuesday to Friday mornings

Class 5 - Wednesday afternoons

With current Safeguarding regulations, a Volunteer Application Form will need to be completed, references taken and a DBS check undertaken before you are able to start. We also ask you to undertake some basic safeguarding training and read 4 safeguarding policies. It is vital that children read in school every day and we really value the volunteers that generously give up their time. All that we ask is that you give a half-termly commitment.

WRITING COMPETITION HOMEWORK

We are very lucky to work closely with the organisers of Sidmouth Science Festival who are promoting a 'Think Footprint - creative writing competition' in liaison with Jo Earlam, children's author of 'Rosa's Footprint'. We would like to encourage all children to take part in the competition and all entries will be awarded 15 house points. Please see the attached pdf document for further competition details.

All entries to be returned to Miss Kemp (Class 3) with your child's name and class on the entry by **Friday 6th November**. Good luck!

REMOTE LEARNING

After half term, any children who are self-isolating due to COVID related issues will be able to continue their education at home via Google Classroom (for Classes 1-6) and Tapestry (for Reception)

CAN YOU HELP?



We are looking to improve the area outside our school by the big wall that is currently a bit dull. If anyone could donate any spare bulbs, small plants and shrubs we would be very grateful.

PTFA NEWS

PTFA AGM FEEDBACK

The following roles were confirmed at the PTFA AGM held on Thursday 8th October:

- Chair - (Co-Chairs) Joanna Bromley and Nicola Davies.
- Treasurer - Nicky Dew.
- Media role for PTFA Facebook page - Oona Webster.
- 100 Club - Sarah Quilty.
- Secretary - Vacant - **volunteer needed**.

The minutes from the AGM are now available on the school website.

As a member of the school community you are automatically members of the PTFA. If you would like to become more involved in the PTFA, please do not hesitate to contact one of the role holders mentioned for more information/to propose ideas.

During these unprecedented times we need to reach out further, look outside the box and use alternative methods of fundraising than we would normally use.

As our larger fundraisers (Summer fete 2020 and winter ball 2020) have not been able to take place, our kitty isn't looking as healthy as it would normally be, yet our requests from school remain and due to Covid have increased due to the need for more outdoor covered space.

After some serious consideration we are in the process of setting up an electronic donation / fund raising page. We realise that this is an unpredictable economic time but if you do have capacity to give to this, we will be able to continue to fulfil funding requests.

MANUAL SKILLS

Do you have skills we could utilise? We currently have two outdoor projects (footpath leading to an outdoor classroom and a sail to cover an outside play area) that require some manual labour and materials. We would like these to be undertaken as soon as possible to maximise the benefit for our children and to meet Covid restrictions.

PUMPKINS

Please see the PTFA Facebook page and class WhatsApp groups for the electronic map of the village. Thank you to all who purchased a wooden pumpkin and entry into the trail. Enjoy your Halloween Walks. A fundraising total will be announced over half term!

COIN COLLECTION

Thank you to all that added coins to the collections within the classrooms. Fundraising totals from this event will be announced soon and the winning class who will receive an Amazon voucher!

AMAZONSMILE

Have you heard of AmazonSmile? It's a simple way of generating some pennies for the school whilst you shop with Amazon. Hopefully you'll have seen details via the class Whatsapp groups, or see the attached instruction sheet for details of how to set this up on your Amazon account and App.

CHRISTMAS ARTWORK

You should have already received a leaflet last week through your child's bookbag regarding Christmas cards/tea towels etc. We have used a company this year that allows you to place orders direct, with deliveries being made to home addresses. There are a nice variety of products to choose from including Christmas cards.

Please note that the website is www.mychildsart.co.uk - log in under the "group portal" option, using the school details, then use the individual code given for your child. Please note the deadline of the start of December.

BIKE RACK

Sharon Green (parent in Y1, Y4 and Y6) has applied for a grant to cover the cost for a mini pod through Devon Country Council for Reception and Year 1 children to use. Thank you Sharon.

COMMUNITY NEWS

SAMARITAN'S PURSE SHOE BOX APPEAL

For the past 30 years, St Michael's has supported the Samaritan's Purse shoe box appeal at Christmas, where children in poorer countries, regardless of colour or creed, get a shoebox full of Christmas goodies. With this global pandemic the need for these little boxes is greater than ever this year. Can you help us to fill boxes to bring a little cheer to children who may get nothing else for Christmas? All donations gratefully received no later than **November 4th**.

We don't have any leaflets at this time, the Samaritans purse office had to close because of Covid and they ask people to go on line to download information. The items that cannot be included in the

boxes are; used or damaged items, war related items such as guns, knives, fighter planes, military figures; seeds sweets, chocolate, or food items; toothpaste, lotions our liquids including bubbles; Playing cards of the 4-suit variety; religious or political literature; sharp or fragile items; books with mainly words. They also ask for donations and these should be made on line at: samaritans-purse.org.uk/occ

Thank you.

HOMELESS SHOEBOX APPEAL FOR THE CLOCKTOWER SURGERY, EXETER

I am collecting shoe boxes for the homeless again this year. All boxes will be going to the Clocktower Surgery in Exeter. I had the privilege of having a tour last year, seeing the invaluable work they do in giving support to our homeless community in Exeter. If you would like to donate a box, please could you drop it to St Michael's Church in West Hill or to my home address, Oakridge House, Brackendown, West Hill. Please label clearly whether it's for a lady or gent (no razors, sharp objects or hand sanitiser please). Unfortunately, I am, not allowed to take blankets and coats as in previous years. The deadline is Friday 11th December, as boxes will be quarantined to keep everyone safe. This could be a good half term project to do with the children and to help them to show care for those less fortunate. Ideas for shoeboxes: hats, gloves, warm socks, wipes, sweets, lip balm, hand cream, toothbrush and paste, shower gel, hair brush, sanitary towels, dog treats, a torch, thermals.

Thank you. Michaela Chown

Have a lovely weekend and half term week.

With my best wishes



Mrs. Cheryl Boulton
Headteacher