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JANUARY NEWSLETTER

Dear Parents / Carers,

A warm welcome back to school to all children and parents. It has been wet this month, but no snow as yet. I am sure we will have colder weather warnings over the coming few weeks so please watch out for our updates on ParentMail, Class DOJO and our Facebook page concerning this information.

St David's Food Bank

Many thanks for your contributions to support the local food bank. I know they were very grateful for your generosity.

Cythnia Spencer Hospice

I am delighted to inform you that we have collected £690 for the hospice from your kind donations at the children's Christmas concerts. Thank you all so much.

Homework Review

Thank you if you completed a survey I sent out last term. We had over 140 responses, which was excellent. It has really helped to ascertain your viewpoints on many aspects of the school. We did ask how we could improve our offer to children and homework was an area that was mentioned by many of you. As you may imagine, the answers were varied and not fully for or against homework, but most parents agreeing the homework needed to be purposeful and marked, which are my sentiments entirely. We will be trialling some homework books in Key Stage 2 and Year 2, as many comments were concerning the amount of time our children are on APP base sites. I will be asking for your views later in the year on how successful the books are in supporting the link with school and home. Homework will be set on Thursdays and need to be sent back to the class teacher by the following Tuesday. There will be a homework club for children who may find completing the homework a challenge. However, this club is voluntary. We will be contacting you directly, if your child is consistently not completing homework, to ascertain how we can support your child to do so. If your child attends homework club they will eat their lunch with staff who will support them in completing their work. They will then go out to play, as we want this to be a positive experience. This will be based in the studio each Tuesday. Mrs Sleightholme and Mrs Abel will run the club over the duration of the lunchtime.

Reading

Reading is our school priority this year. It is imperative that your child reads daily. By continuous practice, they will develop fluency and comprehension – skills we all need. Please remember to record on Boom Reader that your child has read. From EYFS and Key Stage 1, your child will read to an adult in school at least once per week. If you feel you can volunteer some time to support reading in school, please do let me know. Prior to Covid we had lots of volunteers and I would like to gain some more to support the children. We will offer support and training if you feel you could offer some time.



Sports' opportunities

Years 2, 5 and EYFS all have coaches to support different activities. EYFS are being supported with gymnastics, Year 2 have a tennis coach and Year 5 have a rugby coach in to develop our children's skills. Year 5 and Year 6 are also attending swimming. Jamie Worrall is a trained swimming instructor and he is supported at the pool with two other trained instructors. Mrs Hurr and Mrs Ropiak, from school, also support the children. Our intention is that all children can achieve their 25 metres by the time they leave Whitehill as swimming is a life skill. I am always delighted to hand out certificates on our Worker of the Week assembly for those children who have lessons outside of the school day.

SAFER INTERNET DAY

This is on the 7th February. We will be emphasising to the children about how to keep safe on the internet. Miss Mitchell will be leading an assembly during the week for the children. A really useful website is Safer Internet, where you can find advice as a parent on how you can support your child and this can be accessed using this link: <https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/parents-and-carers> As a parent or carer, you play a key role in helping your child stay safe online. You don't need to be an expert on the internet to help keep your child safe online. The advice and resources on the site are there to support parents in supporting children to use the internet safely, responsibly and positively. At the end of last term Miss Mitchell sent a Parentmail to you all with support for parents using the National Online Safety package. You can access the most current information and also there are some training and support videos for parents which are worth investigating.

FRIENDS OF WHITEHILLS SCHOOL (FOWS)

The Friends of Whitehills School work tirelessly to raise funds, which are used to improve provision for your children. During last term, they raised over £500. FOWS have already supported every year group by helping to subsidise the overall cost of trips and residential as well as helping each year group to buy games and resources for the children to use, not to mention Christmas presents from Santa. If you have any other suggestions for how FOWS could spend the funds they have raised, then please, get in touch with them through the following whitehillspta@outlook.com. All parents are welcome to join The Friends of Whitehills School.

It is with sadness that I have to inform you that Mrs Kings has left Whitehills. She has worked at our school for more than a decade in different roles. I know that she will be missed. Mrs Kings will be replaced with Mrs McAlpine and Mrs Fitzpatrick, who already work in the school and know the children and staff.

We break up on Friday 10th February and return to school on Monday 20th February.

With Best Wishes,

Natalie James
Headteacher

DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES

JANUARY	
24 th January	Homework club at lunchtime (every Tuesday)
24 th January	Year 2 & Year 5 Kurling Competition
24 th January	Local Cluster School visit to review maths
31 st January	Year 3 parent assembly 9:05 both classes
31 st January	SAS project Year 5/6 – Selected children
FEBRUARY	
1 st February	Local Authority to visit and review EYFS provision
7 th February	Safer Internet Day
10 th February	FOWs disco all year groups – details to follow
10th February	School closes for Half Term and re-opens Monday 20th February



15 th February	Cut off day to book School meals for the week after half term
22 nd February	Year 3 Synagogue visit
27 th February	Lent assembly with Reverend Sarah
27 th February	Local Authority visit to review Foundation subjects
28 th February	Year 2 parent assembly both classes
MARCH	
2 nd March	World Book Day – more details to follow
3 rd March	Pre-loved school uniform donations
8 th March	Year 5/6 Netball festival at Benham Sports Centre
13 th March	School photographs in hall
15 th March	Year 5 to visit St Mark's church
20 th March	Cricket engagement day years 2-6
22 nd March	Quikstix Hockey Years 3 & 4
23 rd March	Termly Learning Conference
28 th March	Termly Learning Conference
29 th March	Year 4 visit to St Marks Church
30 th March	Young Leaders conference
31 st March	Whitehills children and parents sponsored marathon
31 st March	School closes for Easter and re-opens Tuesday 18th April
12 th April	Cut off day to book School meals for the week after Easter

