



Newsletter

January 2020

A place to
SMILE

Dear Parents/Carers,

Welcome back—we hope you had a lovely Christmas break. In assemblies this week, I have been talking to the children about starting a new decade, and getting them to think about what they hope the world will be like in 10 years time. It seems incredible that it's 20 years since the new millennium. The assembly story I read to KS2 was written in the year 2000, imagining what the world would be like in January 2020! Some things were not too far off—electric cars that could drive themselves; virtual reality theme park; and parents emailing their child to send them a message in the same house! What was interesting was that the story showed that in the year 2000, we were getting the children to think about how they could look after the world to make sure the future was what they hoped it would be—a message which is still so relevant today.

At WPS, we encourage the children to be 'Global Thinkers' which is one of our learning values. We want to help them have an awareness of the world around them, to be able to ask searching questions, and to give their own opinions, giving reasons for their ideas. To help them develop these skills, this year we are subscribing to a resource called 'Picture News' to support our class assemblies, giving the opportunity for children to discuss topical issues in an age appropriate way. As part of this resource, Picture News also provide a 'Picture News at Home' resource which we will be making available to KS2 parents via Parentmail. This is a short 'think piece' with questions to get children thinking and talking about topical issues which parents may choose to discuss with their child (please don't feel you have to print the sheet—there is a space for children to make notes of their responses, but this is not something which they have to do, and the topic could just be discussed from a screen). We will be trialling these materials over the next two terms and will welcome any feedback from parents about whether it has been useful or not. The first edition will be sent out next week.

Lesley Pennington—Headteacher

Citizenship Award

Congratulations to Molly Boag who became the first citizenship award winner for this academic year.

INSET Day Reminder

The school will be closed to pupils on Friday 14th February.

Changes to the Midday Team

Last term we said goodbye to Mrs Bright, Mrs Elo and Mrs Fraser from the midday supervisory team who have all secured different roles in schools this January. We wish them all the very best and thank them for their work for the school. I'm pleased to say that we welcome three more members to the team—Mrs Leech has returned to WPS after a break in a different job, and Mrs Pack and Mrs Webb have also joined as lunchtime supervisors. I'm also delighted that Mrs Irvine and Mrs Smart, two of our most experienced supervisors, have offered to step up to lead the midday team jointly this term and we wish them luck in their new role.

We do still have a 3 day midday supervisory position for Weds-Fri available and we will be re-advertising this week. An application pack can be collected from the school office.



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Name the Gritter Competition—Whiteley Winner!



Last term, the JRSOs invited children to enter a Hampshire competition to name one of the county's gritting lorries this winter. Congratulations to Eddie Robertson whose suggestion, 'Grizzly Gritter', was one of the county winners—a fantastic achievement out of 800 entries! As a prize, his class (3D) will be getting a visit from the named lorry for a special presentation this Friday, when they will also receive a talk about road safety, and get to sit in the lorry!

Census Day—16th January—School Lunch Reminder

On Thursday 16th January, we will once again be asking all YR/1/2 children to take up the offer of a free school lunch as this is the second census day when the funding for the universal free meals is calculated. The numbers who take up meals on census day are used to work out our funding for the rest of the year, so it is really important that as many children as possible take up a lunch on this day. If we can get all children signed up it makes a considerable difference to our school funding for the following year. As usual, we will be making some changes to the Thurs/Friday menus that week to encourage take up and KS1 children will also be able to order a picnic option if they would prefer a cold lunch. See the separate Parentmail for more details.

Prompt Lunch Payments—a Thank You

You may know from my newsletters over the past year that the school have brought in new systems to ensure that payments for school lunches are made promptly and that families are not able to run up large debts. I'd like to say thank you as the vast majority of parents are now ensuring that dinner money accounts are paid for in advance, or settled on a weekly basis. It is obviously important for the school from a financial point of view that we are not left responsible for unpaid meals, but it would also be irresponsible of us to allow families to accrue large debts for meals. If you do receive texts or letters regarding dinner money debt, I would ask that you pay promptly or contact the school office to arrange a payment plan if there are difficulties.

Have your circumstances changed recently? Are you in receipt of any of these benefits?

Income Support Income-based Jobseekers Allowance Universal Credit
Income-related Employment and Support Allowance Guaranteed element of State Pension
Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190) .

If you are in receipt of any of the above benefits your child may be entitled to free school meals. If you have not yet registered your child, please do so by going online at <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/caterers/hc3s>. You just need your National Insurance Number and date of birth. Alternatively, a member of the office staff can check online for you.

Fundraising Thank Yous!

Thank you to everyone who came to join us at the Solent Hotel for our 'Carols at the Solent' Event in December. I'm sure you will agree with me that it was a lovely venue for the event, and I'm hoping we will be able to return there next year. There was a great atmosphere and the Salvation Army band wanted to pass on their thanks to all those who contributed to the collection as they raised £250 towards their charity work with the homeless and vulnerable. Marie Curie Cancer Care have also passed on their thanks to the senior choir who helped them raise £335 singing Christmas carols in Fareham Shopping Centre.

The Young Govenors would like to say thank you for the support for their Christmas jumper day appeal—over £250 was raised for Blue Cross, their chosen charity.

Finally, thank you so much for supporting the FOWPS events last term. The quiz night raised £540, Secret Santa - £990, the discos - £553 and the Christmas card project - £658. Thank you to everyone involved in helping these events to run—the funds will be used to support school projects this year.



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Warm Clothes Reminder

Please can you ensure that children bring warm coats into school each day, and make sure any hats/gloves/scarves are named. Can I also ask that you ensure that your child has some tracksuit or jogging trousers in their PE kit as we continue to do outside games through the winter months. Thank you.



Discount Code—Soho Soaps

Thank you very much to local company Soho Soaps. They are offering a 10% discount code for online purchases (WPS10) which gives the purchaser 10% off but they will also donate another 10% direct to the school for each purchase made with the code.

Internet Safety—Updates for Parents

Many of your children may have received new technology for Christmas, and so if you haven't done so before, now is an ideal time to make yourself aware of the advice for parents on keeping children safe online. I'd like to share with you an excellent free website resource for parents—www.vodafone.co.uk/mobile/digital-parenting/. This has a really good 'expert advice' section as well as articles about the latest apps, gaming, how to set up parental controls and filtering, how to have awkward conversations and so on. It is never too early to start thinking about the ground rules for your house around use of technology and the internet.

I would encourage all parents to think about how they will manage their child's access to technology **before** it becomes an issue—including ground rules for mobile phones. As a school, we are seeing increasing issues around mobile phone use with our older children. We will therefore be updating our mobile phone code of conduct this term. This will be shared with parents and our older pupils.

Accessible Play

We are hugely grateful to Co-op, Park Gate, who selected FOWPS as one of their chosen local charities last year. They raised over £5000 through their membership donation scheme. This money is going to be used to help make our main adventure playground more accessible for children with disabilities, and we were delighted to meet some of the staff who came to present the cheque to us last term.



We are currently exploring possibilities to make use of the space just inside the adventure playground gate, and will also need to create a level access path. We are hoping that the project can be completed in the Summer term.

Health Advice

At this time of year, we often get queries regarding whether children can attend school with common childhood ailments and illnesses. If you are unsure whether your child should be in school when they are under the weather, you may find this web link useful <https://what0-18.nhs.uk/parentscarers/child-unwell-ok-go-nurseryschool> which gives advice on whether your child should be in school, and how to treat common illnesses. Don't forget that school policy now allows us to give liquid paracetamol to children to relieve mild symptoms— if you haven't yet signed to give permission, please contact the school office who can provide you with a form. Advice from the NHS states that children with mild headaches, sore throats, colds and earache can usually be sent to school once they have been treated with paracetamol. Please be aware that the school does follow the **NHS advice for diarrhoea or vomiting**, which is that children should not return to school until **48 hours** after the last episode of diarrhoea or vomiting.



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News from an Ex-Pupil

It is always lovely to hear news from our ex-pupils who have gone on to achieve well in their chosen fields. I'm delighted to share that in November, Bella Skipp (daughter of Mrs Skipp) won the Gold medal for confectionery at the WorldSkills UK contest held in Birmingham. She is therefore the UK's top young confectioner! This month, she will find out if she has made the UK team to compete at the international WorldSkills competition in Shanghai in 2021—we have everything crossed for her!

Snow and Ice Plan

The following information is taken from the school's 'Snow and Ice Plan' which, along with risk assessments, helps us to ensure the on-going health and safety of pupils, staff and parents during wintry weather.

Where possible, we aim to keep the school open in icy/snowy conditions. Measures to support this include

- gritting of main pedestrian routes into the school;
- warning signs of potentially icy conditions;
- regular assessments of the safety of playground areas etc. so that areas can be closed/cordoned off if necessary;
- closure of routes on to the school site which are potentially hazardous.



Please note that the boardwalk entrance may be closed in icy/snowy conditions - this is not necessarily because of the boardwalk itself, but because access to and from the boardwalk requires use of the steps/slope to the all-weather pitch which can become unsafe in icy conditions. Any closure will be notified using signs at the entrance and through Parentmail/texts.

- In snowy conditions, the site team's priority will be to clear the paths to the main entrance, YR playground and piazza to provide safe routes to classrooms. Fewer entrances may be used if necessary.

The decision to close the school is not taken lightly, but may be made in the following circumstances:

- when it is deemed unsafe for pupils/staff to access the school site (after a heavy overnight fall of snow, time may be needed to clear access routes and make the site safe);
- if there is a failure with the school heating;
- when there are likely to be significant difficulties for pupils to make their way safely to and from the school due to local road conditions;
- when there are likely to be significant difficulties for an adequate number of staff to travel safely to and from school due to road conditions.

We are fortunate that we have a number of staff who live locally. It may sometimes be possible to open the school with a reduced staff during snowy conditions, as long as there are enough staff to provide adequate supervision for pupils. Other measures which have been used in the past to support safe travel to school include a staggered or later start to the school day to allow more time for travel.

We aim to communicate any decisions regarding school disruption with as much notice as possible. Notification of school closure will be made using Parentmail, the school website and through local radio stations. Hampshire County Council website also publishes an up-to-date list of school closures and a message will be left on the school answer phone (if access has been possible!)

Timeout Charity Football Match

Last term, Timeout Childcare ran a football tournament between the different after school clubs they run in order to raise money for Child In Need. Congratulations to the Whiteley team who won the tournament—even better news was the £500 raised for Children in Need.