



Newsletter

February 2023

Dear Parents/Carers,

We hope you and your families have had an enjoyable half term. Although classroom staff enjoyed a well-earned break, you may well have noticed that work doesn't stop for our site team! I'm pleased to say that the issues with the AWP steps have now been resolved.

We also currently have contractors on site who will be completing the external decoration of the school over the next 6 weeks. Work around the classrooms of our youngest pupils was completed during the half term and there are controls in place to keep the children separate from the term time works. The team on site are very used to working in schools and are ensuring there is minimum disruption to staff and pupils. I hope you like the new colour!

Lesley Pennington—Headteacher

FOWPS Bunny Run—Saturday 18th March

Enrichment

Hopefully you've already noted the date for the Bunny Run which is one of FOWPS' main fund raising events of the year—and also a favourite for families. It's always lovely to make the most of our school grounds, with families from school (and also lots of pre-schoolers) joining us for our token hunt, egg hunt, and other fun activities. More detailed information of how you and your child can get involved before and on the day will be following shortly, but hopefully you have already seen the message about saving an egg box! These will be replacing the Easter cup decorating competition this year, in a bid to re-use and recycle rather than make use of new single-use items. We also hear rumours of a new look for our Easter bunny! Please do look out for more information over the coming weeks.

Shared Paths

Just a reminder that the red paths around Whiteley are for shared use between pedestrians and walkers. I have asked the Junior Road Safety Officers to re-promote our walker and cyclist codes of conduct with classes to help the children know how to develop safe and courteous etiquette when walking, scooting or cycling to school.

We will share these with parents once the JRSOs have had a chance to review them.



Mutual respect

Mutual respect

New Parking Signs

We've had lots of positive comments from families this week about our new child-shaped no parking signs—hopefully this will remind all car users that they should not be parking or stopping directly outside of the school at



drop off/pick up, and that the reason for this is for the safety of the children.

We will be explaining to the children their purpose in assemblies. Please do ensure your children, including pre-schoolers, do not climb on the signs.





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Staffing Update

Last half term, we said farewell to two of our midday supervisors, Mrs Smith and Mrs Rowlands. We would like to thank them for all their hard work over the years. We have been very fortunate to have recruited successfully to these positions, as well as the roles vacated earlier in the term, and have appointed five new midday staff since the start of January. A warm WPS welcome to Miss Jones, Mrs Edwards, Miss Greene, Mrs Almajai, and Mrs Pearce.

Governor News

On behalf of the governing body, I wanted to let you know that our Vice Chair, Tom Southall, has decided to step down as a governor. Tom decided in August 2022 to step down as Chair of Governors, having supported the school in this role for 7 years. Tom kindly agreed to support me as vice chair when I took over in September 2022, but feels the time is right to leave now and pursue new ventures.

I want to thank Tom for his valuable contribution to the school and the personal support he has given me over the last six months. The recent years have been a challenging time as we came through the pandemic, but Tom's unwavering support and guidance for the school have been outstanding. I am sure you will all join me in wishing Tom all the very best in the future. We will now start the elections process for a new vice chair and will communicate the outcome of this in due course.

Kind regards,

Carla Jefferson, Chair of the Board of Governors

Online Safety—Staying up to Date



In school, we have a high focus about online safety. It appears in the computing and PDL (personal development learning) curriculum, but teachers also regularly refer to aspects of online safety whilst they are using online tools for teaching in class. We are aware that technology changes very quickly, and it can be hard for parents to keep up—however, it really is vital that all parents feel confident to talk to their child about online safety, and also know how to help support their child best as they learn to navigate the online world.

A useful analogy is to think of the online world as a playground—when your child first visits a playground as a young child, you hold their hand and support them every step of the way, deciding what is safe for them, and what they need to avoid. As they get older and more confident, you start to withdraw, observing but staying close, gradually allowing more independence. When they are older and you know their capabilities, you may let your child go to a playground alone, but it will be a place that is familiar to you and your child, and you will still have boundaries for them about when they go, for how long and who with.

There are many resources to help parents stay up to date—in this newsletter, I'd like to signpost you to the [NSPCC website](#) which includes a section on keeping children safe online. In particular, there is a section on Online Gaming. Children are increasingly using online games from a young age, but it's an activity which can feel 'alien' to parents. The NSPCC site would be useful for all parents—if your child is not yet accessing online games, it's still useful to find out what it's all about so you are prepared if they do ask whether you will allow them online.



If your child is already accessing online games, there is a useful checklist regarding the risks, but also tips for parents to help safeguard your child—this includes checking the game content, changing the settings, talking to your child regularly about what they are accessing (being curious—not accusatory!) and also includes a suggestion regarding family agreements.



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Spotlight on Inclusion—Neurodiversity Celebration Week 13-19th March

The Neurodiversity Celebration Week website has lots of excellent information and resources with a section specifically for parents. Visit their website www.neurodiversityweek.com to access the whole website including online events, or select the 'Parent' section for a range of information and resources including sections about autism, ADHD, dyslexia, dyspraxia and dyscalculia.

Also, a reminder that Mrs Bevan will be hosting another coffee morning this half term for parents/carers of children with, or showing traits of, autism (Weds 15th March at 9am). Emma Holmes from Ask about Autism will be joining the session to answer questions and share her tips and advice.

School Vision and Values

Just before half term, three leaders from other schools spent the day carrying out a peer review at WPS, helping us to look at the extent to which our school vision and values are shared and understood across the school. I'm very grateful to the group of parents who came in to speak to the reviewers as part of that process. The team also spent time in classes, observed unstructured times, and talked to groups of governors, staff and children as part of the day.

We had some lovely feedback from the team who very much enjoyed their day with us. Their comments included the following:

- All adults articulated 'buy in' to the vision of the school and shared that this was implicit in everything they see within the school
- Parents spoke positively about the strong ethos of the school.
- All children were willing to participate, interact and discuss with visitors and were clearly proud of the school.
- Children are keen to participate in lessons and learning is clearly important to the children
- It is evident that mutual respect is embedded and is the expectation of all children and adults.
- The physical environment and opportunities for wider curriculum breadth contribute to 'enrichment'.

The reviewers also recommended areas where we could further develop. In particular, we are going to look at introducing a more consistent approach to how the learning values are taught and promoted across the school to ensure there is a common language for staff and children to articulate the values. We held a workshop with teachers on Tuesday to start this process, and I will keep you informed through the newsletters of how this develops.



World Book Day Competition—Winner's Trip to Waterstones!



Just a reminder that the closing date for the World Book Day poster competition is Weds 1st March. We are planning on taking the winners of the competition to Waterstones at Whiteley Shopping Centre on World Book Day to choose their book prize and to take part in a treasure hunt activity that Waterstones are running on the day—the treasure hunt will also be in store over the weekend of 4th/5th March so you may like to take your child to take part. All children will be given a World Book Day token which they will be able to use in store to purchase one of the special World Book Day £1 books, or as money off a different book.

