



Volume 17, Edition 6, 25th January 2021
www.westgateprimary.co.uk
admin@westgateprimary.co.uk

THANK YOU and WELL DONE

This is not the start to 2021, our 150th year as a school, that anybody had hoped for. The shock of the announcement of a full national lockdown, at the end of the children's first day back at school, was a real blow to all of us, children, families and staff alike. I'd like to begin by reassuring parents that everyone at school appreciates the challenges you are facing at the moment: many of you juggling work and remote learning, extreme multi-tasking, working early in the day and late at night around your children and also experiencing a sort of crash course in the finer points of the primary school curriculum. Please be assured that we know that you are all doing your very best and are committed to doing everything you can to help your children in their education while learning remotely. We understand that you may struggle to get everything done. This is OK. As a school, we are obliged by the Department for Education (DfE) to provide 3-4 hours of remote learning each day. However we understand that you may not manage this every day with all the plates you are juggling. All any family can do is their best. This week I saw a rumour online that parents who do not manage to do 3-4 hours of learning each day with each child will be fined. **This is not true.** What you are all achieving at the moment is remarkable. It is important that you recognise when you are struggling and reach out for support and advice, and feel comfortable with knowing when you have done all you can. This is likely to be a marathon not a sprint and we all need to try our best but also guard against burnout. We will get through this together, as we always do.



Helen Carpenter
Head Teacher

KEYWORKER & VULNERABLE PUPIL CARE

We experienced an extremely high volume of demand for this facility at the start of term: approximately 40% of our school roll. Following an update to the school risk assessment, additional advice from the Leeds Health & Safety team, and the directive from the DfE to reopen our nursery class fully, we have had to apply the following priorities:

- 1) *Vulnerable pupils*
- 2) *Families where 1 or both parents are health or emergency services workers, where neither parent is working from home*
- 3) *Families where 1 or both parents are education workers, where neither parent is working from home*

This has meant that we are unable to provide care safely for some keyworker families who do not fall into these categories. We do not under-estimate the challenge this poses to affected families. Anybody in this position has been placed on a waiting list in case a place becomes available in their child(ren)'s bubble(s).

Childcare bubbles for keyworkers operate from 07:45 to 18:00 and have been organised into phases: Nursery/ Reception (separate to the ordinary Nursery class); Years 1&2; Years 3&4; Years 5&6. This is a change to our original structure that has been made to ensure that in-school provision is sustainable for school staff balancing face to face and remote learning. Please note that the school kitchen is fully operational during lockdown and children may continue to have a hot school meal if they are attending school.

Anything in a red box in this newsletter requires action on your part. Thank you ☺

LATERAL FLOW DEVICE TESTING FOR SCHOOL STAFF



From this week, all staff working in school who opt in will be conducting twice-weekly lateral flow device tests on themselves. In the event of a positive test, this will result in close contacts being notified to self-isolate while the staff member undertakes a full PCR test. If this second test comes back negative then self-isolation will cease, but if it is positive then all close contacts (including their school bubble, if applicable) will need to self-isolate for the full 10 days.

REMOTE LEARNING & MICROSOFT TEAMS

Feedback so far from families has been very positive about the use of Microsoft Teams to organise our remote learning,



including offering daily face to face contact for each class. Teachers (and you as parents!) have up-skilled themselves incredibly quickly and we have all loved seeing and hearing from our classes. The sessions help to focus children on the learning for that day and provide opportunities for feedback on learning too. We have tried to timetable meetings to avoid clashes for siblings wherever possible, but we are keeping the timings under review.

Just a reminder that it is OK if children can't make every single meeting - we know home life is jam-packed at present! - but they should attend as often as possible. Remote learning tasks can be done throughout the day - you do not have to fit it all in between the two meetings if this does not work for your family.

Our remote learning offer includes:

- Daily live meetings
- Recorded lessons and associated tasks
- Online activities, including TT Rockstars and Numbots
- Hard copy resources where needed
- Practical tasks

WELL DONE for all you are doing while school is closed to most pupils.

DEVICES & BROADBAND ACCESS FOR REMOTE LEARNING



In the first three weeks of term, school has been able to loan laptops to families without a suitable device for each child, and give data-only SIM cards to families

struggling with broadband access, ensuring that these families have no barriers to accessing our remote learning offer. However, we think there may be more families who haven't yet come forward who need this help. If your child is in Y1 upwards and does not have a device for remote learning, or if you have limited broadband access and your child is in Nursery to Y6, please let us know as soon as possible by completing [this simple form](#) and we will be in touch to help.

STATUTORY ASSESSMENTS

The government has confirmed that the usual statutory primary assessments are cancelled this year. We will continue to work hard to ensure children make the progress they need to make to reach the expected standards for their age, and this may include some internal testing, but welcome the fact that we can focus all of our time on teaching for the remainder of this year.

FROM THE SCHOOL OFFICE



Any outstanding balances from last term (school meals charges, peripatetic music fees, nursery fees and WOOSH fees) are payable through SIMS Pay. Please contact the school office if you are having difficulty with payments at the moment so that we can make arrangements that are manageable for you.

As peripatetic music lessons are continuing online during the lockdown, these fees are payable this term as normal.

ACTIVE TRAVEL



Westgate has done incredibly well in our weekly Travel Tracker since September. Obviously at the moment very few families are

travelling to school. However, a **new WOW Activity Tracker** is being developed which allows pupils (and their parents) to record any physical activity they do at home. This will allow them the chance to continue earning WOW badges and importantly, stay active during this time. As you know, daily physical activity is essential for children's mental and physical health. More information will follow as soon as we have it!

DATES FOR THE DIARY



At the moment, many of our larger events are in question, so this schedule is provisional, subject to the restrictions due to the COVID-19

pandemic.

08/02/21 Booking for Consultation Evening opens at 16:00 **TBC**

09/02/21 Safer Internet Day

12/02/21 Break Up- **NB school is not planned to open for critical worker care over half term**
22/02/21 Training Day (Good Autism Practice L2)- school closed including to keyworker & vulnerable pupils

23/02/21 Back to School

22/02- 05/03/21 w/b Fair Trade Fortnight

25/02/21 Nursery Induction mtg **19:00 via Zoom**

09/03/21 Consultation Evening 15:45 **TBC**

11/03/21 Consultation Evening 17:00 **TBC**

04/03/21 World Book Day

27/03/21 FOW Easter Fair **TBC**

31/03/21 Easter Concert 14:00 **TBC**

01/04/21 Break up for Easter

02/04/21 Bank Holiday

19/04/21 Back to School

03/05/21 Bank Holiday

10/05/21 w/b Y6 test week **CANCELLED**

22/05/21 **Otley Show**

27/05/21 **Maypole 09:15**

07/06/21 Back to school

08-09/06/21 Y5 Whitby residential **TBC**

15/06/21 Reception Induction mtg 19:00

16-18/06/21 Y6 Herd Farm residential **TBC**

19/06/21 **Otley Carnival**

22/06/21 Nursery Induction mtg 15:45

28/06/21 Meet the Teacher Y2/4/6

29/06/21 Meet the Teacher Y1/3/5

20/07/21 Talent show 13:45

21/07/21 Leavers' Play/ Party 19:00

23/07/21 Leavers' Assembly 09:00

23/07/21 Break up

26/07/21 Training Day- school closed to pupils

27/07/21 Training Day- school closed to pupils

If your child does not normally attend Nursery when a blue event is taking place, you are welcome to bring them along. Further details will be available from Miss Robinson.

WESTGATE WINDFALL

December's winners were:

1st: K Burnett (£128)

2nd: D Clough (£32)

3rd: K Mellor (£16)



As of January we have **64** members. If you would like to join the monthly draw, please see Mrs Bleasdale in the office for application details. You can pay by standing order or cash/cheque in advance. We would really like to increase our membership this term, and the more members we have the larger the prize fund to be won! All proceeds go to Westgate School Fund, which is used to purchase resources, to fund visitors to school and to subsidise trips for all pupils. Current projects we are seeking funding for include: upgrading pupil laptops; climate-proofing the outdoor spaces through planting; improvements to the kitchen facilities for EYFS/ pupils. **Average monthly prizes last academic year were £142.17, £35.54 and £17.77!**

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



While some families are enjoying having this extra time together, we also know that the

lockdown may be putting significant additional strain on family relationships. If you are experiencing domestic abuse of any kind, or if you are concerned about somebody else, there is help out there.

[Leeds Domestic Violence Service](#) (LDVS) webpage has lots of information that you can access. There is a 24 hour helpline **0113 246 0401** as well as daily online chat from 13:00- 15:00 through [Leeds Women's Aid](#). In addition, [Behind Closed Doors](#) is the community domestic violence team within LDVS, providing a wide range of practical help, including housing. Finally, if you are concerned about your abusive behaviour towards your partner, [Respect Phoneline](#) (0808 8024040) can offer support to change.

SUPPORT FOR STRUGGLING FAMILIES

Our local community is continuing to work hard to ensure that nobody should struggle to feed themselves during lockdown. Working with the local authority and the town council, we should see everyone who needs it receiving food to see them through. Families eligible for free school meals (FSM) can choose from vouchers or food hampers while their child is not attending school, and we are also working with [Rethink Food](#) to provide additional weekly food packages to all FSM families at the moment.

I am sure that the lockdown will have been a further blow to some families' incomes. Your child may be able to get free school meals if you get any of the following:

- Income Support
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- 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)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

Children who get paid these benefits directly, instead of through a parent or guardian, can also get free school meals. Your child may also get free school meals if you get any of these benefits and your child is both:

- younger than the compulsory age for starting school
- in full-time education

If your child is eligible for free school meals, they'll remain eligible until they finish the phase of schooling (primary or secondary) they're in on 31 March 2022. If you find yourself newly eligible for a range of benefits, your child will be eligible for FSM, and free school milk,

too- don't hesitate to contact the school office (info@westgateprimary.co.uk) to let us know so we can make sure you receive your entitlement. All information will be managed confidentially. **We are here to help.**

FRIENDS OF WESTGATE



Don't forget you can raise funds at no cost to yourself! [Easy Fundraising](#) for a wide range of online retailers- support FOW Friends of

Westgate. We have raised **£804.26** in this way so far!

[Amazon Smile](#) for direct donations when shopping on Amazon- select Friends of Westgate

<https://www.easy2name.com/> when buying name labels (select Westgate Primary School when prompted.)

We are currently rearranging our next Friends of Westgate meeting, which will take place on Zoom. Planning this year will include contributing to school's 150th anniversary celebrations later in 2021, and community and fundraising events that we can safely hold while complying with the COVID-19 rules.

Contact v.fuller@westgateprimary.co.uk for more details if you would like to attend.

