



Whiteshill Weekly News

We are curious, we are unique, we are together, we are Whiteshill!

4/9/20

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I want to start by saying a huge thank you to you all for being so supportive this week and understanding with all the new systems we have had to put in place to ensure the children could return safely to school together. We are so pleased to have them all back and they have been absolutely incredible this week at listening to the new rules, enjoying each other's company and handwashing, handwashing, handwashing! We are so proud of them all. Thank you for your patience particularly at the end of the school day where teachers are having to figure out exactly how long it takes for 30 children to wash their hands and also how to get out in a socially distanced line whilst calling the right children to the front depending on which parent is at the front of the queue!! We know it has not been perfect so far but you have been incredibly understanding and once the teething problems have been ironed out it will get smoother each day.

Thank you especially for how you have been coming on and off site in the mornings and afternoons. We know it is very disappointing that because of the pandemic, unfortunately the playground is no longer somewhere that you can chat and catch up in the same way we would in the past – we miss this very much too so we completely understand! However, it is important that when you are on the school site, you stay in your family groups and are socially distanced from other families. Therefore, please go straight to the queue on the playground and stay on the 2m green lines. Once you have dropped your child off or picked them up, please then straight away leave the playground. It is particularly difficult for other parents if you stand and chat in the exitways so even when you have left through the school gates, please be sensitive to other people needing to use the narrow pathway and the main entrance. Thank you so much to everyone this week who has been incredibly understanding when I have been out there reminding people, I really appreciate it.

Goodbye and Thank you!

I wanted to say an official goodbye and thank you to Mrs McCrink who has run our after school club for the last few years on Mon-Wed and also worked as a TA in Oak class last year. She has moved on to pastures new over the summer but we will very much miss working with her and wish her the best of luck for the future!

A big hello to all our new reception children who started school in Willow Class this week! They have all done so well, waving goodbye to parents at the gate and happily following the teachers in to class. We have been incredibly proud of how well they have coped (and the parents too!) We hope that their first experience has been a fun one, despite the changes this year, and we can't wait to see you all Monday morning at 9.05 for their first official half day.

If your child is in Willow or Elm class, please make sure they have a book bag in school. This is because they need to take their reading books back and forth to school every day. It is also useful for letters going back and forth to school. Older children in Maple and Oak class can carry their books in if they prefer but can also have a book bag if they want. Book bags can be purchased from Batemans in Stroud and as this year it is particularly hard to purchase school uniform because stocks are low, I think you are able to buy just a plain green book bag, it does not have to have the school logo on if these are not available.

PE Kits

We have had a think about PE kits since we came back to school as at the moment all the spaces around school are being used for different classes to do SEND interventions, small group work and also for staff members to have somewhere to go at break and lunch! Therefore, we do not have anywhere for the older children to change in to their PE kits. It is also difficult to do this in the classrooms because of how the tables are now set out in a forward facing way. Therefore, we have decided that the best thing to do going forwards is for the children in Elm, Maple and Oak classes to wear their PE kits (shorts and t-shirt in warm weather and t-shirt, tracksuit bottoms and hoodie for cold weather) in to school on their PE day. PE days are as follows:

Elm class – Friday
Maple class – Thursday
Oak class – Wednesday

Please note – we will keep in school their PE bag and trainers/daps – this is so that if they forget their PE kit one week, they can wear the spare kit from school and still take part. On PE day, please send them in to school wearing their PE kit and their school shoes. We will change their shoes in school.

If your child is in Oak class, PE kits were sent home last week due to lack of space so next Wednesday, if they bring in their PE bag with trainers in too that would be great.

Willow class will not need to do this as getting changed for PE is an important part of the EYFS curriculum and they have the space in their classroom to do this. However, they will not do PE for the first couple of weeks so don't worry about sending Willow class PE kits in for now unless you already have, the teachers will send out a letter when they are needed.

Celebration Assembly

I just wanted to let you know that from next week we will be doing celebration assembly each week over Zoom! So the children will be in their classrooms and I will be in my office but we will still get to share together their proudest moments from the week. We will be giving out Proud of certificates, Grow your brain certificates and handwriting hero certificates so look out for them coming home in book bags. We will also be counting up the merit marks earned in class each week and awarding the house cup as well as celebrating birthdays on this day too with a card for each child.

Forest School

Normally, we would be starting forest school for both Willow and Oak class in the coming weeks, however, this year things are obviously a little different. We are working hard behind the scenes to see how we can possibly run forest school on-site for Willow Class (unfortunately we cannot take the Reception children up to the woods this term as we are not allowed to use parent volunteers and so this is just not feasible) and possibly up in the woods for Oak class with just members of staff taking them. However, the guidelines are complex and there are a lot of factors to consider so we are going to take the first few weeks to decide how best this can work and put plans in place to ensure the risks are minimised. As soon as I have made a decision about how this will look, I will let you know so look out for more information in future newsletters.