



Whiteshill Weekly News

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

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We hope you all had a great Easter holidays and managed to relax and enjoy seeing friends and family perhaps that you hadn't been able to previously! It certainly helped to recharge everyone's batteries ready for the summer term.

As you know, it has been an incredibly hard year for all the children in school and we must keep reminding ourselves and remembering that their education and routine has been impacted in a huge way and therefore we cannot expect them to have the emotional and social resilience and momentum that they would have built up in a normal year. You may find that your child is more tired and emotional than you are used to. They may also have problems with friendships that they haven't before. This is of course all understandable and the important things is that you keep us in the loop about any worries or concerns you have so that we can work together to support your child with anything big or small.

At the moment of course, the children are not able to mix together as a whole school and so break and lunch times are spent together as a class, meaning they do not mix with older and younger children as they would normally. We have been so unbelievably impressed with how all the children at Whiteshill really care for each other and they work so hard to look out for one another and play together in a positive way. I often watch them out of my window at break and lunch and it is so lovely to see them all running around together happily, but of course we do look forward to the days when they can all be out there together again.

We are here to support each and every one of your children throughout this period and so please do talk to us and let us know if your child is finding things difficult. Where we have been able to work with parents this term, we have had some real successes and once we know that a child is finding things difficult, we can work with you to make sure they are receiving the support they need so please do ask.

This evening, there will be a letter coming home about parents evening which will take place this time in the week commencing Monday 17th May. Please fill this in and return it to school by next Friday so that we are able to allocate you a 10-minute slot. This time, we have decided to have a go at offering online zoom meetings as well as phone calls so you can choose which you prefer. We are hoping this will give you chance to feel more connected to the teachers, but it will of course mean that we have to stick strictly to the timings as otherwise we will have a huge zoom queue forming!

Dan the Skipping Man is coming in next Friday to work with the children in Oak class. They are still really enjoying skipping together at break and lunch and have made great use of all the new skipping ropes that we brought. We are hoping that this session will keep them inspired and give them some new skills and ideas for skipping games to play together too!

Our guitar and drum teacher, Mr Cormack-Hicks, has spaces for children in year 2 – 6 to start lessons from September. If you are interested in private lessons for your child during school time, please email him on iansguitartuition@googlemail.com Mr Cormack-Hicks is an excellent music teacher and I can highly recommend his lessons if that is something your children are interested in.

The school nurse will be coming in next week on Wednesday 5th May to do eye tests and general screening for the children in Willow Class. Information about this came directly to you in the Autumn term as it was delayed due to lockdown. All children in Willow class will take part unless you have opted them out directly with the school nurse. Any questions, please contact Mrs Angove on admin@whiteshill.gloucs.sch.uk

I'm really pleased to let you know that this week our new set of 16 ipads arrived in school. Thanks to the hard work of the Friends of Whiteshill School and all of your support through the fundraising events in the last couple of years, we have been able to purchase 16 ipads as well as tough cases for each one and a secure charging trolley to keep them safely in.

This means that both Maple and Oak class have a set of 16 iPads at their disposal at all times which they can use to continually enhance their curriculum whenever they need them. They are so easy to get out and turn on compared to bulky laptops and so the children use them all the time, from spelling and times tables games, to research in English, history or geography, right through to manipulating images for their art work this week. Willow and Elm class also have access to the iPads whenever they need them too.

Even more fantastically, it means that we now have enough iPads in school so that when we teach our computing curriculum, each child in the class can have their own individual iPad. This of course improves the quality of provision hugely and means they get so much more out of the lessons because they have access to up to date and individual technology.

We could never have made this purchase without your support and we cannot thank you all enough for your donations to the school which have allowed us to enhance their learning in such a positive and important way.

Is your family in receipt of 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 so, the school could be entitled to additional funding and you could get free school meals for your child right through Key Stage 2. The school's funding is used to put in place whole school systems to improve teaching and learning and can also be used to support you with payment for trips, music lessons etc. if this is appropriate.

If you are in receipt of any of the above, please go to <https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals> and enter your postcode. This will then take you to the Gloucestershire website, where you can make an application with just your National Insurance number and a current email address. You will receive an instant response as to whether you are entitled to free school meals and therefore the 'pupil premium' funding, once you have submitted your claim. As always, if you have any questions at all please don't hesitate to ask.

You may have heard in the news that the Children's commissioner for England has put together a children's survey called The Big Ask. Along with most other schools in the country, the children at Whiteshill will be taking part in this survey next week at some point. It is just a short online survey which aims to find out children's concerns and aspirations about the future on behalf of the government. There is also an adults survey which I thought you might like to fill in yourselves if this is something which interest you. It can be found here: <https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/thebigask/adults/>

You may have spotted Oak class' 'Positivi-tree' out at the front of the school. They created this during our wellbeing week in March. They have also painted some inspiring and uplifting pebbles which we thought it would be nice to display at our entrance. We know that you can't see them close up at the moment so I thought I would include some photos.



Oak class have enjoyed their first two sessions of New Age Kurling with Mr Pritchard on a Friday. They are learning all about accuracy and precision when aiming for a target and it is a great fun team and individual game to play! Some photos below for your enjoyment!

