



Whiteshill Weekly News

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

www.whiteshillschool.co.uk

admin@whiteshill.gloucs.sch.uk

Tel: 01453 762 949

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Forest School

Willow class have been having a fantastic time in their forest school sessions each Friday morning. The children have taken so well to the experience and have been really safe and sensible during the sessions too. Maple class have of course also started forest school on a Friday afternoon and have been doing work linked to their Anglo Saxon topic up in the forest, particularly looking at how Anglo Saxon's used to build their homes and how these can be recreated in the forest! Today they have also been learning about first aid- this is part of our PSHE curriculum that we complete in a more real-life way up in the woods. Being active outside is an important part of our vision for the children in school and is excellent for the children's mental and physical wellbeing. Our school vision can be found here: www.whiteshillschool.co.uk/our-vision/

Being active is of course one of the 5 ways to wellbeing too. This is an initiative which I have shared with the children in school through assembly and which informs our planning in school all the time – supported by our wellbeing lead Mrs McKay. The 5 ways to wellbeing are:



Don't forget – if you are able to help out at forest school it really is the more the merrier – please sign up in the school office lobby each week.

Parent Survey

On the INSET day after half term, myself and the teachers are going to be look at a whole school strategy for helping you support your children more effectively at home. We know that many of you are very interested in doing this and we want to make sure you have the tools you need to feel confident. We also want to look at how we share with you details about how we teach different subjects as well as more detailed information on how your children's attainment. We would really appreciate it if you would answer just a few short questions [here](#) which will help us to put together a plan of action! Your opinions are of course very important so we would really appreciate your time – it should only take about 5 minutes. You should be able to fill in a form for each child if you have more than one in school.

Martial Arts

I'm really pleased to share that after half term, we will be welcoming Matt Fiddes Martial Arts to school. They will be running sessions for both Elm and Oak class as well as hopefully doing a club after school as well. These PE sessions will run alongside the national curriculum sessions with the teachers, enhancing the children's co-ordination and gross motor skills as well as introducing them to an exciting new discipline! Details about the after school club will follow.

SEN Information Report

Our annual SEN information report can now be found on the school website. Mrs Colman, our SEN co-ordinator, has worked really hard on this document so that it hopefully sets out clearly what you can expect your child's experience to be like at Whiteshill if they have additional needs and are on our SEN register. If your child has identified SEND needs, please do take a look as it will hopefully help you understand what happens in school in terms of identifying their needs as well as planning and implementing their support. It can be found here: www.whiteshillschool.co.uk/sen

FoWS Working Party – Whitestock

The Friends of Whiteshill School are already thinking ahead for the summer term! In previous years, FoWS have held a large fundraising event in the summer term known as 'Whitestock'. It involved music, entertainment, food, drink and fun! Many of you will remember the event from previous years. As you can imagine, this is a huge event to put on and it takes a lot of hard work and time behind the scenes. So far, with our new Friends of Whiteshill School team, they have had to work hard to run events with a small group of people and it will simply not be possible to run Whitestock with just the core group involved.

Therefore, the Friends would like to ask you to get on board if you would like Whitestock to go ahead this coming summer. If you want to be part of organising this event, please email friendsofwhiteshillschool@outlook.com to let them know that you are happy to be part of a working party who will work together to organise and put together Whitestock both in the coming months and on the day of the event. At February half term, the Friends will make a decision about whether the event can go ahead or not, depending on how much support there is and how many people are available to help.

If Whitestock does end up not taking place, don't worry, they have lots of other exciting ideas for how we can fundraise and get together as a community in the summer months which you will be able to get involved with.

COVID-19

We have had a small number of COVID-19 cases in school recently. However, so far these have stayed at a relatively small number. This is thanks to your support with lateral flow testing and hygiene, as well as keeping an eye on symptoms. Thank you very much for all you do in this area. There are a number of schools locally who are experiencing an ever-growing number of cases and some of who had to shut classes etc. so it is something we must still be very aware of.

As you will know, the most important thing is to keep an eye out for the three main symptoms: a new, continuous cough, a high temperature or a loss of sense of taste or smell. If your child experiences any of these symptoms, please keep them off school and book them a PCR test. If you have lateral flow tests at home you can use this – but if it comes back negative you still need to take a PCR and we will not be able to let your child return to school without a negative PCR test. We know that this is frustrating and annoying, but these are national guidelines that we have no choice but to follow.

Nut and Peanut Free Policy

I just wanted to say thank you so much for your support and understanding over the last week about our nut and peanut free policy. We have really appreciated how positively you have responded to our request and your support for helping keep everyone in school safe. Please do keep checking the ingredients in your child's lunches and snacks going forwards.

Key Stage 2 SATs

If your child is in year 6, you may have heard them talking about doing some SATS papers in school last week. This is because we wanted to introduce them to what the SATs papers look like and get an idea of what support they need as we move towards the assessment tests in May. I have attached to this email an information leaflet which you might find helpful if you are not sure what the SATS involve. Over the coming months, we will be helping the children prepare so that they feel confident and comfortable going in to the tests. This is their first experience of the more formal assessment which will become a big part of their lives at secondary school and it is really important that we give them the skills to approach it in a healthy and successful way. We always find that the children end up really pulling together as a team and it is often a really fantastic experience for them which helps them to realise they can do it and they have nothing to worry about. Mrs McKay and myself will be working hard to ensure that the children's experience is a positive one that they can look back on in the future and draw confidence from.

This week in assembly...

We have found out about a number of inspirational people who have spent their lives giving time and effort for the benefit of others. This included finding out about the Nobel prize and how this is awarded each year to those who 'during the preceding year, have conferred the greatest benefit to humankind'. We learnt about Stephen Hawking and his work on time and space, female Chinese scientist [Tu You You](#) who discovered a cure for malaria.

We found out about the RNLI and the story of Grace Darling, the children were especially fascinated to find that the RNLI is run by volunteers and many of them had seen the lifeboats whilst on holiday at the seaside.

Finally, we heard all about the RSPB Big Birdwatch which takes place this coming weekend. This is an annual event and the children in Willow class in particular have been really interested in birdwatching recently! Please do take a look [here](#) and get involved this weekend if you can. All you have to do is:

1. Watch the birds around you for one hour
2. Count how many of each species of bird lands on your patch
3. Go online and tell the RSPB what you saw!