



Whiteshill Weekly News

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

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We hope you have all had a fantastic Christmas break and Happy New Year! I'm very pleased to be able to welcome everyone back in to the spring term this year and it is lovely that we are still able to operate fairly normally in school for the children. We are of course continuing to ensure the children's hand hygiene is strong, rooms are ventilated and clean and that anyone who should be self-isolating is. Staff and children are also taking lateral flow tests when needed to hopefully continue to reduce the risk of an outbreak in school as much as possible.

If you would like to know more about our approach to COVID-19, you can of course read our risk assessment and outbreak management plan on the school website policies page here:

www.whiteshillschool.co.uk/policies

At present, if we do identify a positive case in school who has been in contact with a particular class, we may keep that class in a bubble for a week to minimise contact between them and the other children in school whilst there is a higher possibility of transmission. This means as little disruption to the children as possible whilst reducing risk.

On the next page of the newsletter, you will find information about changes to the government guidance on self-isolation and daily testing of close contacts.

We do not of course know how self-isolation and illness may impact our staffing over the next term. There is a distinct possibility that staff will be impacted and therefore we may have to cancel or make changes to what is happening in school at late notice because of this. We will of course minimise the impact on the children as much as possible, but sadly, some things will be out of our hands, so please do bear this in mind over the coming weeks.

Whiteshill Welcome

A very warm welcome to Faith, who has joined us this week in year 5 and Alex, who has joined us in year 3. We are incredibly pleased that they have both chosen to continue their school journey with us here at Whiteshill and I'm sure that you will all make them and their families feel very welcome.

Changes to Government COVID-19 Guidance

I have attached to this email an updated version of our information sheet which tells you what to do if your child or anyone in their household bubble has symptoms of COVID-19 – please make sure you refer to this copy going forwards as there have been some changes to the government advice as follows:

Changes to self-isolation rules

Since Wednesday 22 December, the 10-day self-isolation period for people who record a positive PCR test result for COVID-19 has been reduced to 7 days in most circumstances, unless you cannot test for any reason.

Individuals may now take LFD tests on day 6 and day 7 of their self-isolation period. Those who receive two negative test results are no longer required to complete 10 full days of self-isolation.

The first test must be taken no earlier than day 6 of the self-isolation period and tests must be taken 24 hours apart. This also applies to children under 5, with LFD testing at parental or guardian discretion. If both these test results are negative, and you do not have a high temperature, you may end your self-isolation after the second negative test result and return to your education setting. Anyone who is unable to take LFD tests will need to complete the full 10 day period of self-isolation. Further information is available in the [stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed COVID-19 infection](#).

Daily testing for close contacts of COVID-19

People who are fully vaccinated, or children and young people aged between 5 and 18 years and 6 months, identified as a close contact of someone with COVID-19, should take an LFD test every day for seven days and continue to attend their setting as normal, unless they have a positive test result or develop symptoms at any time. Children under 5 are not being advised to take part in daily testing of close contacts. If a child under 5 is a contact of a confirmed case, they are not required to self-isolate and should not start daily testing. If they live in the same household as someone with COVID-19 they should limit their contact with anyone who is at higher risk of severe illness if infected with COVID-19, and arrange to take a PCR test as soon as possible. They can continue to attend an education or childcare setting while waiting for the PCR result. If the test is positive, they should follow the [stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed COVID-19 infection](#).

PE days

A reminder that PE days this term are as follows:

Elm class – Wednesday, Maple Class – Tuesday, Oak Class – Thursday

The children can continue to wear their PE kits in to school on these days, including black tracksuit bottoms and hoody (as plain as possible please!) or looged from Batemans in Stroud.

Maple class have forest school on Friday afternoon for the whole of the Spring term up to Easter – see previous letter. Willow class will continue to have forest school each Friday morning.

Volunteer sheets for each class are in the office if you are able to help out – please sign up so we know how many people we have each week – thank you!

E-safety Day

Next Tuesday, 11th January, we will be having our annual E-safety Day as part of our computing and Health and Relationships curriculum. The children in Elm, Maple and Oak will be learning about online safety all day with the teachers and we will also be having a visit (including Willow class) from Stay Safe Workshops, who work with the children each year to give them a really fantastic and memorable session all about how to stay safe online. They use videos, interactive activities and slogans to really help the information stick in the children's memories and because we work with them each year, the children become fluent in their understanding of the important points, which is what we want of course. I will put some information in next week's newsletter to help you with supporting your child online at home following this day.

Children in Need

Thank you to everyone who supported our Children in Need day in school – we managed to raise a fantastic £101.29 altogether. This will go towards funding voluntary groups, community projects and local charities to make a difference for children and young people across the UK.

FoWS Raffle

Thank you so much to everyone who supported the FoWS raffle before Christmas, either through donations or buying tickets. I'm pleased to share that they raised over £770 for the school thanks to your generosity. Well done to all the winners and thank you to FoWS who put in a huge amount of time and effort gathering prizes and selling tickets during the busy Christmas period.

Wellbeing Monday!

Over the last year and a half, mental wellbeing has of course been a very important subject which has rightly come to the forefront of our thinking, particularly when it comes to children and school. During the lockdowns, we had some Whiteshill wellbeing days which were really successful with the children and gave us a much needed boost in difficult times. Obviously we are now in January, the coldest and darkest part of the year and there are many headlines and worries about the pandemic still impacting us, so Mrs McKay our wellbeing lead has had an idea to hopefully give us all a little sparkle and joy!

On Monday 18th January, we will be asking the children to come in to school wearing whatever makes them happy!! We will all do the same as well and we hope that this will just remind us again that taking notice of what makes us happy is important for our mental wellbeing. They are welcome to wear whatever they like (as long as it is appropriate and practical!). It could just be comfy jeans and their favourite jumper or maybe they had a new dress or a sports kit for Christmas they want to show off, or perhaps dressing up as Spiderman is the thing that makes them happy. Bright colours, hats, bells, hairbands with wiggly things on (!) whatever brings them joy!

This week in assembly...

This week we talked about the new year, hope and fresh starts on the first day back. We watched a video of a story about a snowdrop who was breaking through the ground to be the first flower of spring. We talked all about perseverance and how you have to be brave to try something new and challenge yourself.

On Tuesday, we found out about International Braille Day. We discussed how important it is for information to be accessible to everybody and looked at innovative modern inventions which have allowed Blind and visually impaired people to be more independent and have fun – including a braille watch, Rubix cubes and even Lego bricks!



Today, we found out about one of my heroes – Sir Peter Scott. He is the founder of the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust at Slimbridge as well as the WWF. However, not only did he do these two wonderful things in his life, he was also a successful sports person, inventor and artist. Ask the children and see if they can remember any of the incredible things he achieved! Here is a list of some of his achievements: <https://www.wwt.org.uk/news-and-stories/blog/ten-fascinating-facts-about-sir-peter-scott/> He was really an inspirational individual and we talked about how he lived our 'we are curious', 'we are unique' and 'we are together' values to the full during his lifetime.