



# Whiteshill Weekly News

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

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## Lunchtime Clubs

We have been really proud of our year 6 children this term who have been giving up their lunch time play to run clubs for the other children. They came up with their own ideas, planned the clubs and have put together a schedule so that each club takes place once a week. All the children in school can take part in the clubs, they just have to listen for the bell ringing in the playground and then go and join in! The year 6 children have really stepped up as fantastic role models and are taking the responsibility very seriously. They have even created certificates which will be given out in celebration assembly. Thank you to all of them for their hard work with this and Miss Middleton for organising it with them.

The lunchtime clubs on offer at present are Rubix cube (Hector is a real expert and can show you how to crack a Rubix cube in a minute or two – it's very impressive to watch!), tennis, lego, dance, diablo, cheerleading and art. As you can see, the children have been really enjoying themselves and it's nice to see different age groups working so well together.



## Endball Festival

I was very lucky to go along to see some Elm class children take part in the first Key Stage 1 event of the Atlas Sports calendar. We took them down to Archway Sports Centre and they took part in an Endball Festival with lots of children from other schools. Endball is a very simple version of netball where the children have to pass to each other and get the ball to one end of the court to score. They learnt the rules on the day and got stuck in – cheering each other on! I was so impressed by every single one of them for trying something new and I have never seen such an excited bunch of children taking part in something! It was a real joy to spend the morning with them and I hope it will encourage them to take part in more and more sports and activities as they get older and opportunities arise in Key Stage 2. Well done to Henry, Florence, Zack, Billy, Dheeraa, Bethan, Autumn, Evie and Ted. More photos will follow on the school website.



## Earthquake Appeal Cake Sale

Thank you so much to Sanchia Jones who organised the cake sale on Friday so quickly and successfully in aid of the Earthquake Appeal for Syria and Turkey. The sale raised an incredible £145 and I know that lots of people were very glad to have the chance to support this much needed appeal. Thank you so much to Sanchia and Ella for putting it all together and baking such wonderful cakes! I was very sad to miss them as I was in a governors meeting. Much as I love governors' meetings of course, I would have much rather been eating such tasty cakes!

## Swimming Gala

A group of children from Oak class represented the school in the Atlas Sports Swimming Gala recently, racing in front of a crowd and swimming their hearts out. Talia made it to the final of the girls' backstroke, coming in 2<sup>nd</sup> overall and the girls relay team of Maisie W-O, Lilia and Ella J also made it to their final, coming 2<sup>nd</sup> in a very exciting ending to the event! All of the children represented the school well and we were very proud of every single one of them. A special mention must go to our three year 4 boys, William, Louis and Alex N who were racing against much older children. They all did so well and a highlight of the day for me was when Alex bounded out of the gates, winning the first leg of the boys' relay by a mile! Well done to Lola, Talia, Evie, Maisie, Ella, Lilia, Hector, Louis, William, Alex and Harpo.



## Gymnastics

On Wednesday, six pupils from Maple class who had shown a flair for gymnastics during their PE lessons went down to Stratford Park for the Key Steps Gymnastics event run by Atlas Sports. They had learnt a floor routine and a vault and all performed fantastically. It is a brave thing to do at such a young age to perform in front of judges individually and we were very proud of all of them. Their team score put them in 8<sup>th</sup> position out of 12 schools and Whiteshill were one of the smallest schools there - always worth bearing in mind. Well done Bethany, Texas, William, Louis F, Nora and Ben.



This morning, three of our year 6 girls, Lola, Annabelle and Evie competed in the Intermediate Gymnastics Competition. We have never competed as a school at this level before but I knew that we had some children in Oak class who would be interested so we decided to give it a go! The girls practised in their own time and came up with some incredibly impressive routines for both floor and vault. They included back flips, handstands and even one-handed cartwheels! I've honestly never seen anything like it! All three girls were absolutely incredible – they supported each other all day and really worked together to perfect their routines. They were phenomenal and astoundingly, Evie finished in fourth position just 0.1 marks from bronze medal – there were 34 children competing so this was a huge achievement! I feel very privileged to have seen all of the children perform – what a team!



## Stay Safe Workshops

Last week, we worked with Stay Safe Workshops on e-safety day. They come to our school each year to work with all the children and ensure they have a progression of online safety skills taught to them as they move through the school. At the end of the session, Richard from Stay Safe said 'I was VERY pleased with everyone's attitude and enthusiasm across the day. Your pupils were fantastic and I was impressed by lots of their responses and contributions across the day. 10 out of 10 for all'.

There were a number of issues that were highlighted throughout the day from talking to the children and Richard said that this is common to all schools and young people he visits. Year by year digital users get younger and numbers are getting higher. Issues that came up included the children connecting with others on WhatsApp (16+), using TikTok (13+), SnapChat (13+) and Instagram(13+) including having public accounts. This obviously opens them up to 'anyone' making a direct connection. In regards to gaming, 18+ games were mentioned by some of the children including games which allow chatting to people they don't know (in the real world).

Richard wanted to highlight the importance for all parents to fully understand what their children are using online and to educate themselves of the functionality of the games / apps their children use (can they chat? be connected to people they don't know? what content can they be exposed to (either suggested or sent by others)? What age rating? What are the risks?). It's by fully understanding these things that parents will be able to hopefully make informed decisions, support their children and be involved along the way.

To help a bit more, you will find attached to this email the Stay Safe Workshops 'Parenting in the Digital World' resource pack which has useful advice and website links for you to feel more confident in dealing with your child's online experiences as they grow.

## Industrial Action

Just a reminder that the next planned industrial action for the South West region is Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> March. It is looking likely that we will be open for all pupils again, however, this cannot be guaranteed until the morning of 2<sup>nd</sup> March and if a teacher decides to strike, their class will be closed. Please have childcare in place just in case this occurs and I will inform you by text as early as possible on the day.

## Children's Mental Health Week

Last week was Place2Be's Children's Mental Health Week. In school we do a host of things to look after our mental wellbeing in line with the 5 ways to Wellbeing below. I am currently in the process of creating a new display in the hall celebrating them all as they are an important part of our vision here at Whiteshill. If you are interested in finding out about supporting your child's mental wellbeing click [here](#) for some quick videos and information.



## INSET Day and Term Dates

Don't forget there is an INSET day on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> February so the children will return to school on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> February. Term dates for next year were also sent to you via School Ping last week.

## PE Days, Yoga and Martial Arts

In line with the 5 Ways to Wellbeing, this term, the children in Maple class have had some fantastic sessions with Jay from The YogaGlow. They have discussed the importance of mental wellbeing, learned yoga poses, played yoga games, worked in a team for partner yoga and looked after each other with calming head massages as well as practising guided meditation and learning mindfulness tools to manage stress and frustration. It has been so great to focus on the children's mental and physical wellbeing as part of the PE curriculum. We hope to continue working with Jay in to the future so that all the children at Whiteshill can experience this as part of the curriculum.



Next term, Matt Fiddes Martial Arts will be returning to school. Oak class will have weekly sessions as part of their PE and Maple class are invited to join the after school club (you can still do this on SchoolPing if you have not already). Elm class will also have PE sessions with Mrs Court from Matt Fiddes in the summer term.

PE days next term up to Easter will be as follows: Elm class – Thursday, Maple class – Mondays (indoor rowing with Mr Pritchard), Oak class – Wednesday.

## Paganhill Community Group

Down in Paganhill there is a fantastic community group in The Octagon. They have so much going on for members of the community, often free of charge for children and adults. Their [website](#) and [Facebook page](#) are definitely worth looking at. Weekly events include bacon baps and bingo, adult education sessions, afterschool homework club, tiddlywinks, community café and food hub, craft sessions, community gardening and Saturday socials amongst others! They have free sessions through half term as follows:



### Half Term at Paganhill

<b>Monday,</b> <b>20th Feb</b> 	<b>10 to 11.30 - Breakfast Club</b> A variety of cereal, fruit and toast. No need to book just turn up. Let us feed you and the children. Lots to play with in our lovely centre. Donations welcome but not essential.
<b>Tuesday,</b> <b>21st Feb</b> 	<b>3.30 to 5 - Free art and craft session</b> Fun and free art activity with two local artists. Snack and drink provided. Booking essential as limited places. Please email <a href="mailto:laurie@paganhill.org.uk">laurie@paganhill.org.uk</a>
<b>Wed,</b> <b>22nd Feb</b> 	<b>1 to 5.30 - Community Cafe and Food Hub</b> A cafe for all the community on a pay as you can afford basis. Baked potatoes, toasted sandwiches and cake. Our food hub will also be open with a variety of cupboard essentials.
<b>Friday</b> <b>24th Feb</b> 	<b>10 to 12 - Stroud District Kidstuff Beautiful Brunch</b> A beautiful brunch with a variety of options and lots of lovely toys available. Food hub will also be open with a variety of cupboard essentials and fresh produce. Clean Slate services available.



## Welcome to Whiteshill

Since January, we have been very pleased to welcome three new families to our school. Matei has joined us in year 2, Anita in year 5 and Louis in year 4. All of the children have settled in well and we are so pleased that they have decided to join our school. I know that many of you will have met and welcomed their families already and we look forward to getting to know them all as they settle in.

I'm pleased to share that we currently have 103 children on roll at Whiteshill, the highest number since I started here as Headteacher in 2018. We only now have spaces in our year 1 and year 4 cohorts. I'm also glad to say that we had 37 children list us as a numbered choice on their application for Reception 2023, again the highest number since I started at Whiteshill. It is lovely to see our school community here grow and I look forward to welcoming the families of those who are allocated a place in September.

## High School Musical

Our Year 5 children were invited down to Archway this week to watch their production of High School Musical with lots of other children from primary schools across Stroud. It was great fun and gave them chance to see what life in secondary school is like! We have got lots of transition events booked in with Archway School for the year 6 children in the summer term too.



## Fundraising Quiz

At the bottom of today's newsletter, you will find a poster advertising a quiz at the Old Nelson in Stroud on Monday 6th March at 7pm. One of our parents has helped to arrange the quiz and has very kindly asked for half of the money raised to go to the school. Tickets are selling fast but there are still some available so please do go along if you are able! It should be a fun night out and a chance to support the school too! Thank you so much to all those involved in organising it.

## World Book Day

We will be celebrating World Book Day again this year on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> March. The children are invited to dress up as a book character for the day – the choice is endless and there are loads of ideas online for easy and cheap dress-up – no rules, just go for it and have fun! Please don't feel you have to spend a lot of money on a costume, they can be made from what you have at home or bits and pieces picked up from charity shops. The adults in school will also be dressing up and the children will spend the day in their teams, mixing across the age-groups. Each teacher will have designed an activity based around one of their favourite books which all the children will have chance to take part in – completing four different activities in each classroom across the day.

World Book Day is a really important opportunity to celebrate how much we love reading at Whiteshill and immerse the children in books and characters for the day. Each child will also receive a book voucher to spend on one of the specially created World Book Day books which can be found at lots of different retailers.

Find out more about World Book Day [here](#) including some family activities to complete at home.

If you are anything like me as a parent, [these](#) 103 last minute World Book Day costumes might come in handy...!

**Please note – there will be no forest school for Willow or Elm class on this day.**

**OLD NELSON PRESENTS ...**

# **OLD NELSON CHARITY QUIZ NIGHT**

**£5 ENTRY PER PERSON**

**£40 to the WINNING TEAM**

**TEAMS OF 2-6**

**MONDAY 6<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2023\* 7PM\* OLD NELSON\***

**TO BOOK, CALL 01453765821 OR RECEPTION TEAM ON 01453708662\***

**FREE COMPLIMATERY WINE ON ARRIVAL.**

**2 meals for £9.49 & raffles.**

**All money raised will be donated to**

**Great Ormond Street Hospital and Whiteshill Primary School.**

