



## **WHITTINGTON PRIMARY SCHOOL**

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15<sup>th</sup> December 2020

### **RE: End of Autumn Term letter**

Dear parents and carers,



I am not sure that we have ever had an Autumn term like this one! This time last year, we had not heard of social bubbles or social distancing and the thoughts of wearing a face mask would have made us laugh. Yet here we are, in a situation that is continuing to control all of our lives.

Christmas may be a little bit different this year, but I know that all of the staff and pupils are very much looking forward to the festive period. Hopefully, we will all be able to catch up with loved ones at some point and share some sort of 'normal'. We can only hope for a brighter 2021!

### **End of term events**

On our last week of term, we still have a number of Christmassy events to look forward to:

Monday 14 <sup>th</sup> December	Chocolate tombola draw taking place.
Tuesday 15 <sup>th</sup> December	7.45pm Zoom meeting of PTA
Wed 16 <sup>th</sup> December	School Christmas dinner for Nursery and Reception, Year 3 and Year 4
Thursday 17 <sup>th</sup> December	School Christmas dinner for Year 1 and Year 2, Year 5 and Year 6 Special visitor in school
Friday 18 <sup>th</sup> December	Christmas jumper day Break up for Christmas
Monday 4 <sup>th</sup> January	INSET day
Tuesday 5 <sup>th</sup> January	Children return to school

### **PTA**

In spite of the restrictions, our PTA did an amazing job last year and raised money to paint the school corridors, install our electronic sign-in system and provide gifts for all of our children during the initial lock-down and our Year Six pupils as they left us in the summer.



Special thanks go to Nicola Holt (Chairperson), Jennie Lowe and Nicola Warner (secretary), who all stood down from their roles at the AGM at the start of term. Their contribution to the life of the PTA was immense and their support was very much appreciated.

The PTA now moves forward with Lisa Newey as Chair person and Rachel Watts as Vice Chair.

## **Governors**



All schools have a Governing Body which is responsible for overseeing many of the strategic decisions about the school. At Whittington Primary School, our Governing Body is made up of a Chair and Vice Chairperson, 6 co-opted Governors and 4 parent Governors. We currently have a vacancy for a Local Authority Governor.

Governors have three strategic roles within school:

- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent
- Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils
- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction

Our current Governing Body consists of the following members:

Chairperson	Peter Lowe (Parent Governor)
Vice Chairperson	Michelle Williams (Parent Governor)
Parent Governors	Claire Booker, Sam Skinner
Co-opted Governors	Emma Bryant, Andy Owen, Andrew Craddock, Anna Grant, Stephanie Herriotts-Smith, Louisa Williams
Staff Governor	Jordan Gibbs

As a Governing Body, we have recently undergone many changes to personnel and have had a significant number of new Governors. Our thanks go to David Philips, our previous Chair of Governors, whose term of office came to an end in July, and to Peter Gaal and Anne-Marie Wood, who tendered their resignations in October.

## **School Building and Grounds**

During the summer holidays, Staffordshire County Council paid for our Key Stage One playground to be resurfaced. As part of this project, we had to remove the old adventure playground to enable access onto the school site. We are delighted to have been able to use some of our Sports Funding to replace this with a trim trail and are now just awaiting the final layer of spongy flooring to be completed before it can be used by all of the children. We have our fingers crossed that the Key Stage 2 playground will be resurfaced in the summer too!



## **COVID-19 Catch up**



You will all be aware that the Government provided schools with additional money in order to reduce the attainment gap caused by COVID-19. For us, this was £24K. We spent this money on employing a highly experienced Teaching Assistant, Mrs Jo Sharp, who is working across school, both in classrooms and with groups of children and individuals for intervention sessions. She is making a significant contribution to COVID catch up but we are aware that there is still a long way to go in ensuring the vast majority of our children are reaching the expected standard

for their year group by the end of the school year. We believe that the children most significantly affected by COVID and the national lockdown, are those in Year 1 and Year 2 and we are doing all we can to support these children in school. If you have any questions, or are concerned about your child's attainment, please do not hesitate to contact the class teacher.

### Academisation



Last year, the Governing Body made the decision to look into the advantages of becoming part of a multi-academy trust (MAT) as the provision and support from the Local Authority has reduced considerably. We began this journey with some training from David Werry, who came to talk to us about the pitfalls and benefits of being in a MAT. As Governors, we have now picked this back up and have had a working party meeting to consider:

- What are our main drivers behind a decision to join a MAT?
- What are the main drivers behind a decision to stay as a Local Authority school?
- What are our non-negotiables?

We are now looking into a number of MATs within our local area and are completing a fact finding task based on their:

- Ethos and culture
- Vision and strategy
- Size and capacity
- Geography
- Diversity
- Performance, challenge and support
- Leadership and governance
- Finances
- Legal and commercial

We will obviously keep you informed of our findings as we progress.

### Testing arrangements in 2021



Standards  
& Testing  
Agency

The Government have recently released details of changes to the primary school testing regime in 2021.

- The KS1 tests in Reading and Maths have been suspended for 2021.
- The Year 1 phonic screening tests will commence on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> June.
- The Year 2 children who did not pass their phonics screening test in this Autumn term, will be retested with the Year 1 cohort
- Key Stage 2 tests for Reading and Maths will take place as follows:

Monday 10 May 2021

English reading

Tuesday 11 May 2021

Mathematics papers 1 and 2

- There will be no KS2 test for Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar.
- The Year 4 multiplication tests commencing on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> June, are now optional

### **School events in 2021**

JANUARY	
Monday 4 <sup>th</sup> January	Staff INSET day
Tuesday 5 <sup>th</sup> January	Children return to school
Monday 18 <sup>th</sup> January	Mrs Kennedy starts back following her maternity leave
FEBRUARY	
Tuesday 9 <sup>th</sup> February	Parent Consultation evening (arrangements to be confirmed)
Wednesday 10 <sup>th</sup> February	Parent Consultation evening (arrangements to be confirmed)
Friday 12 <sup>th</sup> February	Break up for Half term
Monday 22 <sup>nd</sup> February	Return to school
MARCH	
Thursday 4 <sup>th</sup> March	World Book Day
Friday 26 <sup>th</sup> March	PTA Break the Rules Day
APRIL	
Thursday 1 <sup>st</sup> April	Nursery/Reception Easter assembly and Easter bonnet parade (arrangements to be confirmed) Break up for Easter
Monday 19 <sup>th</sup> April	Children return to school Y4 residential visit to Whitemoor Lakes (new date) following postponement)
Monday 26 <sup>th</sup> April	Y5 residential visit to Whitemoor Lakes (new date) following postponement)
MAY	
Monday 3 <sup>rd</sup> May	School closed BANK HOLIDAY
Monday 10 <sup>th</sup> May	End of Key Stage Two testing begins for Y6
Friday 21 <sup>st</sup> May	Y6 puberty talks with the School Nurse Y5 Girls menstruation talks with the School Nurse
Monday 24 <sup>th</sup> May	Y6 at Bushcraft (delayed from the Autumn term)
Wednesday 26 <sup>th</sup> May	Y6 return from Bushcraft
Thursday 27 <sup>th</sup> May	Children break up for half term
Friday 28 <sup>th</sup> May	INSET day
JUNE	
Monday 7 <sup>th</sup> June	INSET day
Tuesday 8 <sup>th</sup> June	Children back at school Y1 phonics screening checks begin
Wednesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> June	Y5 at Bushcraft
Friday 25 <sup>th</sup> June	Y5 return from Bushcraft
Monday 28 <sup>th</sup> June	Sports and well-being week Provisional date for Sports Day
Tuesday 29 <sup>th</sup> June	Y6 induction day at Lichfield secondary schools
Wednesday 30 <sup>th</sup> June	Y6 induction day at Lichfield secondary schools
JULY	
Thursday 1 <sup>st</sup> July	Mrs Hawkins return to school after maternity leave
Friday 9 <sup>th</sup> July	School reports sent out
Monday 12 <sup>th</sup> July	Meet your new teacher – transition morning
Tuesday 13 <sup>th</sup> July	Meet your new teacher – transition morning Transition information evening for parents

	Y6 formal leavers lunch
Thursday 15 <sup>th</sup> July	Y6 leavers assembly 1.30pm and 6pm (to include presentation in the evening assembly) (arrangements to be confirmed)
Wednesday 21 <sup>st</sup> July	Children break up for the summer



Although I am sure we will see many of you in the coming days leading up to the end of term, we would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very safe and happy Christmas and a healthy and prosperous new year. We look forward to welcoming all of the children back to school on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2021.

Yours sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Nichola Leeson in blue ink.

Nichola Leeson

Headteacher