

Happy New Year & Welcome Back

On behalf of Team Westwood, I would like to offer you a very warm welcome back to school. We hope you have had a wonderful Christmas with your families and have recharged your batteries for another productive year ahead. I would also like to offer a very warm welcome to all of our new pupils throughout the school that started with us both at the end of the Autumn term and for the new Spring term - all children should be highly praised for the amazing start so far! A special mention to our youngest Early Entitlement children that have started this week. They have had a great first week and settled in really well. We also again welcome Mr Gordon, Class Teacher in Class 4, Mrs Anderton as a Learning Support Assistant in Nursery and Mrs Wightman as Administrator in the office. Welcome all to our Westwood family!

As always we have a few reminders and news to start the new year - so here we go!!

Uniform

The children always look great- well turned out in their uniforms! Let's keep this standard of uniform all year through as it really does make a difference. This includes tying back long hair too! To help avoid lost clothing, please make sure you clearly write your child's name on the label of every item (uniform, coats, shoes etc). We still have a lot of uniform in the foyer and lunch boxes too - so please pop in - it may be your child's!

Information we hold at school

During the first few weeks we will be again updating our data bases and contacts, so it important we have up to date addresses, mobile numbers for at least 2 contacts and email addresses for School Comms and School Spider communication. The main office will be by the Easter break, a cash free office for dinner money and trips. Everything will be on the School Comms app for payment or we will issue a pay point voucher to pay any monies owed. So can all parents ensure their details are correct (as it states). Any issues, please call in and we will help you set the app up. Also we need to ensure all information we hold about your child is correct too. So any medical conditions including asthma, intolerances, allergies or any well-being information that we need updates on, please let us know immediately. This is really important!

Morning Drop offs

As I have asked in a number of Newsletters, all children in the main building come in promptly, and that parents and carers let children walk from the front door into the foyer independently. The main entrance can get unnecessarily busy and crowded and getting pupils to their classes safely is our priority. Staff are present to monitor your children as they come in.

Attendance & Punctuality

Attendance and punctuality is the key to success! We are carefully monitoring attendance at all times. The expected attendance for pupils is 94% and over. We will be continuing to contact families with attendance below this figure, who have not provided a medical note or valid reason for absence.

A very small minority of families are excessively absent (below 90%) or regularly late. However it is important to reiterate the importance of regular attendance and punctuality in school. Lateness is not only disruptive to the school day but can seriously affect your child's readiness and capacity to learn; lates do count towards absence. Doors open at 8.40am.

As a Flintshire school we must adhere to their process for attendance management. If you need support please speak to Mrs Thomas or myself by appointment. For more information on how absence and lateness can affect your child, and the implications for poor attendance, please visit Flintshire's site <https://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Schools/Education-Fixed-Penalty-Notices.aspx>

Collections

Again this week, there have also been a few earlier than usual collections of pupils before home time. Unless the reason for collections relate to appointments or important arrangements, which a written note, mobile app confirmation, email or letter confirming this is shown to staff, then we must stress that pupils are only to be collected at home time. As you can appreciate as it is very disruptive to the school day and the learning of the children. Furthermore, the office may be unmanned during the day so there will be nobody to answer the door. Thank you :)

Home time pick up

We always stress that at home time pick up, to please keep your young ones close and safe. At home time parents and carers are responsible for their own children. **I must remind you that your child is your responsibility at the end of the school day or after events.** We want to continue to allow pick up from the rear of the school. Please support this by keeping your children close and safe.

Near Miss

On Tuesday 7th January, there was a near miss between a toddler and a vehicle on the corner of Tabernacle Street and Padeswood Road. Luckily, a vigilant parent of another pupil saved the toddler from being hit by the car. The parent of the toddler was unaware of the incident as they had already gone around the corner. Please keep your children close and safe - I am sure nobody wants to read there has been an accident or any child hurt!

Parking

We would also like to thank the parents who park responsibly at the start of the day and on pick up. I have been informed again that the P.C.S.O.s will be in attendance around schools in Flintshire. I have read this on the Buckley Residents Group on an email from Flintshire County Council / Buckley town Council to a Buckley resident this week, with regard to the Spar car park.

This is an email that I received today from the clerk of btc which he has been sent from FCC, hope this clears up the parking in the car park opposite the spar

We are in the process of finalising the legalities to the change of the legal order on the car park. This will be sealed this week and the required public advertisement will be made on Friday (10 January). From this time the free 1 hour parking will commence.

However, I can inform you that since the 1st January we have not been charging on the small section of the Brunswick Road Car Park, allowing users to still have benefit from free parking (all be it unrestricted in time).

If the car parks locally are free for a short time, please make use of this facility. Maybe email / write to the council and ask for this to be an all year round consideration for all Buckley car parks! For our children's safety, please park responsibly. Thanks :)

Stay & Play

Stay and Play is back with Mrs Quirk and Mrs Thomas in the Westwood Centre Hall from 9.30am to 11am on Wednesday 15th January. We look forward to welcoming you all back for a fun packed session!

Website

Just a reminder to look at the class pages, as they have been updated ready for the Spring Term. You will find all the information needed for topics, kit, P.E. days/swimming, dates and so much more! Staff regularly post information, so please check out your child's class page. You can do this on the app or at www.westwoodprimary.co.uk.

Curriculum

As last year, we have lots to look forward to and your children are already busy organising their new historical topics. So please talk to your child about the topic and what they would like to learn about it- It's their curriculum and you play a big part in their learning journey!

Eco Committee project

As part of commitment to recycling and sustainability, we are still collecting and recycling crisp packets at Westwood. As you know crisp packets are not currently recycled by Flintshire and end up in landfill. Each empty crisp packet is worth 1p to the 'Never forget Fund' who research for treatments and equipment to save the baby Asian elephants from the deadly E.E.H.V. virus at Chester Zoo! So we would welcome your crisp packets from home, as every crisp packet makes a difference. We have a collection bin in the foyer so please pop them in!

P.T.F.A. Christmas Fair & 5p Challenge with the School Council

The P.T.F.A. worked tirelessly to bring you this event and they had lots of fun in the process. The support was amazing; including raffles, the P.T.F.A raised over £1100 profit! That is including the 5p challenge which raised collectively £255. The winners were Class 8 with £44.30 who will decide on what they spend the collective total on. We have started again with the 5p challenge! The school Council will help the P.T.F.A. run the challenge from now until Easter. A huge thank you to all of you who supported the events and we look forward to bringing you even more new and exciting events this new year!

Mrs Harrison's Retirement

As you know, Mrs Janet Harrison retired at Christmas through ill health. Mrs Harrison has been a teacher at Westwood and Westlea for 36 years, and has taught well over 1,000 pupils during her teaching career! Many of our current parents have even been through her very capable teaching hands. We are all incredibly sad to see Mrs Harrison leave and I know you will extend your very best wishes to her in her well-earned retirement. We know she'll be kept busy with her family commitments, new baby granddaughter and her creative interests. Mrs Harrison will be greatly missed by all parents, governors, staff and pupils; she'll be a hard act to follow! We are collecting for Mrs Harrison on behalf of the Parents, P.T.F.A and Families of Westwood from Monday 13th January. If you wish to make a contribution to Mrs Harrison's collection, please call into the office where there is a card for you to sign too. Many thanks.

We are so looking forward to working with you again this year; we are so proud of our school and it's standing in our community. This is all thanks to you and your children that helps us to make Westwood the greatest.

Here's to another fantastic year!!

#Team Westwood