

20<sup>th</sup> December 2023



Dear Parent and Carers,

It is hard to believe that we are almost at the end of the Autumn Term and that Christmas is less than a week away. I hope that you are all ready to enjoy the festivities.

### **Attendance**

Attendance at school matters. Our children learn new things every day in school so it is very important that children miss as few school days as possible. There is a direct link between children's attendance at school and their academic achievement (progress). Attendance also impacts greatly on your child's physical, social and emotional well-being.

Children who do not attend school regularly are those with attendance less than 90%. After the Christmas break, parents and carers of children with attendance below 90% will be contacted and may be invited to attend an attendance meeting with our attendance officer, Steph McCurdy. These meetings are offered in a supportive capacity to look at ways in which we can work together to ensure that your child's attendance remains above 90%.

Any holidays in school time will not be authorised unless they are deemed as exceptional circumstances. Any holiday of 5 days or more will result in a penalty notice being issued. We have also been asked to bring your attention to penalty fines surrounding children arriving late. 10 lates within a term under a U code, which is arriving after the close of registers, will result in a penalty notice being issued.

Our current whole school attendance is 93.5%. With the colder weather, it is not unusual at this time of year for children to pick up bugs and illnesses. If you are not sure whether your child can attend school, please call the school office to check.

### **Staffing**

Mr McGregor and Mrs Kirkham continue to be off school at this time. We are currently looking into the arrangements for Year 5 and will confirm these with parents as soon as possible.

We would like to pass on our thanks to Mrs Rawson and Miss Rawling who have been providing supply in Year 1 and Year 5 over the last term. Mrs Rawson will still be in and out of school but we wish Miss Rawling good luck in her new job.

After Christmas we will be making some changes to support across Key Stage 1. Mrs Sprakes will continue to support in F2, whilst Mr McManus will support in Year 1 and Miss Milligan in Year 2. Miss Fenna will support across F2, Year 1 and Year 2.

## What's been happening this month?

Years 1, 2 and 3 worked with Big Heritage to create their own museum afternoon for parents.

Year 1 shared their learning about Toys - past and present; it was lovely to see so many family members coming in to talk to and work with the children as part of their topic.

Year 2 became experts in the Great Fire of London – they found it unbelievable that the fire happened after our school opened.

Year 3 have been learning all about Holy Cross Church and its history. They also spent an interesting afternoon in church with Revered Josie learning all about the many historical artefacts that are within the church building.

Year 3 led our Church Service on Advent and helped us reflect in the importance of this time of year.

Year 5 invited Year 3 to learn all about the Ancient Greeks in their class mini museum.

Across the school we have seen budding chefs at work with all the children participating in food technology sessions. We've had fruit kebabs, sandwiches, flatbreads, pizzas and home-made bread.

The children enjoyed a whole school trip to the panto to see Snow White – they all seemed to enjoy themselves and requests have already come in for next year!

We have had our Christmas Plays. This year F2 hosted their own Christmas assembly, which was an absolute joy to watch. They did amazingly well and the pride on adults' faces was priceless. Key Stage 1 treated us to Davey the Donkey and it was lovely to see every child involved in their own way. Key Stage 2 presented their Christmas Celebration in church, sharing some interesting Christmas trivia along the way.



## Extra-Curricular Clubs

This term we have put in place a number of lunchtime clubs such as Quiet Club and My Happy Mind. Some children have worked together to create and build their own chess club. After school we have run Gardening Club and Full of Bean have overseen a number of sports clubs.

As we move into the Spring term we want to continue to build on the extra-curricular offer for the children. A separate flyer will be sent home outline clubs on offer, with further details of new clubs in the Spring term.

## PAWS Christmas Fair

A huge thank you to all those parents and family friends that supported our Christmas Fair last Thursday. It was lovely to see the hustle and bustle of families in school. Without the tireless effort of those parents who helped set up and organise we would not be able to hold such events. Proceeds of the fair will be going towards improving the playground and playtimes for the children.

A special thanks also to the school council who organised their first fundraiser with their own games room with the help of Mrs Carter. The money they raised will be used to support and develop school council projects.

PAWS are always on the lookout for any additional parent helpers – please get in touch with Hayley Gaunt or Nicky Reavy should you wish to help out or get more involved.

## Home – School Partnership

From time to time issues may arise in school and we would encourage any parent or carer with a question, worry or concern to get in touch and come and talk to us as soon as possible. Home-school partnership is important to us and a vital part of supporting your child in school. Please speak to a member of staff on the gate or call into the school office if you would like to make an appointment or would like a phone call. Class teachers are on the yard at the end of the day if you wish to speak and make an appointment to meet with them.

Mrs McCurdy, our Family Support Worker, is also available on a Monday, Tuesday and Friday if you wish to discuss any concerns or would like advice about support for yourself or family.

## School Uniform

As previously requested, can we ask that the children have a warm and waterproof coat in school with them – even if they do come to school in the car, they will need it for breaks.

Just a polite reminder about **PE kit**:

- Converse pumps and boots are not suitable footwear for PE and should not be worn to school. Please do not be offended if we contact you in relation to unsuitable footwear for PE. **From January, any child wearing unsuitable footwear such as Converse Boots for PE, may not be able to join in the practical aspects of the PE lesson.**
- Long hair should be tied back.
- Children may wear **plain black jogging bottoms or leggings**. We do ask these do not have any logos on. Children should bring shorts to school with them as they need to wear shorts for gymnastics rather than jogging bottoms.

Jewellery

- We are seeing an increasing amount of jewellery coming into school, especially amongst our older children. **No jewellery to be worn.** Stud earrings are acceptable, but must be removed or taped over for PE – **smart watches should not be worn in school.** We also ask that friendships bracelets, necklaces etc are not worn. Children will be asked to remove such items if they are wearing them.

## Home – School Communication

We continue to use the School APP and emails for most of our communication home. There are also times when we will send paper copies home – please check your child's bag. If you have not yet downloaded the School APP, we would encourage you to do so as soon as possible. If you need any help, the ladies in the school office are more than happy to talk you through accessing the app.

Class Teachers also send messages home through **Marvellous Me**. Again, if you do not have the app, please let us know and we will send you the details on how to access.

Our school website continues to be added to - please do visit [woodchurchceprimary.com](http://woodchurchceprimary.com) to have a look.

### **Collection at the end of the School day**

From the start of the Spring Term, we will be trialling opening the main school gate at 3:15pm to allow parents access to the school yard to collect children at the end of the school day. The other gates will open at 3:20pm to allow parents and children to leave the yard.

Could we ask that if waiting on the yard, parents can stand back from the school doors to allow us to get the children out of the building safely.

We will be looking at the start of the day in the new year.

### **Key Dates**

**Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> December** – school closes at 2pm. Please join us on the yard from 1:45 for a singalong (weather permitting)

**Monday 8<sup>th</sup> January** – School re-opens

**Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> January** -INSET Day

**Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup>/Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> January** – Parents and Carer Evenings

**Friday 15<sup>th</sup> March** -INSET Day

A full list of dates will be sent out in the Spring Term.

On behalf of all the staff at Woodchurch CE Primary, I would like to share our thanks for your continued support at this time. We wish you all a lovely Christmas and look forward to seeing you all again in the new year.

Kind regards,



J Davies

Acting Head Teacher

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given... and his name shall be called  
Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting father, Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9 v 6-7