



WESTON NEWS

2023-24 ISSUE 1: 3 SEPTEMBER 2023

Website: weston.cheshire.sch.uk

Facebook: [westonvillageprimary](https://www.facebook.com/westonvillageprimary)

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Dates for your diary (new dates in red):

Monday 4 September – Teddy Bears' Picnic (new starters)

Tuesday 5 September – School reopens for all pupils

Thursday 14 September – Individual and siblings school photographs

Friday 6 October – Harvest festival

Monday 9 October – Year 6 to Crucial Crew event

Thursday 12 October – Book fair for one week

Monday 16 October and Wednesday 18 October – Parent consultations

Thursday 19 October – Aqua class assembly (arrive at 9.50am for a 10am start)

Friday 20 October – School closes for half term holiday

Monday 30 October – INSET day (school closed to all pupils)

Tuesday 31 October – School reopens for all pupils

Thursday 2 November – Friends of Weston firework display

Thursday 9 November – Blue class assembly (arrive at 9.50am for a 10am start)

A message from Mr Cutts

I hope you have all enjoyed the summer and had the chance to spend lots of time together with your children. It has not gone unnoticed that the sun has chosen to make an appearance at the start of September rather than at any point in the prior 6 weeks! That said, the sunny start to term reflects the positivity that all staff feel at the start of a new year. There is lots for the children to look forward to.

Welcome to all new starters and their families throughout the school, not least in Reception. I look forward to us working really closely together, in the best interests of your child.

We will see you all on Tuesday 5th September, no later than 8.55am.

Please ensure that you familiarise yourself with this letter and how it relates to your responsibility as parents/carers. The tone may be a touch more bossy than my usual communication but it is very important that there is absolute clarity around the detailed expectations. As ever, thank you for your support.

Attendance

Much has been made of school attendance since the pandemic and it is true to say that nationally and at Weston, attendance has not returned to its pre-pandemic levels. There is a clear directive from the DFE to improve attendance and punctuality, underpinned by the recognition that absence and lateness = missed opportunity.

This year, we will work even more closely with you to ensure that your child's attendance is at least 97%. We urge families to promote positive attendance as well as consistent punctuality because this is fundamental to academic achievement and personal success. When attendance is at risk of becoming a concern, we will follow our procedure, which, in the first instance, will involve contacting you directly to provide support.

Term Time Absence

Whilst we recognise that some absences due to illness are completely unavoidable, there has been a clear increase in the number of requests for leave during the school term. Please do your best to arrange medical appointments for outside of school time (I understand that this is not always possible).

Please remember that, under current regulations, headteachers may not grant leave of absence in term-time unless there are 'exceptional' circumstances because of the impact that having time off has on a child's achievement, wellbeing and future success. Exceptional circumstances tend to be one off events that are unavoidable and for short periods of time, for example the funeral of a relative or a housing crisis that prevents attendance. Typically, family holidays do not fall into the category. In addition, where the attendance of a child is 95% or below, even absence classed as 'exceptional' may not be authorised due to the impact it would have on a child's learning. Please help your child to maintain a positive attitude to school attendance.

Finally, please be honest with us about your child's absence. It is not fair to ask your child to lie about why they have been off and they (or their friends) will generally tell us where they have been. Where this conflicts with the information you have given us, it can potentially damage our relationship, which is based on mutual trust and respect. It is regrettable that this happened a few times last year. We will challenge you if we have cause to.

Hometime Pick-Up

[Did you see the letter about hometime pick-up from September?](#) Here is a reminder of the key points:

- No change to drop-off – children can be dropped off from 8.30am and **must** be in their classroom by 8.55am
- Don't drive onto the turning circle to collect at hometime – if you are driving, park at the pub; walk if you can; car share if you can; consider taking advantage of the Wychwood bus.
- Do not park on the roads surrounding the school
- Hometime for all children is 3.15pm – please avoid being late
- There are strict times for gate opening based on safeguarding
- Children should be collected from external classroom doors



Thank you in advance for your support in working with us to achieve a smooth, safe and successful hometime, in the interests of the whole school and Weston community. Please do re-read the original letter above to remind yourself of the specifics and rationale.

Parent Governor

Following an extensive review of the governing board, including skills and experience, roles and responsibilities, committee structure and constitution, we are now in a position to recruit a new parent governor. Information and nomination papers will follow imminently. Please contact the school to arrange a meeting with me if you would like to discuss the role and expectations in more detail.



Reception 2024 / Year 7 2024

The application window is open for both primary and secondary places for September 2024. I have already shown several prospective Reception 2024 parents around the school and look forward to sharing our school with others throughout the autumn term. Some admissions advice: if you have a child already at a school, you still need to complete an application within the window; don't just put one choice – carefully consider which schools you would be happy for your child to go to in the event that they aren't offered their first choice. The deadlines are October 31 2023 for Year 7 applications and 15 January 2024 for Reception applications. There is no advantage in applying early but you must apply within this window. Please ask if you have any queries. If you don't live in Cheshire East, you will need to apply through your local authority, even if it's for a Cheshire East school.



Haircuts, Piercings and Uniform

[I would like to draw all parents' attention to our school uniform policy.](#)

While your child attends Weston, we expect them to fully conform to this. I specifically want to point out the following regarding piercings and hair styles:



Pupils are permitted to wear watches. For safety reasons, the children are only permitted to wear small stud earrings, which must be removed for PE lessons and after school sports clubs.

Pupils are not permitted unnatural hair colour (hair must be one colour) or extreme hairstyles, including designs or lines shaved into hair.

With regards to piercings, your child **must** be able to remove and replace their own earrings ahead of PE lessons. From a health and safety perspective, we are taking a firmer stance on this, this year.

With regards to hair styles, more and more children are coming to school with lines shaved into their hair. This is not acceptable and is typical school policy. If your child comes to school with lines shaved into their hair or other extreme hairstyles, we will be contacting you to request that it is rectified. Please help your child to adhere to the policy and get in touch if, for any reason, they are struggling to do so.

Please remind yourself of our uniform policy, which all children must fully adhere to. Again, we will be taking a firmer stance on breaches of uniform policy this year. Please speak to us if you have any issues around your child adhering to the policy.

Please also name all uniform and property. This is an expectation which will help us to reunite your child with lost property quickly.

Many thanks in anticipation of your full support of our policies.

Class Dojo

All updates to Dojo will take place on Tuesday following the children's first registration. Please use this platform to communicate with teachers. Absence must be reported to the school office (you may also advise the teacher but must ensure that the school office is always informed) by phone or email.

Nut Free School

Here is your regular reminder that we are a nut free school. Some of our children have a severe nut allergy and the only way to manage the risk to their health is to insist that no one brings nuts or products containing nuts into school. This includes children, staff and any visitors. The obvious risks are with packed lunches and when children bring in sweet treats for classmates on their birthdays. If you require any further clarification, please ask.



Medical Needs

You have all been very supportive in advising us of certain illnesses in relation to one of our pupils, who has undergone chemotherapy and, as such, had a compromised immune system. We are asking for you to continue to support us by advising us of certain illnesses, not least because another Weston pupil is currently immune-compromised. If the child were to be exposed to measles, chickenpox or shingles, they would be at serious risk. If you suspect your child of having any of these illnesses, you should let us know immediately so that we can inform the child's parents.

Secrets of Success

We continue to underpin our school ethos with the Secrets of Success. Through this approach, we really single out the characteristics of successful people and actively promote and reward those qualities. The Secrets of Success are 8 qualities which we believe are essential to ensuring success at school and beyond. These are:

Try new things

Work hard



Concentrate

Push yourself



Imagine

Improve



Understand others

Don't give up



Mobile Phones

The children are not allowed to bring mobile phones to school. There may be occasional exceptions to this such as if a child has come to school from one parent's house and is going home to another parent's house. If this is absolutely necessary, please agree it with the class teacher in advance and they will keep the phone, which should be fully switched off, in a locked cupboard during the day.

Bringing Items into School

For health and safety and behaviour reasons, please note that there is a blanket ban on children bringing any items into school other than those necessary for their learning or additional support, or requested by their teacher, unless pre-agreed with their teacher via Class Dojo. This includes jewellery, as prohibited by our policy, with the exception of watches or small stud earrings. This applies to all children in all circumstances, including medals and trophies for sharing in Celebration assembly. To be clear, the children are encouraged to do this, but only once you have let their teacher know.

We will also reserve the right, as set out in our behaviour policy, to search children's bags if we suspect that they may have prohibited items.

Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete

You may have seen recent media coverage regarding Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) and its use in educational settings. RAAC is a lightweight form of concrete; because it is weaker than regular concrete, concerns have been raised about its long-term durability. Department for Education (DfE) has recently changed its guidance to education settings on the management of RAAC to take a more precautionary approach and as a result, areas in affected spaces will be vacated.

I want to inform you that we are not affected by this decision as we do not have RAAC in any of our buildings and therefore they will continue to function as normal. I understand that parents may want to understand more about the support to educational settings to manage RAAC safely. [You can read more through the article published by the DfE on the Education Hub.](#)

I hope that this offers reassurance.

Don't hesitate to ask if you have any questions.

Thomas Cutts