

Westfield Primary Head's Newsletter— March 2026



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Welcome to our March newsletter, the months suddenly seem to be flying by! Spring definitely seems to be just round the corner and it has been lovely to see the sunshine and enjoy the lengthening days!

It is with great excitement that we can announce Westfield Primary now has an Instagram account! Why not follow us and keep up to date with all the exciting and interesting events happening at Westfield. It is also a good way to pick up information and tips, for example there is information on 10 top tips for reading for pleasure at home—well worth a read! You can find us by following the link below:

<https://www.instagram.com/westfieldprimaryschool/>

February was a busy month (even though half term fell in the middle of it), here are some of the engaging enrichment activities which took place:

- ♦ A-Life workshops for every class (promoting healthy living and exercise)
- ♦ Class assemblies and book looks
- ♦ Children's mental health themed week
- ♦ 'Come as yourself' dress up day
- ♦ World thinking day in school
- ♦ Year 6 Ancient Greece day
- ♦ Golf tester day
- ♦ The FOW also ran a popular Valentine's themed bake sale

Our spring term parent consultation evenings also took place, these are so valuable for finding out how your child is progressing and what you can do at home to further support them. Thank you for coming and working in partnership with the school for the benefit of your children.

This half term the PRIDE value we are focusing on is INDEPENDENCE. This is such an important skill, we encourage the children to not only develop independence in their learning and attitude, but also in who they are, having the confidence to speak up for themselves, be independent of thought (not follow the crowd) and have the courage of their convictions. As the playwright Oscar Wilde said: **'Be yourself; everyone else is already taken'**.

Please do take the time to make a note of any important dates at the back of the newsletter, we would hate you to miss anything.

We wish you all a very Happy Easter and spring break—when we get there!



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Well-being and Mental Health at Westfield.

In February (just before half term) we took part in Children's Mental Health Week and we all had great fun and learnt a lot! The theme was 'This is my place', all based round the feeling of belonging and how important that is to all of our wellbeing. The staff planned many engaging activities around, and to promote, this theme and to support the children in recognising the importance of feeling like we belong, for ourselves and those around us.

We started the week with an assembly and a dress up day (Come as Yourself day). It was wonderful to see all the fabulous outfits the children had put together. The staff all joined in and took a common theme—everyone wore an item of pink and their sunglasses—to demonstrate our sense of belonging to Westfield and each other. It was lovely to see the children start to realise staff were dressed in similar ways!

During the week the children all contributed to a collaborative piece of art by each decorating their own butterfly, this beautiful display is now up in the main school corridor and it looks fabulous!



Why not try this **wellbeing tip during March**: try a 'Tiny Reset' each day. As spring approaches, it's a great time to refresh our routines and boost our mental wellbeing. This month, try building a "tiny reset" into each day—just a small moment where you pause, breathe, and check in with yourself.

A tiny reset can be as simple as:

- Taking **three slow breaths** before starting a new task
- Stepping outside for **one minute of fresh air**
- Stretching your shoulders after sitting for a long time
- Writing down **one thing you're grateful for**

These small breaks give your mind a chance to rest and refocus. Over time, tiny resets can help reduce stress, improve concentration, and support a more positive mindset. Why not get the whole family involved? Even the smallest pause can make a big difference.

With this in mind, this month's Action for Happiness calendar is 'Mindful March', you can find the calendar [HERE](#). We hope you enjoy the mindfulness moments and the 'tiny resets'.

Nurture Principles

This half-term, we are focusing on **Children's learning is understood developmentally.**




At the start of lessons, we look at what previous learning will help us and how this learning will be used in future learning—we call them learning journeys. Just as a house would fall down without solid foundations, children's understanding and learning can only be continually built upon successfully if the basic skills are secure.

Home Learning is very important in helping children secure the basic skills for the foundations of their learning. It gives children extra practice, reinforcing classroom learning in a comfortable and familiar setting.


We have linked this Nurture Principle with one of the 5Rs of our learning behaviours. For the second half of Spring Term, we are promoting Resourceful Ruby. Resources help children of all abilities to explore, understand and embed their learning.

Resourceful Ruby



Resourceful Ruby

- Ruby has an amazing bank of ideas to assist children in their learning when they get stuck:- look back at the question, highlight any important parts, ask three then me to name a few. Being resourceful, like Ruby, will enable children to try more ideas to help themselves before asking a teacher, which in turn will develop their independence.
- Ruby reminds us that we all learn in different ways and we all need different resources to help us be successful.



Learning
Children's
learning is
understood
developmentally

Age Checks, Safer Apps & the Online Safety Act

Many parents may notice that apps, games and websites are starting to introduce **new age checks, privacy settings and safety pop-ups**. This is happening because of new UK online safety rules designed to help keep children safer online.

These changes mean that children might suddenly be asked to confirm their age, review settings or see new safety warnings. While this can feel confusing, the aim is to reduce harmful content and give families more control over what children see online.



Why are apps asking for age checks?

The UK's Online Safety Act places new responsibilities on technology companies to protect young users. As a result, some platforms are:

- Introducing stronger age verification
- Limiting certain features for younger users
- Adding extra reporting and blocking tools
- Changing privacy settings automatically

You may notice your child being logged out, asked to verify their age, or seeing messages about new safety rules.

What parents might see at home

Children may say:

"My account looks different."

"I can't use that feature anymore."

"It says I need a parent's permission."



These changes are normal and are designed to make online spaces safer for young people.

How to support your child

You don't need to be a technology expert – small conversations make a big difference.

- Check age ratings before allowing new apps or games
- Help children choose **private accounts** where possible
- Talk about why some features have changed
- Encourage children to tell you if something online makes them feel uncomfortable
- Explore safety settings together rather than doing it for them

Ofsted Update and Attendance Expectations



As part of recent national changes, Ofsted has updated the way schools are judged, moving away from the single overall grade and instead reporting on several specific areas— **including 'Attendance & Behaviour.'** This means that each area is assessed separately, putting children's attendance as part of their behaviour.

One important implication of this **new system is that attendance now plays an even more significant role in how schools are evaluated.** Westfield Primary School has been set a Department for Education attendance **target of 94.7%**, and our current attendance is 94.6%. Under the new Ofsted model, this **places us below the expected standard for the 'Attendance & Behaviour' element of the report card.**

We fully understand that children become unwell and may need to stay home, but we would like to remind families that both the Trust and Surrey County Council operate a two-week half term (this year in May/June for Westfield and next year in October, this is a Trust decision). Holidays, family travel abroad, celebrations and similar absences are expected to be taken during these longer breaks, or during Easter or the Summer holiday. For this reason, **such absences cannot be authorised during the school term.** Improving attendance will not only support pupils' learning but also ensure the school is meeting national expectations.

Punctuality:

We would also like to **ask for your continued support** in ensuring that all children arrive promptly for the start of the school day at 8:35am. Valuable early morning learning is planned from the moment pupils enter school, and arriving late not only means missing this important start-of-day activity, but can also affect a child's emotional regulation and readiness to learn. **Consistent punctuality helps children feel settled, confident, and fully prepared for the day ahead, giving them the best possible start.**

Below is the full Ofsted explanation:

Ofsted has introduced a new grading system for schools, moving away from the previous four grade model. Instead of giving one overall judgement, inspectors now provide a multi area report card, offering a more rounded picture of how a school is performing across several key areas.

Schools are now graded using the following categories: Exceptional, Strong Standard, Expected Standard, Needs Attention, Urgent Improvement. These categories are not comparable with the old grades because the inspection approach has changed significantly.

What Each Grade Means for Parents

Expected Standard

This is the national benchmark. A school meeting the expected standard is doing everything it should to ensure children receive a high-quality education. This is a strong and positive judgement, shown in green on the Ofsted report card.

Strong Standard

A grade showing that the school is consistently delivering excellent practice that is making a clear difference for children and learners.

Exceptional

This is a higher bar than the former 'outstanding' grade. It is only awarded when inspectors see practice that is among the very best in the country—approaches that should be shared nationally to help other schools improve.

Ofsted Update and Attendance Expectations

Needs Attention

This is not a negative judgement. Instead, it signals that certain areas need focused development so the school can reach the expected standard. It is a constructive signal that targeted work is needed and is not the same as the previously used grade of 'requires improvement'.

Urgent Improvement

Used when more serious issues require immediate action.

We hope this is helpful!

Ofsted have also produced a video for parents: New Ofsted report cards and grades: a guide for parents <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kbl0FvY976g&t=2s>

Westfield Heroes

Help celebrate Our Westfield Heroes!

At Westfield Primary School, we believe in recognising the everyday heroes who make our school such a special place. If a member of our staff has brightened your day, supported your child, or made a positive difference—no matter how big or small—we want to hear about it!

Anyone in our school community can be a Westfield Hero:

- A friendly face in the office
- Someone who made your child smile
- A class teacher or Learning Support Assistant who went above and beyond
- Our Well-Being Assistants, Nurture Lead, SENCO, Inclusion Leader, kitchen staff—or anyone else you'd like to thank!

If you'd like to celebrate a member of staff, simply click the link below to fill out our short form. Share your story with us, and we'll make sure your kind words are passed on to your Westfield Hero.

[Click here to nominate a Westfield Hero.](#)

Thank you for helping us celebrate the fantastic staff who make Westfield Primary School such a wonderful community.



Application for leave of absence/exceptional circumstances

As parents, you have a legal responsibility to ensure your child's attendance at school. Holidays should be taken during the school holiday period. During the academic year pupils are at school for 190 days and at home for 175 days. Students are expected to attend 100% of the time.

Please fill in a request of absence form (available from the office or online) if you want to ask the Headteacher to authorise a *leave of absence* during term time. You must ask well in advance and you are strongly advised to request leave of absence before you confirm your arrangements.

New legislations (Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013) means that if an application is not "*made in advance to the Head teacher by a parent with whom the pupil normally resides, and the Head teacher does not consider that leave of absence should be granted due to the "exceptional circumstances" relating to that application*", then it will not be authorised.

If you take your child out of school without the approval of the school, you may be liable to receive a Penalty Notice from Surrey County Council for failing to ensure your child's regular school attendance.

Unauthorised absence in school time will not be authorised. *Guidelines from the local authority are that they may issue a Penalty Notice (with a fine) to each parent, when students are taken out of school during term for 5 days or more and if this absence is recorded as unauthorised by the school. Please note it includes cumulative absence over a 10 week period (several unauthorised absences that total 5 days within a 10 week period).*

The amount payable on issue of a Penalty Notice is £80 per parent per child if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £160 if paid within 28 days. If the penalty notice remains unpaid after 28 days, the Local Authority will consider a prosecution in the Magistrates Court. Please note that penalty notices are issued per parent/carer per child so a family of two parents and two children will receive 4 penalty notices. **If the absence exceeds 20 days, your child's name may be removed from the school roll and you will have to reapply for a place on your return.**

The Headteacher will consider the reasons for the request carefully, taking into account the effect on the continuity of your child's learning and your child's overall attendance rate, and then may authorise up to five days of absence. The Headteacher will notify you, via the office, of the decision within five working days of receiving your written application.

Leave of absence, for exceptional circumstances, will not be granted if additional leave is taken as holiday either side of this time. Proof of flights or other documentation supporting the request must be produced if asked for.

Monthly Attendance Letters

Monthly letters are automatically produced and sent to all parents whose children are late 4 times or more in a month. Monthly letters will also be produced to all parents whose child has an attendance below 90%, and for those between 91-94%. These letters will continue to be sent until the attendance is above 94%. Please be aware that this may take quite a few months.

Surrey Attendance Advice Officer (previously Education Welfare Officer)

The Surrey Attendance Advice Officer monitors the attendance of all children on a regular basis. They may contact parents if children are consistently late or there are concerns about attendance.

SCHOOL PENALTY NOTICE FINES FROM AUGUST 2024



The following changes will come into force for Penalty Notice Fines issued after 19th August 2024

1

FIRST OFFENCE

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for term time leave or irregular attendance the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child if paid within 28 days. Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

2

SECOND OFFENCE (WITHIN 3 YEARS)

The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for term time leave or irregular attendance the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child to be paid within 28 days. No reduced rate will be offered.

3

THIRD OFFENCE AND ANY FURTHER OFFENCES (WITHIN 3 YEARS)

The third time an offence is committed for term time leave or irregular attendance a Penalty Notice will not be issued and the case will be presented straight to the Magistrates' Court. Magistrates'; fines can be up to £2500 per parent, per child. Cases found guilty in Magistrates' Court can show on a Parents future DBS certificate, due to failure to safeguard a child's education.

10 SESSIONS (5 DAYS) OF UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE IN A 10 WEEK PERIOD

Penalty Notice Fines will be considered when there has been 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period.

HOLIDAY FUN CLUB
AT WOKING UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

EGG-CITING NEWS

FOR THE WHOLE WORLD

- Tuesday 31st March - Thursday 2nd April
- 9:15am - 12:30pm
- For children in school years R - Year 5
- £5 per day or £12 for all three days
- Siblings £4/day or £10 for all three days

BREAKING NEWS wokingurc.org.uk

Tuesday 31st March - Thursday 2nd April 2026

EGG-CITING NEWS

Continued from page 1

Each day we will explore part of the story with drama and music, craft, cooking, games, and prayer and reflection.

Doors open at 9:15 for registration and an introductory activity.

We then join together in the sanctuary to warm up for the day and hear the story for the first time.

We will then split into groups once more and move round to four activities. These will explore the story in different ways and hopefully leave us with something to think about. There is also time for a mid-morning snack.




At 12 we meet back together in the sanctuary to recap and reflect on what we have experienced and sing some songs. Parents and carers coming to collect their children can join us for this part of the morning.

Then it's home time. Your children will be given a bag to bring home anything they have made.

We aim to be inclusive of those of all faiths and none and all abilities and needs. If there is anything you want to discuss ahead of booking or any way we can support you/your children in attending Holiday Fun Club please contact us. children@wokingurc.org.uk

£5 per day or £12 for all three days
Sibling discount for second and subsequent children
£4/day or £10 for all three days

Booking open between 13th February-17th March.
See the church website www.wokingurc.org.uk, scan the QR code below

WESTFIELD PRIMARY DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Whilst we endeavour to keep the school dates fixed, we sometimes need to change these and ask for your support with amendments.

| | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|--|
| Tuesday | 3rd March | 9am—Year 4 book look in hall |
| Thursday | 5th March | Book Day—dress up day |
| Friday | 6th March | 10am Penguins class assembly |
| Friday | 13th March | 10am Puffins class assembly |
| Wednesday | 18th March | Year 6 Polka Theatre trip |
| Friday | 20th March | 10am Robins class assembly |
| Wednesday | 25th March | 10am KS2 Easter assembly |
| Wednesday | 25th March | 11am KS1 Easter assembly |
| Thursday | 26th March | Children break up at 1.20pm |
| Monday | 13th April | Summer term starts |
| Monday | 13th April | African Explorer Workshop for Year R |
| Tuesday Wednesday | 14th April-15th April | Bikeability level 1 for year 4 |
| Wednesday Thursday | 22nd April- 23rd April | Bikeability level 1 for year 4 |
| Friday | 24th April | 10am Owls class assembly |
| Friday | 1st May | 10am Caterpillars class assembly |
| Monday | 4th May | Bank Holiday—school closed |
| Friday | 8th May | 10am Dragonflies class assembly |
| Mon-Fri | 11th-15th May | SATS week |
| Monday | 12th May | Year 3 Weald & Downland museum trip |
| Friday | 15th May | 10am Ladybirds class assembly |
| Thursday | 21st May | Year 1 trip to Windsor Castle |
| Friday | 22nd May | 10am Beetles class assembly |
| Mon-Fri | 25th May—5th June | 2 week half term |
| Thursday | 11th June | Class photos and year 6 leavers photos |
| Friday | 12th June | 10am Bumblebees class assembly |
| Wednesday | 17th June | Year 2 trip to Brooklands Museum |
| Thursday | 18th June | Summer Fair |
| Friday | 19th June | 10am Butterflies class assembly |
| Mon-Fri | 22nd—26th June | Year 6 activities week |
| Wednesday | 24th June | 9-11am Sports day for year R |

WESTFIELD PRIMARY DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Whilst we endeavour to keep the school dates fixed, we sometimes need to change these and ask for your support with amendments.

| | | |
|-----------|-----------|---|
| Thursday | 25th June | 9-11am Sports day for years 1 & 2 |
| Friday | 26th June | 10am Kingfishers class assembly |
| Monday | 29th June | 9-11am Sports day for years 5&6 |
| Tuesday | 30th June | Move up day - children meet teachers for next year |
| Tuesday | 30th June | Parents of children in Year 1 & 2 in Sep to meet new teachers in the hall 3.15-3.45pm |
| Wednesday | 1st July | Parents of children in Year 3 & 4 in Sep to meet new teachers in the hall 3.15-3.45pm |
| Thursday | 2nd July | 9-11am Sports day for years 3&4 |
| Thursday | 2nd July | Year 6 summer production 2pm |
| Thursday | 2nd July | Parents of children in Year 5 & 6 in Sep to meet new teachers in the hall 3.15-3.45pm |
| Friday | 3rd July | 10am Woodpeckers class assembly |
| Friday | 3rd July | Year 6 summer production 2pm |
| Monday | 6th July | Wellbeing week dress up day |
| Thursday | 16th July | Year 6 leavers BBQ 4-5.30pm. Children leave at 3.10pm and return at 4pm for the BBQ. |
| Friday | 17th July | 10.30am Year 6 leavers assembly |
| Friday | 17th July | 11.45am term ends for year 6 |
| Friday | 17th July | 1.20pm term ends for years R-5 |

