Westfield Primary Head's Newsletter– November 2026

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As we reach the end of our first half term of the new academic year, I would like to take a moment to reflect on what has been a wonderfully positive and successful start to the year at Westfield.

It has been a pleasure to welcome both new and returning families back to school, and our pupils have settled quickly into their learning with enthusiasm, confidence and a real eagerness to succeed. Classrooms have been busy with exciting learning opportunities, and it has been wonderful to see our children demonstrating our values every day through their kindness, resilience and positivity.

We have also thoroughly enjoyed welcoming prospective parents and families to Westfield over recent weeks. Sharing our school with visitors and seeing children proudly talk about their learning has been a real highlight. We are now looking forward to celebrating our **Wonderful Westfield Learning** at our **Open Evening on 12th November, 5.00– 6.30pm,** when families, both current and prospective, will have the opportunity to see first-hand the fantastic experiences and achievements taking place across the school. *We look forward to seeing you there!*

Our recent Parents' Evenings had a lovely buzz around them, with staff and families coming together to celebrate children's successes and discuss their next steps. We were particularly touched by the many positive comments left on our feedback hearts. Messages included:

"We love the importance placed on well-being and inclusion."
"I like the friendly community of parents - I've made friends."
"I like that Westfield has had a positive influence on my son's confidence."
"I like that everyone is so approachable, friendly and helpful at Westfield School."
"Westfield is an amazing school, with brilliant teachers and staff."
"The best school in town!"
"I love the friendly and welcoming environment, the staff and the facilities."

There were many more equally heart-warming comments, and we would like to thank all of you for taking the time to share such positive feedback. Your support and partnership mean a great deal to us.

The last half term also saw our school community come together for **#HelloYellow Day**, raising awareness of children's mental health and wellbeing. It was wonderful to see so many pupils and staff taking part and supporting such an important message about looking after ourselves and each other.

We are pleased to extend a very warm Westfield welcome to Mrs Cheryl McDaniel, who joined our team as the new Year 2, Caterpillars Class teacher, just before half term. We are excited to have Cheryl with us and look forward to seeing the positive relationships, enthusiasm and expertise she will bring to our children and wider school community.

We finished the half term with our Harvest celebrations, holding two special Harvest Assemblies. Thank you to everyone who generously donated items for our local foodbank. Your kindness and generosity will help support local families, and the foodbank team were extremely grateful for your contributions.

We hope you have had a restful half-term break and we are looking forward to another exciting half term ahead.

As always, I would like to thank our children for their hard work, our staff for their dedication, and our families for their continued support. Together, we make Westfield such a caring, vibrant and successful community.

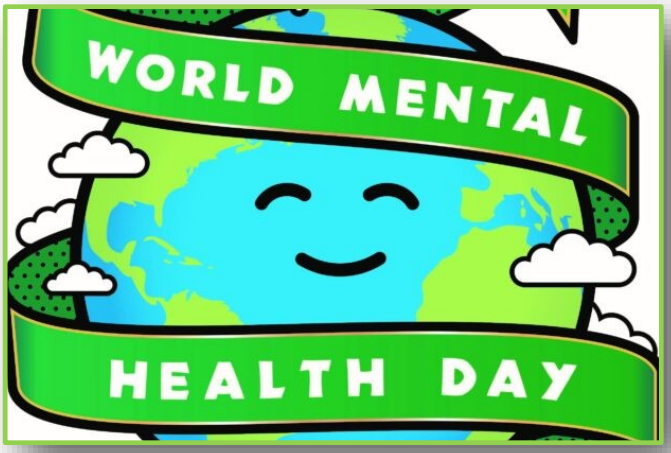
Well-being and Mental Health at Westfield.

#Hello Yellow! Celebrating World Mental Health Day

What a fantastic day we had marking World Mental Health Day through our #Hello Yellow day (linking with Young Minds)! The whole school was transformed into a sea of yellow as children and staff dressed in their brightest yellow outfits to raise awareness of the importance of looking after our wellbeing and mental health.

One of the highlights of the day was the wonderful displays in classrooms of decorated and dressed-up yellow fruit, which brought plenty of smiles and creativity into school. Children also took part in a range of wellbeing-focused activities, including a buddy class activity, a 'Secret Friend' activity, and lots of opportunities to celebrate kindness, friendship and belonging.

The day created a lovely buzz across the school, with children talking about ways to support their own wellbeing and that of others. Do look on Page 4 for some pictures from the day, and also Instagram. A huge thank you to all families, staff and children for helping make the day such a success!



Our **Wellbeing Ambassadors** continue to be busy this term. They continue to play an important role in promoting kindness, inclusion and positive wellbeing across the school. We are especially proud that they have recently begun supporting our Reception children during their weekly Stay and Play sessions. Well done to all of our ambassadors for being such positive role models!

As we are now in November, the 'Christmas' word is increasingly talked about! The run-up to Christmas can be an exciting but busy time for children and adults alike. As diaries become fuller and routines become busier, it's important to remember some simple ways to protect our wellbeing:

- Make time for rest and relaxation
- Enjoy being active outdoors, even for short periods
- Talk to family and friends about how you're feeling
- Limit screen time where possible and make time for real-life connections
- Focus on the small moments that bring joy and gratitude each day

Remember, looking after ourselves helps us to be at our best for others too.

This month's Action for Happiness calendar (New Ways November) can be found HERE.

Group Chats: When the School Day Ends, the Conversation Continues

WhatsApp, iMessage, Snapchat and gaming chats can be a great way for children to stay connected with friends. However, group chats can also become overwhelming very quickly. A disagreement that might once have ended at the school gate can now continue into the evening, with dozens of messages, screenshots and other people becoming involved.

For primary-aged children, navigating this can be particularly difficult.

Messages can quickly escalate
Without facial expressions or tone of voice, jokes and comments can easily be misunderstood. One unkind message can also lead to others joining in.



Being left out feels very public
Children may create new groups without someone, remove somebody from a chat or talk about another child while they are not there. This can have a significant impact on friendships in school.

Screenshots don't disappear
Messages, photographs and voice notes can be saved or shared with other people – even when they were originally sent privately.

There's pressure to keep checking
A busy group chat can generate hundreds of notifications. Children may worry that they will miss something or be talked about if they don't respond straight away.

Not everyone in a group may be a friend
Children can be added to groups containing people they don't know. Phone numbers, profile photographs and other personal information may then become visible to a much wider group.

What can parents and carers do?

Talk regularly – Ask about the chats your child is part of and how they make them feel.

Agree some boundaries – Consider keeping devices out of bedrooms overnight and having times when group chats are muted.

Teach the 'pause before you post' rule – Would I say this face-to-face? Is it kind? Would I be happy for a trusted adult to read it?

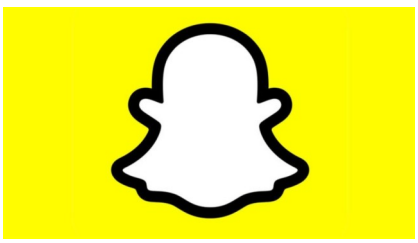
Don't encourage children to respond to arguments – Taking a screenshot, leaving the conversation and speaking to a trusted adult is often safer than replying.

Check privacy settings together – Look at who can add your child to groups, see their profile information or contact them.

Remind them they can leave – Children do not have to stay in a group that makes them uncomfortable, even if their friends are in it.

If something upsetting happens in a group chat, encourage your child to:

STOP – Don't reply or retaliate.
SCREENSHOT – Keep evidence of concerning messages.
SPEAK – Show a trusted adult and ask for help.



October Fun



Evacuees Day



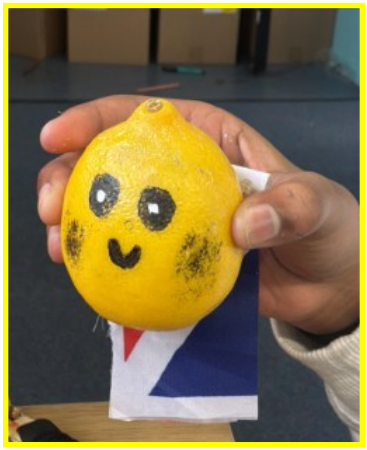


Victorian's Day











#Hello Yellow Day

Harvest Assembly

The South Woking Food Bank were very grateful for all the donations. We hope you enjoyed the assemblies.





Poppy collection after half term

This half term the poppy collection will go around to the classes. The poppy collection (known as the Poppy Appeal) raises vital funds for the Royal British Legion to support serving Armed Forces personnel, veterans, and their families.

Remembrance: Wearing a red poppy serves as a visible symbol of respect and gratitude for the lives lost in active service from World War I to the present day. A purple poppy is a symbol of remembrance in the United Kingdom dedicated to animals that served and died in military conflicts.

The children may bring in cash to donate to the Poppy Appeal. We only have limited items of certain things, and these will come to classes from 4.11.26

Recommended donations are:

Pencils – suggested donation of 50p
Silicon & Ribbon Wristbands £1.00
Vinyl Poppy on tag 50p
Poppy stickers – any donation
Poppies – any donation



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.



Children in Need



Head Boy and Head Girl

Congratulations to Timothy and Erin who are this year's Head Boy and Head Girl.





Westfield Primary

Learn • Belong • Thrive

Small steps make big futures

Reading opens doors for life

Reading is more than just a school skill – it builds confidence, imagination and success.

Why is reading so important?

Builds vocabulary
Helps children express themselves and understand the world.

Improves concentration
Strengthens focus, attention and listening skills.

Boosts confidence
Gives children pride in their achievements and ability.

Supports all subjects
Good readers are better learners in maths, science, PE and beyond.

Encourages imagination
Opens up new ideas, cultures and perspectives.

Builds future success
Reading helps children become independent and resilient.

How you can help

Make reading a daily habit
Just 10–15 minutes a day makes a big difference.

Create a reading-friendly space
A cosy spot at home, with good lighting, helps children get into the story.

Talk about books
Ask questions, share your thoughts and let them choose what they enjoy.

Let them see you read
Children are inspired by the adults around them.

Encourage a love of reading
Celebrate their progress, no matter how small!

Every little bit counts

You don't need to be a reading expert – just a positive role model and **encourager**!

Together, we can help our children become confident, curious and capable readers.



Thank you for your support!

Your encouragement and time really do make a difference.
Let's work together to give every child the chance to read, learn and thrive.

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).**

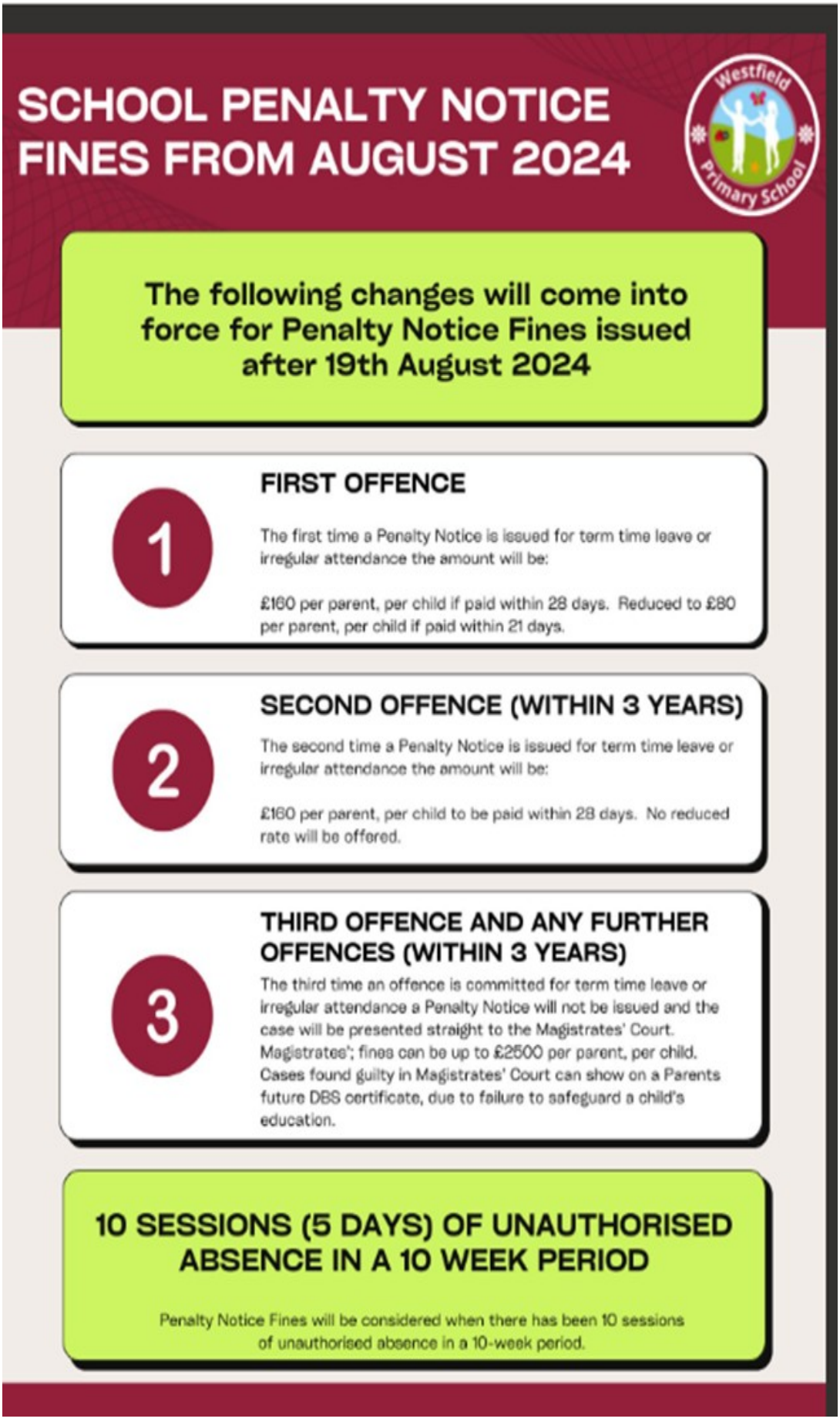
The amount payable on issue of a Penalty Notice is £80 per parent per child if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £160 if paid within 28 days. If the penalty notice remains unpaid after 28 days, the Local Authority will consider a prosecution in the Magistrates Court. Please note 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 over-all 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
Westfield Primary School
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.

Perform SCHOLARSHIP



Would your child benefit from weekly drama, dance and singing classes?

Designed to boost confidence, communication, concentration and coordination, Perform classes for 4–7s combine drama-based games and fun activities with a termly performance.

perform.org.uk

To celebrate the launch of our new school, we are offering selected children a free scholarship for a full term.

To nominate your child, please email their name, age, school, your contact details and why you think they'd benefit to:

Sophie Ladds

sophieladds@perform.org.uk

Perform Scholarship venue:

Perform Woking

Moorcroft Centre For The Community, GU22 9PB

Drama, dance & singing classes for:

4-7s: Saturdays 11.15am-12.45pm

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.

Monday-Friday	2nd—6th Nov	Bikeability for years 4 & 6
Tuesday	3rd November	Mufti—donations please for the chocolate tombola
Wednesday	4th November	Year 5 "All Rise" legal workshop
Friday	6th November	10am Penguins class assembly
Tuesday	10th November	Year 6 WW2 workshop
Thursday	12th November	Open evening 5-6.30pm
Friday	13th November	Deadline to order school photos is midday today
Friday	13th November	Children in Need Day—spotty dress up day. Donations can be made on Scopay, or cash on the day
Friday	13th November	10am Puffins class assembly
Monday-Friday	16-20 Nov	Bikeability for year 6
Monday	16th November	Anti Bullying week—Wear odd socks day
Monday	16th November	Flu Immunisations And Reception Height & Weight
Tuesday	17th November	Mufti—donations please for the bottle tombola
Friday	20th November	10am Dragonflies class assembly
Monday-Friday	23rd—27th Nov	Bikeability for year 6
Wednesday	25th November	Christmas fair 2.45-4.30pm
Friday	27 Nov,4 11 18 Dec	Christmas Jumper days
Tuesday	1st December	10am—Christmas production to year 3 parents
Thursday	3rd December	Aladdin panto to whole school
Friday	4th December	2pm—Christmas production to year 5 parents
Monday	7th December	2pm—Christmas production to year 1 parents
Tuesday	8th December	2pm—Christmas production to year 2 parents
Tuesday	8th December	2pm—Hawks Christingle at St Marks Church
Wednesday	9th December	10am—Year R advent assembly—DO NOT USE ADULT ED CAR PARK
Thursday	10th December	2pm—Falcons Christingle at St Marks Church
Thursday	10th December	2pm—Christmas assembly for Year 4 parents
Friday	11th December	Santa's Grotto day (Friends of Westfield)
Thursday	17th December	Christmas meal day
Friday	18th December	1pm carols around the tree
Friday	18th December	School breaks up at 1.20pm
Tuesday	5th January	Students return