

# Westfield Primary Head's Newsletter— November 2023



## Contents

Message from	1
Mrs Hing	
Wellbeing	2-3
Positivity	4
Online safety	5
Head Boy & Head Girl	6
Westfield Heroes	6
Book look	7
Communication	7
Trips info	8
School photo deadline	8
Sports	9
Harvest	10
Absence	11
Notices	12
	13
Dates	14

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I hope this newsletter finds you and your family well. I would like to extend a warm welcome back after the half term break. I trust that everyone had a restful and enjoyable two week break, and that the children are now energized and ready to dive back into their learning.

I wanted to take this opportunity to recap some of the exciting events and activities that took place last month. Our Sports Crew training was a huge success, allowing our students to enhance their leadership skills and promote physical activity within the school community. Year 3 also had a fantastic time during their continued visits to Mayford Grange retirement village, they have been engaging in activities such as making Candy Cane reindeer for our Christmas Fair. It was heart-warming to see the positive connections between our pupils and the older generation.

In addition to these events, we celebrated World Smile Day, which brought so much joy and positivity to our school. Our school photos were taken, capturing precious memories and smiles for years to come. We also took part in World Mental Health Day by wearing yellow (#hello yellow). It was wonderful to see the support and solidarity from both pupils and staff.

Our Year 6 children participated in insightful World War 2 workshops, delving deeper into this significant historical period. They also had a successful evacuee day, immersing themselves in the experience of children during the Second World War. Year 6 also took part in motivational workshops.

Throughout the month of October, we had the pleasure of enjoying various class assemblies that showcased the talents and hard work of our children. Additionally, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all the parents who generously donated to our Harvest Festival. We were able to donate your contributions to Woking Food Bank, which will greatly benefit our local community- Thank you!

Our girls' football team had an exciting match against Brookwood Primary School, demonstrating great sportsmanship and skill. For our Year 5 and 6 students, the "Re-start a Heart" air ambulance session via Zoom was both educational and empowering. Lastly, the recent Parent's evenings and book looks were invaluable opportunities for parent-teacher collaboration.



We would like to congratulate Mrs Gumbrell on her recent marriage, she will now be Mrs Minnaar. We wish her a lifetime of joy and happiness with her partner.

Looking ahead, we have another action-packed month planned, filled with engaging activities and enriching learning experiences. I encourage you to stay updated with our school newsletter dates found on the back page and keep an eye out for any future communication regarding school events.

Thank you once again for your continued support and involvement in your child's education. Wishing you a wonderful month ahead!

# Well-being and Mental Health at Westfield.



## The Importance of Kindness

World Kindness Day is fast approaching!

Every year this special day is celebrated on November 13th, this year that falls on a Monday (next Monday) and it also falls within our Anti-bullying week, which is very apt.

World Kindness Day is a global day that promotes the importance of being kind to each other, to yourself, and to the world. On this day, everyone taking part, attempt to make the world a better place by celebrating and promoting good deeds and pledging acts of kindness, either as individuals or as organisations.

At Westfield, we recognise and promote the importance of Kindness, its significance in our daily lives and its positive impact on our community.

Kindness is an essential value that we strive to instil in our pupils. It goes beyond mere politeness and encourages empathy, respect, and compassion towards others. By fostering an environment where kindness is celebrated, we aim to empower our children to make a difference in the world both now and in the future.

Here are some fabulous examples of kindness from around the world:

- In Japan, it is customary for people to donate thousands of origami paper cranes to hospitals, symbolizing good health and well-being for the patients
- In Uganda, bicycle ambulances are used to transport sick people from rural areas to the nearest hospital, ensuring access to healthcare for all
- A shopkeeper in Australia gave a young child a free toy turtle as a gift, and asked that he 'paid it forward' and showed kindness to others
- A tourist in Marrakech was invited to share a meal with a local family and the family then drove them around and showed them the sights of their lovely city

These examples serve as inspiration for all of us to think about how we can make a positive impact, no matter how small.

## **Why should we be kind?**

Kindness and empathy help us relate to other people and have more positive relationships with friends, family, and even perfect strangers we encounter in our daily lives. Besides just improving personal relationships, however, kindness can actually make you healthier and feel happier! That's got to be a good thing!

It would be amazing if, at home, you can continue this conversation about the importance of kindness. Let's work together to create a community where kindness thrives, and our children can grow to be compassionate and considerate individuals!



There is a great opportunity to be kind in our community on the next page!

This month's Action for Happiness calendar can be found [HERE](#).

## Well-being Opportunity!

We have some good links with the local retirement village, Mayford Grange. Our Year 3s have an 'intergenerational link' with them and visit regularly and our choir sing to them every December.

We thought it would be lovely if our children made Christmas cards for the residents and we will deliver them before the end of term.

We are offering this as an optional extra curricular activity to be completed at home. Therefore, if your child would like to take part, we ask that they make a Christmas card (no bigger than A5 please) and bring it into school by Friday 1st December. Please mark the card for the attention of Mrs McPhee.

The cards should be as colourful and 'Christmassy' as possible, so that they bring as much joy as possible! Please can the children sign the cards with their first name only and 'and all at Westfield Primary School'.

We will celebrate the entries in a future newsletter and of course the children will have the benefit of knowing they have increased someone's happiness and hopefully decreased any feelings of loneliness over the festive season. Thank you!



## Positivity! (One of our PRIDE values)

This half term the PRIDE value we will be focussing on is positivity (the P in PRIDE).

Below are some positive quotes, we have also shared these with the children. Do you have a favourite? Perhaps you know some different ones, why not share them with your family?

In our assembly on positivity, we reminded the children that it is an attitude and also a choice. Which is great news, as this means we can do something about it and teach ourselves to have a more positive attitude and outlook.

### Positive Quotes & Thoughts....

"Every day may not be good,  
but there is good in every  
day." - Alice Morse Earle

"Having a positive attitude is asking  
how something can be done rather than  
saying it can't be done." - Bo Bennett

"A positive attitude  
will lead to  
positive outcomes."

"We can complain because rose bushes  
have thorns, or rejoice because thorn  
bushes have roses." - Abraham Lincoln

"Every cloud has a silver  
lining." - John Milton

"A bad attitude is like a flat  
tyre; you can't go anywhere  
until you change it."

"Attitude is a little thing that can make a big difference." - Winston Churchill





## Online Safety

### What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

# SNAPCHAT

AGE RESTRICTION  
**13+**



#### WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Snapchat is an instant messaging app which allows users to send images, videos and texts to people in their friends list. One of Snapchat's unique features is that pictures and messages 'disappear' 24 hours after they've been viewed; however, this content isn't as temporary as many believe – with some users saving screenshots or using another device to take a photo of their screen. This year, Snapchat added 'My AI': a customisable chatbot with which people can chat and share secrets, as well as asking for advice and suggestions of places to visit.

#### CONNECTING WITH STRANGERS

Even if your child only connects with people they know, they may still get friend requests from strangers. The Quick Add option lets users befriend people the app recommends – but these 'friends' are merely a username, which could have anyone behind it. Accepting such requests reveals children's personal information through the Story, SnapMap and Spotlight features, potentially putting them at risk from predators.

#### EXCESSIVE USE

Snapchat works hard on user engagement, with features like streaks (messaging the same person every day to build up a high score). Spotlight Challenges tempt users into spending time producing content in search of cash prizes and online fame, while it's easy for children to pass hours watching Spotlight's endless scroll of videos.

#### INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Some videos and posts on Snapchat aren't suitable for children. The hashtags used to group content are determined by the poster, so even an innocent search term could still yield age-inappropriate results. The app's 'disappearing messages' feature also makes it easy for young people (teens in particular) to share explicit images on impulse – so sexting continues to be a risk associated with Snapchat.

#### ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

My AI is Snapchat's new chatbot, which replies to questions in a human-like manner. However, the software is still in its infancy and has significant drawbacks, such as biased, incorrect or misleading responses. There have already been numerous reports of young users turning to AI for medical help and diagnoses, which could be inaccurate and therefore potentially dangerous.

#### ONLINE PRESSURES

Although many of Snapchat's filters are designed to entertain or amuse, the 'beautify' effects on photos can set unrealistic body-image expectations – creating feelings of inadequacy if a young person compares themselves unfavourably with other users. Snapchat now also has 'priority' notifications (which still get displayed even if a device is in 'do not disturb' mode), increasing the pressure on users to log back in and interact.

#### VISIBLE LOCATION

Snap Map highlights a device's exact position on a virtual map which is visible to other users. There are options to restrict who can see this information: all friends, only you (Ghost Mode) or selected friends. Snapchat also has real-time location sharing, which is intended as a buddy system to ensure friends have reached home safely – but which could also be used to track a young person for more sinister reasons.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

#### TURN OFF QUICK ADD

The Quick Add feature helps people find each other on the app. This function works based on mutual friends or whether someone's number is in your child's contacts list. Explain to your child that this could potentially make their profile visible to strangers. We recommend that your child turns off Quick Add, which can be done in the settings (accessed via the cog icon).

#### CHOOSE GOOD CONNECTIONS

In 2021, Snapchat rolled out a new safety feature: users can now receive notifications reminding them of the importance of maintaining connections with people they actually know well, as opposed to strangers. This 'Friend Check Up' encourages users to delete connections with users that they rarely communicate with, to maintain their online safety and privacy.

#### DISCUSS AI

Although My AI's responses can often give the impression that it's a real person, it's essential that young people remember this certainly isn't the case. Encourage your child to think critically about My AI's replies to their questions: are they accurate and reliable? Remind them that My AI shouldn't replace chatting with their real friends, and that it's always better to talk to an actual person in relation to medical matters.

#### CHAT ABOUT CONTENT

It may feel like an awkward conversation (and one that young people can be reluctant to have) but it's important to talk openly and non-judgementally about sexting. Remind your child that once something's online, the creator loses control over where it ends up – and who else sees it. Likewise, it's vital that children understand that some challenges which become popular on the platform may have potentially harmful consequences.

#### KEEP ACCOUNTS PRIVATE

Profiles are private by default, but children may make them public to gain more followers. Snap Stories are visible to everyone your child adds, unless they change the settings. On SnapMaps, their location is visible unless Ghost Mode is enabled (again via settings). It's safest not to add people your child doesn't know in real life – especially since the addition of My Places, which allows other Snapchat users to see where your child regularly visits and checks in.

#### BE READY TO BLOCK AND REPORT

If a stranger does connect with your child on Snapchat and begins to make them feel uncomfortable through bullying, pressure to send explicit images or by sending sexual images to them, your child can select the three dots on that person's profile and report or block them. There are options to state why they're reporting that user (annoying or malicious messages, spam, or masquerading as someone else, for example).

#### Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



**National Online Safety**

#WakeUpWednesday

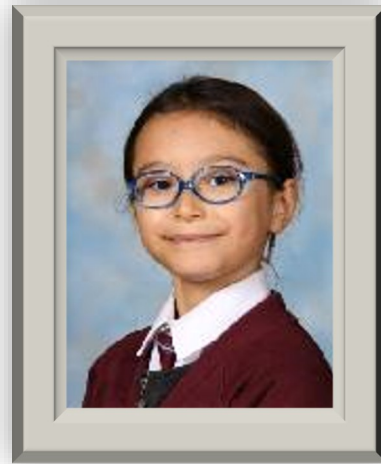
Sources: <https://help.snapchat.com/hc/en-gb/articles/202076358832-What-is-My-AI-on-Snapchat-and-how-do-I-use-it> | <https://www.eunet.org/en-GB/wake-up-wednesday-learnings-from-the-digital-and-online-safety-enhancements> | <https://www.nos.gov.uk/2023/04/snapchat-features-location-sharing-changes/> | <https://help.snapchat.com/hc/en-gb/articles/20202404644>



### Head Boy and Head Girl

We have selected our Head Boy and Head Girl, from Year 6. It is always a really tough decision, as we have so many children who display our PRIDE values and follow The Westfield Way every day. This year, following a very tight staff vote we have selected Rivaan and Katy May .

They will be escorting visitors around school, supporting at school events and assemblies and demonstrating The Westfield Way to our pupils.



### Westfield Heroes

It's nice to be nice and if a member of Westfield staff made you smile then let us know and we will pass on your comments to them. It can be for absolutely anyone in school and for any reason - we'd just like to know! Maybe someone in the office was super helpful, someone made your child smile, your class teacher or LSA went the extra mile, or you were helped by a Well-Being Assistant or Nurture Lead, SENCO or Inclusion Leader, or you just want to say thankyou. Please click on the link and fill out the form it will take you to, then just add in the information about the Westfield Hero.

[Click](#) for the Westfield Hero form.



## **Year Group Book Look Reminder:**

Every term we run our year group book looks. These are an opportunity to come to school and look at your child's books, alongside them, so they can show you pieces of work they're particularly proud of and explain their learning and topics to you.

The book looks usually take place in our delightful Wild Garden and are lovely events to take part in. It was lovely to hear so many parents took advantage of this opportunity last half term.

These events do take some organising, therefore, we ask that you let the class teacher know (via the class email address) in advance of the event so that they can prepare books, ensure the correct children are present etc. If you haven't let the teacher know prior to the event it can be difficult to make the necessary arrangements at short notice and therefore you will not be able to join the event.

Thank you for your co-operation and understanding.

## **Communicating with the school over the weekends:**

This is an important reminder regarding emails to the school.

The school cannot accept emails over the weekends, therefore if you do email the school over the weekend, the emails will not be delivered and will bounce back. The school will not receive them.

Please ensure that you do not email the school or a member of staff during the weekends as they will not see or receive the email and therefore you will not get a response.

We are sure you understand, that the wellbeing of our school community is very important to us and this is one of the ways we can help support our staff's wellbeing. We can all support each other to get some rest and relaxation over the weekend and be refreshed and ready for the working week! Thank you for your support.

## **Trips & cost of living crisis**

### **A Huge Thank you!**

We want to extend a huge thank you to the very generous parents who reached out to the school and very kindly overpaid on the Year 5 Magistrates' Court trip. They paid for their own child to attend and then also made an additional donation, thereby allowing the trip to go ahead for all. We appreciate that we are in the middle of a financially difficult time for all, and this generosity is really heart-warming.

The school cannot afford to continually subsidise trips and if there are not enough funds to cover a trip, then sadly that trip will not be able to go ahead.

This time the trip was saved by a group of generous parents. Thank you!

Many schools ask parents for a termly voluntary donation (on top of trip costs) to help support the school. This is not something we do, or want to do. However, we do ask that when there is a planned trip, if you are able to, that you provide the requested amount, or as much as you can towards it. This will allow trips to happen for all. Thank you very much.

### **Photo deadline**

Please ensure that you order your school photos online with Fraser Portraits by November 8th.

After this date you can still order but there will be a fee of £4, and the photo will be sent directly to you and not to school.





# Sport at Westfield

## Sports for schools visit and sponsored fitness

At the end of September, the children of Westfield took part in a sponsored fun fitness circuit, lead by commonwealth games athlete and 9 time world record holder, Nerys Pearce. The children got to meet Nerys and hear all about her journey, achievements and challenges.



We are absolutely delighted to announce that over £2,000 was raised. The sponsorship money has funded the event and will also go towards sports equipment for the school. A massive well done to all the children!

## Year 3 and 4 girls football fixture

On the 5th of October, seven girls from Year 3 and 4 took the field to play their first friendly vs Brookwood. The girls played brilliantly and did themselves and the school proud. The final result was 2-0 to Brookwood. Despite the result, the girls enjoyed the experience and played with smiles on their faces nonetheless!



## Harvest assemblies and donations

Thank you to all the parents that came to watch the Harvest Assemblies. Thank you too for all the donations. The South Woking Community Food Bank were thrilled to receive so much and expressed their thanks to you all.



### 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 relating to that application", then it will not be authorised. **We will therefore not authorise any holidays.**

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.

Holidays 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 (e.g. a holiday).* **Please note it includes cumulative absence over a 3 month period (several unauthorised absences that total 5 days within a 3 month period).**

The amount payable on issue of a Penalty Notice is £60 per parent per child if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 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 will 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 90%. Please be aware that this may take quite a few months.

### Surrey Inclusion Officer (previously Education Welfare Officer)

The Surrey CC Inclusion Officer (Mrs Beverly King) also comes in half termly and conducts register checks and she may contact parents if children are consistently late or there are concerns about attendance.



## Mayford Athletics—Girls Football



Smarts Heath Road  
Woking  
Surrey  
GU22 0PP  
Charity no. 1113168  
Chairman – Geoff Newman

31<sup>st</sup> October 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

Has your daughter been inspired by the Lionesses success and wants to become the next Mary Earps or Alessia Russo, does she enjoy the exploits of the Premier League and beyond, or does she just want to get fit and have fun with friends. If you have answered yes to any of the above, then Mayford Athletic would like to hear from you.

We are a family friendly club providing football and fun for boys and girls from under 6 through to under 17, with over 300 players across our age groups coached by a dedicated team of volunteers and parents. We are an inclusive and all welcoming club with some of our teams having had a mix of girls and boys over the last few seasons, but we have recently noticed a trend towards girls wanting to play in an all-girls team and we are keen to take this feedback on board.

Our ultimate objective is to establish a set of girl's teams across our age groups and get them playing regular matches against other girls' teams, but the first step on that journey is understanding if there is demand and that's where you all come in.

So, if the above sounds like something your daughter would be interested in, please email us at [mayfordfcgirls@gmail.com](mailto:mayfordfcgirls@gmail.com) by 10<sup>th</sup> November and include details of your child's current school year and we will take it from there. Also look out for a notification about an open day soon so you can come down and see what we are all about.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Keel'.

Phil Keel  
Mayford Athletic FC Girls Football Lead

#LETGIRLSPLAY

**BARNSBURY PTA**

# **FIREWORK DISPLAY**

**SATURDAY 11TH NOV 2023**  
**4:30 TO 6:30PM**  
**BARNSBURY PRIMARY SCHOOL, ALMOND AVENUE, GU22 0BB**

**LOW NOISE**  **FIREWORKS**

**TICKETS**  
**£6.00**



 **GAMES ~ HOT CHOCOLATE**   
 **SMORES ~ TOMBOLAS ~ DRINKS**  
**PRE - ORDER**  
 **BBQ** 

**pta@barnsbury.surrey.sch.uk**

## 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	9th November	Open evening 5-6.30pm
Friday	10th November	Year 5 class assembly 10am- Penguins
Monday	13th November	Mufti day—chocolate donations for tombola
Wednesday	15th November	Year 3 Robins trip to Pizza Express
Thursday	16th November	Year 4 class assembly 10am- Woodpeckers
Tuesday	21st November	Mufti day—bottle donations for tombola
Tue & Wed	21st & 22nd November	Flu immunisations
Thursday	23rd November	Year 4 class assembly 10am- Kingfishers
Wednesday	29th November	<b>Christmas fair 2.45-4.30pm</b>
Thursday	30th November	Christmas assembly for year 3 at 2.15pm
Friday	1st December	Christmas jumper day
Friday	1st December	Christmas assembly for year 5 at 2.15pm
Monday	4th December	Christmas assembly for year 4 at 10am
Tuesday	5th December	Year R advent assembly at 10am
Wednesday	6th December	Year 6 Christingle at St Marks Church at 2pm
Thursday	7th December	Christmas assembly for year 1 at 10am
Friday	8th December	Christmas jumper day
Friday	8th December	Christmas assembly for year 2 at 10am
Thursday	14th December	Christmas jumper day (to be worn over uniform)
Friday	15th December	1pm Carols around the tree. Pupils break up at 1.20pm
Wednesday	3rd January	Pupils return for Spring Term

