

OCTOBER

6.10.25



WHITEGATE COFE PRIMARY

Newsletter

It is hard to believe that we are already into October and today is the start of our sixth week back at school. Autumn is definitely here ... and with it the rain and wind! I hope that you have stayed safe over the weekend and haven't been too affected by Storm Amy!

We always make the most of every learning opportunity by spending plenty of time outdoors, both during social times and through outdoor learning and PE. With this in mind, please help to ensure the children are well prepared for the change in season by providing warm and waterproof coats and sensible shoes. As always, please feel free to send in a spare pair of footwear for the children to change into when spending time outdoors.

Dogs on School Grounds

I'm sure that you all know how much we like our furry friends here at Whitegate (!) but, it is a county-wide policy from the Local Authority that dogs are not allowed on school grounds. This includes carrying dogs in arms and in bags. The exception to this are Buddy and Reggie as they are trained to socialise with children and have a thorough risk assessment in place. Thank you for your cooperation with this matter.

Mobile Phones

I am sure that you will have noticed the new signs in our school grounds about being a 'mobile-free zone'. We ask that all phones are away whilst on school premises. We recently had an incident where a parent had taken a photograph of a child who didn't belong to them. This cannot happen again.

Harvest Service

As per the ParentMail, please do join us for our Harvest Festival tomorrow morning at 10am **in the school hall**. We are looking forward to gathering together to thank God for all that he provides; and to think too about the importance of sharing what we have with others. Oak class will be leading us in worship with Acorns, Rowan and Birch sharing too. We are so grateful for the food that has already been donated for the local Food Bank. Please continue to send this in over the course of this week and we will send our donations in a week's time.

Macmillan Coffee Morning

What a wonderful morning we had at the end of September as we gathered together to enjoy tea and cake in order to raise money for Macmillan Cancer Support! I know that this charity is close to many people's hearts with so many of us being affected by cancer. Y6 did a great job of hosting. What a great opportunity this was for them to shine! We raised an incredible £538.71

School Disco

After the success of the coffee morning, the day continued to go from strength-to-strength with the first school disco of this academic year. The children enjoyed having their faces painted, munching on hotdogs, chips and lots of other delights; and of course, ... the usual screaming competition! (I really do need to ask Disco Dave not to do that one!) There were some amazing moves ... and by some of the least expected attendees too! It clearly was a huge hit with many children asking when the next one will be! Thank you to all staff who made this event possible. We raised £375.68 bringing the overall total raised since January to £2,559.88.

Curriculum Evenings

Thank you to all of those who attended the Curriculum Evenings this year. If you were unable to attend, a copy of the presentations can be found on the class pages of the school website. Some key messages were:

Homework:

Please see the 'Home Learning Policy' on the school website for details of the homework that is expected. We do not set a lot of homework at Whitegate (apart from Y6 as we are preparing the children for SATs and for high school readiness). We do expect all children from Y1 to Y6 to read at least 4 times a week and to spend time on Numbots or TTRS for at least 15 minutes per week. If children have not completed these tasks, we will ask them to catch up during social times. This is not a punishment but to ensure that children's progress is not inhibited. As our policy says, children whose reading is not supported by adults at home do not make the same good progress as their peers. Reading impacts on children's achievement in all other subjects.

Calculation Policy:

If you are unsure how to support your child in mathematics, please have a look at our calculation policy which can be found on the school website. As explained, we are planning to carry out workshops for parents in the spring term to support you with this.

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School Calendar:

At the time of the Curriculum Evenings, this had not been populated. Mrs Winnington has now added the dates for the rest of this term, so please do take a look to see what is coming up. I encourage you to regularly check the calendar as new events are added by teachers as activities are organised, such as school visits and work-shops.

Educational Visits:

As explained, we are currently working with the governors to review procedures, for educational visits, including residentials, and communication will be released soon regarding this area.

Chat Groups:

Please do not allow your children to use WhatsApp and Messenger to chat with their friends. These sites are not appropriate for primary aged children as they do not have the wisdom needed to navigate these. We are finding that we are having to deal more and more during learning time with fallouts that have happened on chat groups in the evening or at the weekend.

Trust Appeal Fund

Following the Curriculum Evenings, we have sent out the information needed to sign-up for the Trust Appeal Fund. As all money raised by the PTA currently is going towards the final instalment of the 10% for the new-build, this fund is going to be vital this year to ensure that our children are able to participate in many activities and have the materials that they need to complete tasks that cannot be supported by the school budget. When I last wrote we were having to use funds to pay for a new interactive whiteboard leaving £5,106.45 in the account. Every small contribution makes a huge difference to school life. Thank you to those who contribute and for your consideration of joining this fund.

World Mental Health Day

On Friday, we are marking World Mental Health Day. We invite children to wear the colour yellow and to bring in £1 for doing so. All donations will go to Young Minds.

Marking the day will remind us of the importance of positive mental health. In class, we will look at what we can do to ensure positive mental health and encourage conversations about mental health issues, breaking the stigma around this. This goes hand-in-hand with the work that we are currently doing in school around spirituality. In school, we are beginning to use the language:

In—helping us to ask big questions;

Out—helping us to feel a sense of awe and wonder;

Up—helping us to understand that there is something greater;

Around—helping us to feel known and loved.

Family Breakfast

Why not join us for the start of World Mental Health Day as we join together for our first family breakfast of the school year? Please book via ParentMail by **12noon on Wednesday** this week.

Personal Belongings from Home

We ask that children do not bring any items, such as stationery and small toys, from home. We provide everything that your child needs. The only items coming in to school each day should be your child's reading wallet, containing their reading book; Home-School Contact Book and, if necessary, reading glasses— nothing else – and their packed lunch if they are having one. Any 'fidget tools' or, as we like to call them, 'concentration tools', must be agreed with the class teacher and our Inclusion Lead – Mrs Savage.

We also ask that book bags are not brought into school as we do not have the space to store them in our cloak-room areas. Thank you.

School Council

Congratulations to Harlee, Orla, Abigail, Archie, Lula, Sebastian, Avery, Stanley, Melanie and Theodore who have been voted as class representatives for our School Council this year. I am looking forward to seeing what improvements can be made to our school this year.

Senior Friends Lunch

Last Wednesday we welcomed grandparents into school for our first Senior Friends' Lunch of the year. This is a new initiative strengthening intergenerational links. These lunches are taking place on the first Wednesday of each month – roast dinner day! Lunches cost £3 per person and must be booked by the Monday before to ensure that our school cook, Miss Byrne, has enough food to go around. Our next lunch is the 5th November. Please note, there will be no Senior Friends' Lunch in January.

Autumn Fair

On Thursday 23rd October the children in Oak class will be hosting our annual Autumn Fair. This will take place in the school hall and will run from 1:30pm until 4pm. Each class will be given the following time slot to attend:

Acorns: 1:30pm - 1:50pm

Birch: 2:10pm - 2:30pm

Hawthorn: 2:50pm - 3:10pm

Rowan: 1:50pm - 2:10pm

Elder: 2:30pm - 2:50pm

In order to help the children in Oak prepare, we would welcome donations of toys, teddies, bric-a-brac, items that can be used for raffle prizes etc. What a great opportunity to have a sort out at home! Please start to bring these items in so that we do not panic that we are not going to have enough! Thank you so much.



Thank you for your anticipated support in all of these matters. If you have any questions or would like to discuss anything further, please do not hesitate to get in touch. Thank you in advance for your continued partnership.

Every blessing,

C Mackenzie

Key Dates

Tuesday 7th October	10am	Harvest Service in St Mary's Church
Friday 10th October	All day	World Mental Health Day
Friday 10th October	8am	Family Breakfast in the school hall
Tuesday 14th October	2pm onwards	Y5/6 Inspire girls football tournament (invitation)
Friday 17th October	1pm onwards	Y3/4 Aspire football event (invitation)
Thursday 23rd October	1:30pm—4pm	Autumn Fair hosted by Oak
Friday 27th October	3:15pm	Break up for half-term
Monday 3rd November	8:45am	School re-opens
Monday 3rd November	All week	Inter-Faith Week
Tuesday 4th November	All day	Judaism workshop for Rowan and Hawthorn
Tuesday 4th November	2pm onwards	Y5/6 Inspire basketball event (invitation)
Wednesday 5th November	12:30pm	Senior Friends Lunch