



Whaddon Wheatsheaf Newsletter

(Number 3.)

Whaddon C of E School, Stock Lane, Whaddon, Bucks, MK170LS

01908 501719

office@whaddon.bucks.sch.uk

Welcome to the third edition of the Whaddon Wheatsheaf.

There is so much to share with you! Between newsletters, we have endeavoured to share information with you via Parentmail and our website calendar. We appreciate that this is not the same as receiving a newsletter but we thank you for your continued support and patience during this time.

This is a longer version, than usual, as there is so much to share with you, so grab a warm drink and settle down....



New arrival!

Many congratulations go to Mr Small and his wife for the safe arrival of their little boy, Milo. Milo joined the Whaddon Family, in October. We wish them all the very best (and lots of sleep!) as a new family of three.

Wellbeing space

Our commitment to the wellbeing of children and staff at Whaddon School has been further enhanced by the development of a dedicated wellbeing space. Our bespoke and highly personalised wellbeing space has been designed and built by "Distinct Garden Rooms" who have worked tirelessly to provide us with a space that will enable us to meet the needs of our children and staff, as the school grows and equip us with a beautiful space we can hire out for meetings and functions. We are thrilled with how this project is coming along and can't wait to see it finished, in the New Year. Week-by-week updates can be seen on the Distinct Garden Rooms Facebook page. As with all things in Whaddon School, pupil voice is vital and we asked the children to offer their ideas about what this space should be called. The winning name was "The River Bank". This lovely room will have a dedicated sign, like our classrooms. Our big opening date will be shared at a later time.

Staffing...

I am delighted to welcome **Mrs Highton**, who will be joining us from 5th January 2024, as our new office manager. Her warm and friendly manner, diligence and organisation will be much appreciated by school and our families.

Sadly, we have two members of our Whaddon family who are leaving us, at the end of this term.

Miss Evans, our Badgers class teacher, is leaving teaching to pursue interests and adventures outside of the classroom. We all want to say a heart-felt thank you for all she has done for the school and the Badgers children, in her term with us. We are sad that she is leaving, but wish her well in the future.

We have recently secured a teacher for Badgers class, in January *Teacher Read*, will join Badgers on 5th January and, from Easter, another fabulous teacher will be joining the school to job share. The two teachers will work together in a 3 day and 2 day arrangement. We will give you more details, once all of our pre-employment checks have been completed.

We are feeling blessed to have employed such talented teachers. There is currently a recruitment crisis in teaching, which has meant some local schools have not been able to secure staff for their children. We are happy that we have the right teachers, for our children.

Mrs Abery is leaving us on 15th December. She has an opportunity that is too good to miss. Her new role is that of a forest school leader- all week! Mrs Abery has been part of Whaddon village for many years, as a pre-school leader and with the school since 2022- as a forest school leader and class TA. Mrs Abery has been instrumental in ensuring our outdoor learning is as holistic, fun and safe as it has been and I know the children have developed many essential skills in her forest school sessions. She is very sad to leave Whaddon School, but is also excited to begin this new opportunity.

We have been recruiting, but have not yet secured a TA for Squirrels class. We are continuing our search for the right person, so ***if you know anyone who may be a Whaddon School person, please direct them to our webpage, where they will find the person specification and job description in the vacancies tab.***

FOREST SCHOOL ETHOS



Forest school 2024...

To ensure a seamless forest school experience for our children, we have secured the services of a fantastic forest school leader Alex also known as: **“Mr. Mud”** who will join us on Friday mornings, teaching Hedgehogs and Squirrels class together. This will give the children the opportunity to work in a larger group and develop their communication skills. We will require the support of parent volunteers, in order to maintain the safe ratios, to enable camp fires and tool work to be offered.

Alex **“Mr. Mud”** runs Green Planet Forest School, which some of you may be familiar with as part of Sports4all. Green Planet Forest School work with other local schools and also run forest school clubs in the holidays. This is something we hope to develop, at Whaddon School, in the future, so watch this space!

<https://www.green-planet.co.uk/>

As the forest school work develops, we are aiming to offer Key Stage 2 children a forest school afternoon once a half term, so that they are maintaining the key principles of the Forest School experience that is so important to our school and to ensure they have more opportunities to work together outside of the classroom and transfer these skills to their indoor learning.

Please let the school office know, if you are able to support the school, 09.40-11.50am Friday mornings.

We will carry out a DBS check, if your support is frequent contact with our children.

If you would prefer to help us in another way, such as supporting the renovation of our pond area, etc., please let us know. This is a particular area of focus for the school, this year and anyone with expertise in ponds and pond life would be most welcome.

Green planet ethos

“Everything we do is deeply rooted in the Forest School ethos, with heavy emphasis on the holistic development of children and young people. That means jointly the social, emotional, physical, mental, and intellectual growth of a person, and we put great effort into creating environments, activities and situations where the children who come to our sessions can get those benefits in fun, impactful, and memorable ways. Our experienced instructors provide a safe, supportive environment where children can learn and grow at their own pace... we offer a range of activities designed to engage and inspire young minds, from nature walks and plant identification to shelter building, use of tools, fire skills and campfire cooking.”

Timings...



Getting to school on time really matters. Did you know...

If in a school year, you are late every day by...	You would have lost approximately...	or you would have missed approximately...
5 Minutes	3.5 Days from School	18 Lessons
10 Minutes	7 Days from School	35 Lessons
15 Minutes	10 Days from School	50 Lessons
20 Minutes	14.5 Days from School	73 Lessons
30 Minutes	22 Days from School	110 Lessons

You should not take holidays during term time.
Please be punctual to maintain attendance.
Remember Absence = Lost Opportunity

Unfortunately, we are seeing patterns in late arrivals to school and would like to urge parents to bring their children to the playground for the latest of 08.25 am. This ensures they are on time for registration and the vital interventions the teachers have planned. Starting the day with their friends offers a calm and productive start to the day. Children arriving late is not only unsettling for the individual child, but also detrimental to the class and interventions groups, as when late comers arrive they need to be settled in by staff, which takes them away from their intervention groups and the children already in them. Lateness is recorded and reported to the local authority, as per the commitment to improving attendance and attainment.

Uniform...

After the growth spurts that have no doubt occurred, since the summer holidays, you may require new elements of uniform. Maisie's are a local, family run business in Wolverton offering affordable uniform choices. Ties and other elements of embroidered apparel are available on the Whaddon School section of their website.



We would like to take the opportunity to remind parents that name stick ins are available to purchase, but if you choose not to use this form of labelling, we request that all elements of uniform likely to be removed in school are named with a permanent pen- this includes PE tops and forest school clothing. This will enable all items to be returned to the right person at the end of the day.

Friends of Whaddon School will notify parents of any pre-loved uniform sales that will be held across the school year.

We are going to continue with the process of children wearing their PE kit, to school, on PE days but request that dressing and undressing skills are practiced at home, as frequently and independently as possible.

Please note that fades in hair-cuts and nail varnish are not part of our school uniform and request that these are not worn by children.

Reading...

In the New Year, we will be providing parent workshops to introduce you to our Little Wandle phonics and early reading scheme, as the way in which reading is organised is slightly different to the traditional way.

E books also form part of our reading for pleasure offer, so children can read on-the-go.

We appreciate that we are all committed to reducing time on screens and that nothing beats the experience of a real book in your hands, but we also appreciate how devices are part of our lives and for some children, the best way for them to access high quality texts. Another factor is the cost of books, with so many having not been returned or returned damaged, in the past, it is a consideration we must make, in order to prioritise our spending on new texts, rather than replacing existing ones.



When reading with older children, please encourage them to answer questions about what they are reading with a view to the impact on the reader regarding the word choices by the author. Please encourage frequent reading, as this develops the essential skimming and scanning skills required for reading stamina and retrieval in longer passages.

Texts can be: comics, annuals non-fiction texts, jokes, poems, leaflets, letters, emails, short stories, diary entries, instructions, recipes- it isn't always about chapter books and more experienced readers should have opportunities to access texts with little or no text, to develop inference skills.

Lunches...



We hope that as many children as possible take up school dinners. We understand that broadening tastes can be a challenge for some of our little people, so if you would like your child to have a small taste of some meals, this can be arranged, with sufficient notice.

Please note that we have children and staff in school with severe allergies and due to these, we request that **no nuts** or **nut products** are brought into school, this includes Nutella spread, peanut butter and biscuit bars with almonds, peanuts and walnuts.

We aim to promote a healthy lifestyle and request that the packed lunches provided are balanced and sugary treats are kept to a minimum. Break time snacks, for Key Stage 2 pupils should be a piece of fruit or vegetables or a rice cake. School provides fruit or vegetable snacks for Key Stage 1 pupils.

We are a healthy school wish to encourage healthy lifestyle choices. This is something we are learning about in PSHE and Science.

Please don't forget to order your child's lunches for the New Year- via Wisepay!

Houses...



Our house captains have been democratically voted for and have been fulfilling their duties in celebration assemblies and in house events, such as our Children In Need event. New house captains will be voted for, in the

New Year. Those pupils who wish to be elected should write a letter to me outlining why they would like to be a house captain and the skills they have. The deadline for this is Tuesday 9th January 2024.

Celebration/class assemblies...

We warmly welcome parents and family members to attend our celebration/class sharing collective worships on Friday mornings. We aim to notify you, if your child is receiving an award, by the Thursday before. The children will not know if you are able to attend or not.

Should your child have been awarded a certificate or medal, outside of school, please let us know, so that we can share this, as a school. Please ensure that the school office is notified, in advance of the assembly, to manage the timings of the worship.

The rota for each classes sharing assembly is available on the school website. These sometimes have to be changed, due to other events that arise, throughout the school year. We endeavour to communicate these to you, via Parentmail.

Curriculum

The new subject specific curriculum has been warmly received by the children and parents are reporting that their children's' involvement in their learning, outside of school, has increased.

As a staff, we have considered the homework tasks, for each class, carefully, in order to make it manageable for families; with their many other commitments. We also want to make the tasks enjoyable for the children and the parents. We aim to promote independence, as much as possible, but also love it when families work together. Please share any work completed at home, so that we can celebrate it, in school.

Our curriculum, for next term, will be published on the curriculum and class pages of our website soon.



How we compare...

We are proud to share with you our Year 1 phonics screening data, and the year 2 repeat screenings, from the Sumer term which were amazing! **100%** of our eligible children exceeding the required mark. This shows our new Little Wandle phonics scheme is providing the children with the necessary skills and experiences. Our Year 4 times table check scores were also amazing with 100% of eligible children scoring 24 or 25 out of 25 marks. The national average was 19.5 out of 25. We are rightly proud of our children and

Website / dates for your diary...

January

4th January 2024 **INSET day-School Closed**

5th January 2024 School opens to pupils

5th January 2024 panto visit MK theatre **packed lunches required!**

11th January Early years open morning 09.00-09.30 am- no need to book.

15th January closing date Buckinghamshire Council reception class places September 2024

12th January 2024 Celebration collective worship 09.00-09.30am

12th January 2024 Forest School Mr Mud Hedgehogs and Squirrels 09.45-11.45am

February

9th February pancakes at forest school

12th - 16th 2024 Half term

19th February back to school!

March

7th March 2024 World Book Day

8th March 2024 Mother's Day

26th March 2024 Easter celebration at St. Mary's Church Badgers and Foxes

27th March Easter egg hunt children hunting in houses- coloured T-shirts for their house needed

A message from the governors...

We are still looking for one more foundation governor! Please contact Amanda Hardman, if you or someone you know, are interested in the role. To be a foundation governor, you do not need a current link to the school, but you do need to have a link to Church (any church, not just Whaddon).



Well done to all of the children for their hard work and the demonstration of our school values! We are all proud of you!



Merry Christmas and a peaceful New Year!

