

# WESTBURY-ON-SEVERN C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL

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**Westbury-on-Severn  
CE Primary School**

Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

I hope you are all well and enjoying the sunshine at last! I hope that you are also settling back into some sort of normality now that the children are all back in school. It has certainly been wonderful to see them all back and getting back into the ways of school again!

It has been another bust week and lots of things have been happening. The biggest change so far has been the reorganisation and restructuring of our whole-school phonics and reading programme. You will shortly receive a letter or email from Mrs Sim, via your class teacher, explaining the new approach, and I have written some details below.

## Reading:

It is an exciting time for us as a school as we, once again, adapt to the changing educational landscape and review our processes in response to it. I want to express my sincerest thanks to Mrs Sim, who has worked extremely hard on training and upskilling the team here and working with a national English Hub so that we are continuing to develop reading and phonics throughout the school. Now more than ever, it is essential that the children don't fall back in their reading. I think that the most important message we want to get across is not to expect that your child will race through their reading books, or to compare your child's reading books to others. Reading is not about how many words you can get through and bark at, but the ability to understand and comprehend what you have read. Decoding words is essential to being a great reader, as is the ability to talk about and respond accurately to texts that have been read. We expect a child to read a book at least three times fluently before moving them onto a new book, as well as understand what they have read. This is not a terribly new approach to our reading strategy, but we will be sticking to it and strengthening our approach in this area.

As always though, I want to thank you as parents and carers for the ways in which you have continued to support reading and phonics at home with the children. We will be offering parent training sessions to support you in helping your child read at home, when we are able to do it safely and appropriately.

We are also grateful to 'Friends of Westbury School' for contributing to a range of new fully decodable books for the children. You have all enabled this to happen by the contributions you have made to the fundraising activities that have taken place, so again, thank you all.

## Forest School:

We are excited to say that over the next few weeks, we will be renovating our Forest School area and updating some of the features therein. It is being used so much now to support learning across the school, with our younger



children using it for the majority of the time. We will put some photos on our website as we complete the work. It has been so good to see our 'Elvers' (Preschool) using it each Monday as part of their outdoor learning and play.

### **Preschool:**

Please be aware that we are continuing to take names and allocate places to our preschool. If you would like to put your child's name down for joining our preschool, please contact Mrs Cox at the office as soon as you can. Please also make people you know aware of our provision. We have been delighted with the response to preschool and it has been wonderful to see the children blossom and flourish as they prepare for school in September. We admit children to preschool from their third birthday.

### **Red Nose Day 2021:**

Obviously things will be a little different this year for comic relief. We will not be able to have a whole-school bake sale because of bubbles and a non-school uniform day won't work as the children already come to school in their PE or Forest school kit on a Friday. However, we will have a 'Messy Hair' day on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> March instead. Children can come to school with 'messy hair' (however you want to interpret that) with a suggested donation of at least £1. Of course this is not obligatory and you might just want to bring a donation anyway. Due to our hairdressers being closed because of the lockdown, my hair will be messy anyway!!

### **School uniform:**

We completely understand that at the moment the wearing of school uniform in its entirety is a bit difficult for some children due to shops being closed and growth spurts (especially the older children). So at the moment we have not enforced our policy. However, as shops continue to offer click and collect service and start to reopen over the Easter break, we will be looking again at this after Easter and do expect children to be in full school uniform for 19<sup>th</sup> April. If this continues to be a problem, please let us know. In addition, coloured hair may have been OK during the time children spent at home, but it is not acceptable now they are in school. Please do not colour your child's hair, or part of it, but save that for the summer break, when the children have time to grow it out or make sure it can be washed out. Thank you.

