

Weston Turville CE School

MISSION STATEMENT:
TO PURSUE WISDOM WITHIN A CHRISTIAN ETHOS

Frequently Asked Questions

2022/2023

We hope that your child settles to life at the school quickly and smoothly.

We do encourage parents to let us know of any issues which concern them. We can't promise to solve all problems but by keeping us informed you do help us to make allowances and provide a suitably sympathetic approach for your child.

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Diary through the year

How is Harvest celebrated?

There is usually a whole school assembly to which we invite parents. It is held in the school hall. We invite Infant children (classes R, 1 and 2) to bring in a "hamper" of produce - fresh, packets, tins or a mixture – a shoe box is about the right size. The children carry these in to the assembly. The Reception children take part in their own service in their classroom. The Junior children are invited to bring in a cash donation that can be handed to the class teacher or left in the collection plate in the entrance. This is forwarded to a charity each year.

We do not allow photographs or videos to be taken during any of our "public performances" because it is distracting for the children and spoils the event for other parents.

Our current parents have asked that if pre-school children are taken in to a performance and make their presence heard they are taken out so as not to spoil other people's enjoyment of the event. After the Harvest Assembly the produce and donations are sent to St. Mary's Church, Weston Turville, for their Harvest Festival the following Sunday. They then take responsibility for distribution to the elderly and poor in the area.

What happens when the school photographer comes to take individual photos?

This usually takes place during the Autumn term. We invite families who want a photo showing all their children to attend before school, followed by individual photos for pupils in each class during the morning. We need individual photos for our records. Photos are offered for sale to parents but there is no obligation to buy.

How is Christmas celebrated?

The Infants usually put on two performances of their Christmas production in the hall. Typically one will be in the afternoon, one the following morning. Parents are invited to watch. Older children have the opportunity to see the production at the dress rehearsal, and sometimes we invite the local senior citizens to this performance too.

Junior children attend a Carol Service at St. Mary's Church, Weston Turville, to which parents are invited. Children are sent home/collected from the church; they do not return to school.

Parties are held for Infant children. We ask for a donation to cover the cost of food and drink from each family. An evening disco is arranged for Junior children.

How is Easter celebrated?

The whole school attends an Easter Service at St. Mary's Church, Weston Turville. Parents are not invited to attend since the church cannot accommodate all the children and parents. Children are sent home/collected from the church; they do not return to school.

What happens when the school photographer comes to take class photos?

This usually takes place during the Summer term. Photos are also taken of the school sports teams, and children in Year 6 have individual photos taken to create a Leavers' presentation package.

What is the PTA Christmas Fair?

This is our main PTA fundraiser of the year.

At Christmas the PTA runs a Fair during a Friday afternoon (usually the first Friday in December) from 1pm. The children bring money to spend and older children accompany younger children to the fair at various points during the afternoon. We need as many adults as possible to help us organise and run this event.

What does my child need for swimming?

Children in Year 3 (and any older children who can't swim 25m confidently) go swimming every week during the Autumn and Spring Terms at Aqua Vale where they have private use of a 25m indoor pool. A one piece costume/trunks and towel are required, plus a swimming hat for all children. We do not allow shorts or bikinis. We ask for voluntary contributions to help cover the cost of transport, pool hire and a qualified swimming teacher. If we receive enough contributions children swim during the Summer Term too.

What is the Year 5/6 Production?

This usually takes place at the beginning of July. It usually consists of two evening performances of a musical, and one afternoon performance for the local senior citizens and infant children. Year 5 and 6 children have the opportunity to take part on stage, in the choir or back stage, and audition for parts.

What happens on Sports Day?

These are held separately for Infants and Juniors, but on the same day. Parents are invited to watch. If the weather is poor Sports Days are postponed but not cancelled. They are a combination of team games and optional competitive activities. The Sports Days are usually in the Summer Term. On a Monday evening in June the District Sports are held for all schools at the Stoke Mandeville Stadium. Children who attend our summer Athletics Club are invited to take part.

Other Aspects

What stationery should my child have?

Children in the Infant classes will not need to bring any stationery to school as this will be provided.

We ask all parents of children in Juniors to supply a basic stationery kit.

Your child will not be able to tackle the work effectively without this kit.

Class 3

A pencil case containing:-

- HB pencil
- Pencil sharpener (one that collects shavings is best)
- 30 cm ruler (preferably not one of the folding ones)
- Coloured pencils
- Eraser
- Pritt Stick
- Highlighter pen
- Fibre tip pen, eg Berol Handwriter, with blue ink (cartridge pens are not suitable for this age group)

Classes 4 – 6

As above, plus:-

- Cartridge pen – blue ink – if this is preferred to the fibre tip pen
- Pair of compasses
- Protractor
- Simple calculator (not scientific ones)

Please make sure everything is clearly labelled with your child's name.

Parents providing this basic set of equipment allow the school to use its limited resources more effectively to support the education of the children.

What are the times for a School Day?

For the Reception class we ask you to initially bring your child in to school between 8.40 am and 8.55 am each day, and help them to hang up any coats etc. They can then go into the classroom. Here there will be a range of activities for them to start with. This is an opportunity for you to raise any issues or concerns with the staff if you wish. Once your child is settled please say your goodbyes and leave. We ask all parents to leave by 8.55 am so that the register can be completed and the children given their tasks for the first session.

Children will need to be collected at 3pm.

Children leaving after the morning session will need to be collected from the main gate (adjacent to the main hall) at 12.00 pm or 1.00 pm if staying for lunch. Reception children can only attend full time or mornings only.

For children in Year 1 and above we ask for your child to arrive at school between 8.40 am and 8.55 am each day, and they congregate on the playground. It is preferable that these older children are not accompanied onto school premises. They can be collected from the infant playground gate at 3.00 pm (infants) or 3.15 pm (Juniors).

Unless there is an emergency we ask parents of children in Year 1 and above not to try to have discussions with the class teachers before school starts as they are busy preparing lessons for the day. Messages can always be left at the office or ask to see the Headteacher.

What happens if we are late arriving at school?

We expect all children to arrive by 8.55am. The children's gate is locked at 9am and those who arrive at school after this time should come to the main entrance, report to the office and fill in the late book. This will affect your child's attendance record so it is best to avoid being late wherever possible.

What is the Pupil Premium?

The Pupil Premium is an additional amount of money the school can claim to spend on educational resources and support for children whose parents are on low incomes. These children also qualify for free school meals once they leave the infants.

In order for the school to claim the additional money we need to check whether your child is eligible. If you think they might be then it is essential you let us know because this additional money can make a huge difference to your child's education. This information is kept strictly confidential and will not be shared with other families.

What should we call the staff?

Staff do not hide their Christian names from children or parents. However it is protocol for children and parents to refer to staff by their title and surname.

Sometimes this is waived. As a general rule if the staff refer to a parent by their Christian name, it is acceptable to use that member of staff's Christian name.

What can the children eat at morning break?

Infant children are supplied with fresh fruit or vegetables to eat at morning break but if you prefer you can supply your own. Juniors bring their own. No other food is permitted at playtime. Water is available in school at each break, and children may bring non-spill water bottles to fill and drink during the day.

To start with the Reception class children will have their break time on their own, away from the older children. Initially this will be on their own playground, then on the Infant playground. Only when they are sufficiently confident will they join the other children.

What should my child have for lunch?

We provide a hot meals service or you can send your child with a packed lunch. Infants are entitled to a free hot meal but Juniors are charged. You will be able to view menus and order meals in advance and, in the case of Juniors, pay the supplier directly for the meals online using ParentPay. We encourage healthy balanced lunchboxes. For safety/hygiene reasons we do not allow glass containers, fizzy drinks or nuts. We also request that parents do not supply chocolate bars/biscuits, sweets or highly coloured cordials.

Can my child have water during class?

Children may bring a plastic bottle of water for the classroom; this should have a nozzle to prevent spillage. Usually the younger children prefer to drink from the water fountains instead as an extra water bottle is another thing for them to think about!

When are the holidays?

Dates for the current academic year are in the prospectus and on the website. Dates for the next academic year are circulated as soon as we are able – usually during the Autumn term.

Can my child have leave of absence?

There are new rules surrounding term-time absence. Pupils may have leave of absence for exceptional reasons, such as funerals, and for music exams and visits to other schools etc. However, they may not have leave of absence for term-time holidays unless their parents work in the military or police or other service which requires them to work during school holiday periods. We will need proof of these commitments, such as a letter from an employer.

How do we communicate with the school and how does the school communicate with us?

To keep you up to date with school activities we produce a newsletter every other Wednesday. This and other letters are sent out electronically. No money is sent into school and parents pay for trips online via our communication network, ParentMail.

From time to time we also send out text messages – for instance to let parents know when a coach is due back from a trip, or when the school is closed due to bad weather.

If you need to contact us please call us (01296 613436) or email us (office@westonturville.bucks.sch.uk) or drop in to the office. If you need to speak to a

teacher the best time to do so is after school, and staff also have dedicated email addresses for you to use.

What kit is required for PE and Games?

This is listed separately on our School Uniform factsheet. Pupils may wear coloured t-shirts for PE which relate to their house colours. All items of PE kit can be purchased at the Bucks Schoolwear shop in Aylesbury town centre.

What happens if my child is ill?

This is a complex area but we hope the following is useful: -

- As a general rule if your child is healthy they should be in school, and if they are ill they are better off at home – we do not have the staff or resources to look after sick children.
- If we ask you to collect your child from school we feel they should go to bed for the rest of the day.
- If at the start of the school day your child is complaining of mild discomfort/illness/headache etc and you are not sure how serious the problem is we advise you to send them to school. We will always contact you if they deteriorate.
- Please do not tell your child they can ask to be sent home. The children do not decide this – staff do. Too often children pick up the wrong message and feel they can ask to go home whenever they feel like it.
- The average days' absence for each child is about 6 or 7 days each school year – or just over two days a term.
- If your child has sickness and/or diarrhoea they should be kept away from school for 48 hours after the symptoms have stopped.
- As a general rule if children are fit enough to return to school after a period of illness they should be fit enough to take part in all lessons – including PE, Games, Swimming, playtime etc. We do not have the facilities to adequately supervise these children indoors. Clearly if your child has a physical injury – broken bone, damaged tendon etc, we will excuse them from physical lessons and provide supervision.

What happens if it is necessary to close the school?

Sometimes it is necessary for schools to be closed in an emergency at short notice. If we can, we will send a letter to parents via their child and a notice will be displayed at the front of the school.

Sometimes we get no notice – most commonly a heavy fall of snow over night and staff cannot get in to the school or the sudden breakdown of the heating system. In such

circumstances we put a notice on the gate and ask the local radio station (Greatest Hits Radio – Tune to 96.2 on FM waveband) to broadcast information. By listening to this station you will be able to gather up to date information. Any message the radio station puts out about school closure is genuine – schools have a password to ensure hoaxes do not get through! We also ask that you check the school website and the Buckinghamshire Council website school closures list. We also try to send out a message by ParentMail.

However we all hope that these circumstances only arise infrequently.

What are Class Assemblies?

Each class puts on a class assembly each term. This is an opportunity for them to share their work with the rest of the school – it is not a “performance”. Consequently, as a rule, we do not invite parents to attend. However, if on the odd occasion you are really keen to see your child’s class assembly please contact the Headteacher so that we can investigate alternative arrangements.

Can we help in class?

We are always able to make use of any offers of help. We do not encourage parents to help in class R until the child has had the opportunity to settle. We discourage parents from working in their own child’s class so that we can allocate help fairly to all the classes – but we warmly welcome you to work in other classes. The Governors have a volunteers’ policy which we ask you to read and sign before working in school on a voluntary basis, and we will also ask you to fill in a DBS form.

Can my child take medication during the school day?

As a general rule the school will administer medication prescribed by a doctor. We will not administer over the counter remedies. We have a form that must be completed and signed prior to any medicines being brought in to school. Please ask at the office. If children are known to need emergency treatment on occasions eg. anaphylactic shocks arising from nut allergy, please talk to the Headteacher.

We do not allow children to have medicines or tablets in their care to avoid breakages, accidental overdoses or being generous to their friends! This includes cough sweets, paracetamol etc. Ventalin inhalers must be given to the staff for safe keeping. In line with advice from the Asthma Society, provided they are mature enough, older children (Years 5 & 6) may take responsibility for their own inhalers.

What about the children’s safety?

While children are in the Reception class we ask you to collect them from the school gate next to the main hall.

All other children are released onto the Infant playground when staff can see the adult who is collecting the child. If you are delayed we will keep your child until you arrive. However this causes anxiety for the children and should be avoided unless exceptional circumstances arise. If so, a phone call to the office will allow us to reassure your child.

Please - never take someone else's child home with you unless this has been agreed with that child's parents, and staff.

Where you have arranged for somebody else to collect your child you will need to contact us in advance as we will not release any child to another person unless we have been informed. The best way is by letter sent in with your child first thing in the morning. We do accept calls during the day from parents who need their children collected by somebody else in an emergency, but as this causes disruption we ask that such calls are kept to a minimum.

Can my child attend part-time in the Reception Class?

The Reception class children start to attend full time depending on their age and maturity. Decisions are made on an individual basis by staff and parents in consultation. As a rule most children are full time from the Autumn Term but younger children can stay part-time until the term after they are five.

Where can I park?

All schools suffer from congestion in the immediate area at the beginning and end of the school day. If at all possible we ask you to walk to and from school. If you must drive we ask parents not to use the school car park for parking, or as a turning area, unless you are disabled. We have an arrangement with the Parish Council which enables parents to use the village hall car park, and with the Five Bells across the road from School Approach who are happy for parents to use their car park. We do encourage the children to walk, so those who have to use a car could park it in a safe place further from the school and walk the rest of the journey. However, our neighbours do request that parents are considerate of their needs also and do not obstruct driveways.

We also ask parents not to park on School Approach in order to keep the children safe as they walk up the path.

What do you do to maintain security?

Once the children are in to school the pedestrian gates are locked and entry is only through the main doors. These are controlled by a remote locking mechanism. Please be patient if the entry phone is not answered immediately. Sometimes, for brief periods, there is no one in the office. Even when the office staff are in the office we have two telephone lines and it may be that they are answering one or both of those.

To exit there is a release button on the left of the door. Under no circumstances are children allowed to use this button.

We do not allow parents or children back in to school after 3.30 pm. By that time staff are busy with other tasks – there are industrial cleaners, trailing cables, wet floors etc. Please keep everyone safe by not returning for forgotten homework/lunchboxes/kit/clothes. They will still be there tomorrow.

What about the productions and shows?

We encourage parents to attend these events. We do not allow photographs or video to be taken during the show, but where possible, we will offer a photo opportunity at the end of the performance. Sometimes it is possible to have a DVD made if a parent kindly volunteers which can be copied for any parent who requests a copy, although there is usually a small charge for this service.

Where can I view school policies?

All the school's policies can be found on the website.

What is the website address?

The school's website address is www.westonturville.bucks.sch.uk

What about Parents' Evening?

The Reception Class staff try to meet with parents as soon as possible at the start of the Autumn Term to discuss individual emotional needs. There will be a form available for you to book your time. If childcare is an issue you can bring your child with you but this is not preferred.

There are two other Parents' Evenings during the academic year which take place in the Autumn and Spring terms. These last 10 and 15 minutes respectively.

In the Summer Term you will receive a written report about your child's progress through the year.

What do the Governors do?

The Full Governing Body meets twice per term. They have overall responsibility for setting policy, maintaining and improving standards. This is usually listed as covering five areas:

- **Steering role** – agreeing policies, setting budgets, agreeing improvement plans, responding to inspection
- **Monitoring role** – monitoring plans, budgets, standards of education, achievement
- **Executive role** – recruitment, discipline, admissions, appeals

- **Accounting to parents** – annual school profile, publication of minutes, survey of parents' views
- **Supporting role** – supporting and advising the Headteacher, providing practical help and skills – with parents, with the wider community

The Governing Body can delegate authority for some decisions to committees which are defined in each committee's terms of reference which are reviewed annually.

The Governing Body acts collectively. Individual governors do not have the authority to make or change decisions. The day to day management of the school, implementation of policies, and the implementation and management of the curriculum are the responsibility of the Headteacher.

We hope that you find this a useful document. Please let us know if there are any amendments or additions to be made. Any feedback would be appreciated.

Ms K Brooks
Headteacher