

February  
2023



WITHYMOOR PRIMARY SCHOOL

# School Newsletter

## Dates for your Diary

Monday 27<sup>th</sup> February – **INSET – school closed to pupils**  
Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> March – World Book Day – please see separate information  
Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> March – Parent Consultations  
Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> March – Parent Consultations  
Friday 31<sup>st</sup> March – school closes at 3.15pm for the Easter break  
Monday 17<sup>th</sup> April – school opens for the Summer term  
Monday 1<sup>st</sup> May – **Bank Holiday – school closed**  
Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> May – **school closed for Local Elections**  
Monday 8<sup>th</sup> May – **Coronation Bank Holiday**  
Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> May – Friday 12<sup>th</sup> May – Year 6 SATs  
Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> May – children break up for the half term holiday  
Friday 26<sup>th</sup> May – **INSET day – school closed to pupils**  
Monday 5<sup>th</sup> June – School reopens after half term holiday  
w/c 5<sup>th</sup> June – 3 week period for children in Year 4 to complete multiplication checks  
Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> July – end of term – children break up for the summer

## Online Safety/Cyber Bullying

At Withy Moor senior staff often have to deal with issues relating to our pupils' use at home of WhatsApp and other social media platforms. This is despite school teaching children about the importance of online safety and bullying through lessons and assemblies. The impact of what we teach in school can only be effective with support from home. We therefore urge all parents and carers to check and regularly monitor your children's phones and devices, especially messages and content shared between friends. School cannot do this alone, especially as these incidents are occurring in the evenings and weekends. If you need any support with parental controls or age restrictions, please speak to Mrs Tong, Deputy Headteacher.



UK Safer Internet Centre has published new research on online safety for children and young people. Findings from a survey of parents, carers and young people include: 62% of young people want to act and support others in being safe online; 43% say they want to be able to report something and someone online more easily; 35% say that having more support from the online industry about online safety education would make life online more enjoyable and safer for all; and 36% of parents and carers are not certain where to turn should they need support or access to resources on online safety.

**Read the news story:** [Young people keen to educate parents on online safety](#)

## Children's Mental Health Week

Thank you to everyone that took part in our events at school during Children's Mental Health Week. It proved to be such a successful and enjoyable week during which everyone made connections either through physical activity, singing, dancing, crafting or art. As part of this, Year 5 children did a great job of singing at Sainsburys, and we are pleased to report that, as a result of this, £108.80 was raised for charity Place2Be. Well done!



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## Absence and Lates

The Department of Education has made it clear that schools must be stricter when dealing with families whose children are persistently absent or late for school. A child's absence from school can only be authorised in exceptional circumstances, if they are too poorly to attend or if they have a medical appointment that cannot be made outside school hours.

If your child is persistently absent or regularly late for school, whatever the circumstances, a referral may be made to Dudley Education Investigation Service, and this could result in a fine. If you are having difficulty getting your child to school, or to school on time, please contact the school office so we can offer some support.

Please note that school will not authorise holidays during the school term and that our policy is to refer such absences of 5 school days or more to Dudley Education Investigation Service who may issue a fine.

At the end of the day, if you are going to be late to collect your child, please let the school office know as soon as possible. If a child is not collected at the end of the school day, he/she will be taken to the school office where, if a message has not been received, attempts will be made to contact parents/carers using the listed emergency numbers. For more information, please refer to our school attendance policy: <https://primarysite-prod-sorted.s3.amazonaws.com/withymoor-primary-school/UploadedDocument/bd13d355-111b-4585-a8c2-96e1aaa75bf2/reviced-attendance-policy-may-2022.pdf>



## Teachers' Strike

As previously advised, the NEU teaching union declared strike action a few weeks ago. The first of the strike days was Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> February, and there are further strike days planned for **Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> March, Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> March and Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> March**. The strikes are happening because of a national dispute between teacher unions and the government over teachers' pay and conditions, and not because of any issues at our school.

As before, learning may be disrupted on these dates and it may be that a class or classes will not be open. We recommend again that you start to make alternative childcare arrangements for these dates in case your child's class is affected.

I fully understand that this situation may be frustrating, especially as I am unable to provide advance confirmation about which classes are affected.

I will, of course, let you know as soon as possible which class or classes are not open on the above dates.

## Welcome Back

Mrs Rose and Mrs De Gregorio have now both returned from their maternity leave. It is lovely to have them both back – although we just cannot believe it has been a whole year! Where has that gone? I know you will all want to join me in welcoming them back to Withymoor.



## Mrs Gorman and Mrs Brown

After being a Teaching Assistant here for nearly 20 years, Mrs Gorman has now, sadly, left Withymoor. Over the years, Mrs Gorman has worked hard and supported lots of children and will be missed very much by colleagues and pupils. I am sure you will want to join me in thanking her for everything she's done and to wish her all the best for the future.



We also say goodbye (for the time being) to Mrs Brown who has now started her maternity leave. We would all like to wish Mrs (and Mr!) Brown huge congratulations and good luck with their new baby, when he or she arrives.



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## Toddler Forest School Sessions

After February half term we are pleased to be able to offer an outdoor toddler group in the woodland area on our playground. The group will be led by staff from Fruits of the Forest, a small business providing forest school and outdoor play. The group is open to children from our local area who are up to 3 years old and who are toddling/walking. It will run initially for 4 weeks every Tuesday from 7<sup>th</sup> March to 28<sup>th</sup> March between 9am – 10am at a total cost of £20. The charge includes a drink and a snack, and there will be lots of different activities for children to enjoy. Please note: there will unfortunately be no toilet facilities. If you are interested in the group for your child, or if you know someone who might be interested, please contact the school office on 01384 818530.



## NSPCC Number Day

Thank you to everyone who supported our NSPCC Number Day by helping children to dress up in clothes related to maths/numbers. Thanks also to Mr Brown and Mrs Parry for organising some wonderful mathematical activities throughout the school day. £135.45 was raised for the NSPCC.



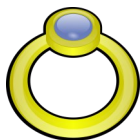
## Parent Governors

Congratulations to our new Parent Governors who are Mrs Amanda Jones, Mrs Millie Copeman and Miss Kirsty Fleming. We look forward to working with you in the coming months and years.



## Jewellery

Just a reminder, the wearing of jewellery to school is discouraged, although an inexpensive, small watch is allowed. If your child has pierced ears, only one pair of studs should be worn, for safety reasons. These must be removed for P.E. If you decide to have your child's ears pierced, please arrange this to take place during the summer holidays so that studs can be removed for PE on return to school. Nose studs and body piercing are not allowed.



I hope you have a restful February half term and thank you for your continued support. We look forward to seeing everyone back in school on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> February.

**Alison Wootton**  
Headteacher

