

DATE
September
2022



WITHYMOOR PRIMARY SCHOOL

School Newsletter

A warm welcome back to all our children and families, and to all our new Reception children who have started school for the first time. It is great to see you all! I hope you had a wonderful summer. We are so pleased to see how quickly all of the children throughout school have settled into their classes and we look forward to a happy, positive and successful year here at Withymoor.

Her Majesty the Queen



It was with great sadness that we learnt last week that Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II had passed away. A whole school assembly took place last Friday to celebrate Her Majesty's life, and we will of course support any children in school who are feeling particularly sad or troubled by the news. Following the announcements over the weekend by the Government and Department for Education, I can confirm that school will be closed on Monday 19th September, in line with all schools and colleges, as the day has been declared a Bank Holiday. We will re-open as normal on Tuesday 20th September.

Communication with teachers and other staff in school

Class DoJo is a great tool to use to message class teachers, and we aim to respond to messages within two working days. Please do not use Class DoJo for urgent messages eg relating to safeguarding, changes to collection arrangements or to advise about a child's absence that day.



Non-urgent messages can also be emailed to school on info@withymoor.dudley.sch.uk. We check emails regularly during the school day between 8am and 3.45pm.

For urgent messages, please use the school office telephone number 01384 818530.

If you have a concern, please call or speak to your child's Class Teacher in the first instance. If your concern remains unresolved, an appointment should be made to speak to one of our Phase Leaders – Mr Brown (Year 3 – 6) or Mrs Dulson (Reception – Year 2). If the concern has not been resolved please make an appointment to speak to Mrs Barrett or Mrs Billingham, Assistant Headteachers. Although we aim at Withymoor to get everything right and please everyone, this is not always possible. We understand that sometimes parents and carers might be unhappy about something in school, and we will always look at ways to resolve issues or concerns. When speaking to teachers or other members of staff, please do so with respect, as we are here to help you and do our best for your child. Thank you.

COVID

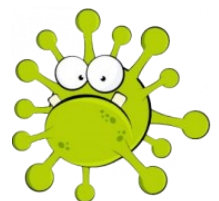
Government guidance states: "It is not recommended that children and young people are tested for COVID-19 unless directed to by a health professional.

If a child or young person has a positive COVID-19 test result they should try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for 3 days after the day they took the test, if they can. After 3 days, if they feel well and do not have a high temperature, the risk of passing the infection on to others is much lower. This is because children and young people tend to be infectious to other people for less time than adults.

Children and young people who usually go to school, college or childcare and who live with someone who has a positive COVID-19 test result should continue to attend as normal."

Please click on the following for further information:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/people-with-symptoms-of-a-respiratory-infection-including-covid-19#Children>



Dates for your Diary.....

Autumn Term

Bank Holiday
Inset day
October Half term
End of term

Monday 19th September
Friday 21st October
24th-28th October
Friday 16th December

Spring Term

Bank Holiday
Inset day
February Half Term
Inset day
End of term

Monday 2nd January
Tuesday 3rd January (Children return Wednesday 4th)
20th-24th February
27th February
31st March

Summer Term

Children return
Bank Holiday
Voting day
Inset day
Half term
End of term

17th April
1st May
4th May - school closed
26th May
29th May-2nd June
25th July

Parents Evening

Wednesday 19th October 3.30pm-7pm and Thursday 20th October 3.30pm-6pm

Wednesday 15th February 3.30pm-7pm and Thursday 16th February 3.30pm-6pm

Uniform

I am proud to see our pupils looking so smart when they come to school. Please support us by ensuring your child wears the correct Withymoor uniform every day, unless it's a MUFTI day or their birthday. This also includes on PE days when children can come to school in Withymoor PE uniform. Please note that brightly coloured tops or hoodies, or clothes with big logos/writing are not part of our uniform. Only black/dark-coloured pumps or trainers are suitable for PE days. Thank you for your co-operation with this.



Please note that if your child attends an after school club on a day that isn't their P.E day they will need to bring their sports clothes to change into at the end of the day.

Attendance

We have already received a number of requests from parents and carers for leave of absence during term time. As previously advised, we are unable to authorise absence during term time, including for holidays, unless there are 'exceptional circumstances'. Please note that reasons given such as cost, annual leave restrictions at work, birthdays etc are not classed as 'exceptional'. All unauthorised absence of 5 days or more – this can be a one-off absence, or cumulative over a number of weeks - will be referred to Dudley Education Investigation Services. This may in some circumstances result in fines being issued by the Local Authority.

Above 97%: Less than 6 days absence a year - Less than 30 Hours of Learning Lost

Excellent attendance! These young people will almost certainly get the best levels/grades they can, leading to better prospects for the future. Pupils will also get into a habit of attending school which will help in the future.

95%: 10 days absence a year - 50 Hours of Learning Lost

These pupils are less likely to achieve their target levels/grades and will start to find it difficult to maintain a habit of attending school regularly. Pupils who take a 2-week holiday every year can only achieve 95% attendance.

90%: 19 days absence a year - 95 Hours of Learning Lost

The Government classes pupils in this group as "Persistent Absentees", and it will be almost impossible to keep up with work and achieve their target levels/grades. Parents of young people in this group could also face the possibility of legal action being taken by Dudley Council, including the issuing of Penalty Notices and Fines.