



## Newsletter – 15<sup>th</sup> September 2023

### Key Updates in this Newsletter:

- Survey responses
- Increasing parental engagement and changes to Star of the Week
- Relaunching Clubs
- PTFA invitation

### Letter from Mr Gaffiney

As we reach the end of another wonderful Winshill week, I have been reflecting on how positive the school is. Coming back to school after a long break can be really challenging for children (and adults!), but the start of term has once again shown what a sensational community we are a part of. It has been great to reconnect with parents, our staff team are flying and driving inspiring learning and our children, as always, have blown us all away with their hard work, kindness and spirit. What a wonderful job we are privileged to do!

This week has also seen the return of our staff, parent and child surveys. Thank you for taking the time to complete these – they have been provided by our Trust and give really good insight into what is going well and what we can do better. **We have put together a response to your feedback later in this newsletter – please do have a look!** We are entirely dedicated to making Winshill the very best place to learn, and your feedback is really appreciated to help us with this.

**In the ‘Increasing Parental Engagement’ section**, we share our plans to improve opportunities to interact with the school. We really value this, and detail some of the additional things we are doing, plus some changes to Start of the Week. We have shared these with our Year 6 School Ambassadors, and they have helped us to shape this offer, but we would love your thoughts on this too.

**We are also restarting school clubs.** Details of this will be shared in a separate letter, but I want to thank the staff for offering this – they do this without payment and as an addition to their contracted work, so I am sure you will join me in sharing appreciation for going the extra mile for our children.

Finally, we are **relaunching the PTFA** and would like to invite anyone who is interested in supporting this to an information session on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> September, from 4pm. Biscuits will be provided!

Thanks as always for your support – we are really grateful to you all.

With very best wishes,

Chris Gaffiney

Headteacher

## Updates this week

### Survey responses

Thank you for taking the time to respond to our survey this year. 12% of parents and 87% of staff responded in total, and the vast majority of our children completed their questionnaires.

Areas of strength from parents included:

- 94% of parents felt the school was better than 'Poor', with 72% rating it Good or very Good
- 78% of parents felt the school had either stayed the same or improved
- Top areas of satisfaction included teaching quality, control of bullying and caring teachers

The key areas for enhancement identified by parents, plus how we will seek to improve this, are below:

Enhancement Area	Our response
Out of School Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Clubs are restarting this term</li><li>• We are in talks with external partners to further enhance this</li><li>• We are mapping all of our school trips to ensure lots of opportunity</li><li>• Outdoor education, including forest schools and residential, are also being reviewed</li><li>• Enrichment days will commence in the coming terms</li></ul>
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Weekly newsletters have resumed</li><li>• Leadership staff are available on the doors each morning</li><li>• Letters are being sent electronically wherever possible</li></ul>
Homework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• New reading scheme launched (see letter sent this week)</li><li>• Review of homework underway</li></ul>
Parents' Evenings/ supporting parents to help their children at home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review of parental engagement and creation of new opportunities, including family lunches, learn together sessions etc.</li><li>• Review of parents' evenings</li><li>• Production of support videos will start during the year</li></ul>

This was a relatively small sample of parents, so **if there is anything else you would like us to consider then please do let us know by email to the office.** A member of staff will respond to you.

In addition, there wasn't a question about what you would like to see specifically added or changed for each section, so we have created the list above from our ideas and experience. **If there is anything you would specifically like to see us doing, please let us know and we will do all we can to help.**

We will also be acting on the other areas you have raised, as well as those from the staff and children.

## **Increasing Parental Engagement**

This is an area that we are really excited to be working on! We love having parents in school and be part of our learning team and have some great plans for the coming year!

Family lunches will start this term, with a class each week being able to invite their parent in to share a meal with them. This will take place on a Friday (fish and chip day!) and we will let you know when these will take place.

Learning Together sessions will also start this term. Parents will be able to come in and learn alongside their child, as well as have a chance to see the school in action. Again, watch this space for further details!

Parents' Evenings will also be reviewed. Suggested changes include sending the books home in advance for you to review them, along with current performance information. We will need to keep to 10 minute slots simply due to time, but will extend the sessions to allow working parents to attend more easily. If there is something you would like us to do differently, please get in touch.

We will also be working on providing videos to support learning at home. We have found that parent workshops are not very well attended, and so hope this is a better way of sharing information, but do let us know if there is something you would value.

## **Changes to Star of the Week**

We have spoken with our School Ambassadors and, with their advice, have decided to change our Star of the Week. This assembly took place on a Friday and children felt it was long and a bit boring. They also reported feeling embarrassed or worried about coming to the front and also a sense of disappointment if they had tried especially hard but it had not been given the award. It was also hard for some parents to make it to the assembly, and logistically it was very challenging for the school staff.

As such, we have made a change whereby classmates will share positives about everyone in the class, with the group agreeing someone who has done a particularly great job of showing the school values that week. This takes place in a weekly class discussion on a Friday afternoon, and children will then be presented with a 'Pride of Winshill Village' postcard on a Monday, along with an invitation to hot chocolate with a member of Senior Leadership during the week. We will also celebrate them in our weekly newsletter, on a display in school and on Twitter (with your consent). This will mean that we won't have parents in on a Friday any longer, but hope that all of the other parental engagement events make up for this. We hope the changes will also make celebrating successes more positive for children but, as always, do let us know if you have any suggestions about this.

## Ongoing Information Items

### Dates for Autumn Term

*More will be added through the year – we will keep you informed via letters and the website!*

Date	Event
Thursday 21 <sup>st</sup> September	PTFA Launch meeting and AGM – all invited!
Tuesday 10 <sup>th</sup> October	World Mental Health Day: Activities in school
Wednesday 25 <sup>th</sup> October	Open Day and Evening for Nursery and Reception
<b>Mon 30<sup>th</sup> – Fri 3<sup>rd</sup> November</b>	<b>HALF-TERM WEEK</b>
Monday 6 <sup>th</sup> November	INSET DAY – No pupils in school
Mon 13 <sup>th</sup> – Fri 17 <sup>th</sup> November	Anti-bullying Week: Activities in school
Tuesday 19 <sup>th</sup> December	JT MAT Carol Concert for School Choir pupils only
Mon 25 <sup>th</sup> Dec – Fri 5 <sup>th</sup> Jan	<b>CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS</b>
Monday 8 <sup>th</sup> January	INSET DAY – No pupils in school

### Training Days (School Closed to pupils)

Monday 6<sup>th</sup> November – MAT Inset  
Monday 8<sup>th</sup> January – School Training  
Friday 5<sup>th</sup> July – MAT Inset  
Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> July – School Training

### The School Day

The doors open from 8.45 and all children must be in for 9.00am at the latest. This time is used for learning so the earlier your children can be at school, the more they will get out of this time.

The school day will end at 3.15pm for Key Stage 1 and 3.20pm for Key Stage 2. **Please note our new dismissal procedure which will start from Monday 11<sup>th</sup> September!**

Please note that we are going to formal consultation on changing the school day. This will be shared with you in the Autumn Term.

### Breakfast Club

We are delighted to provide our own in-house Breakfast Club daily whenever school is open to pupils in all classes. Pupils may arrive any time from 7.30am and no pre-booking is required.

Costs:

7.30 – 8.45am            £3.50

8.00 – 8.45am            £3.00

These prices include breakfast

## **After-school Club**

We offer after school care daily whenever school is open to pupils in all classes in partnership with Winshill Childcare. They organise and run this session, so if you would like to make use of this then please let the office know and we can share their details.

## **Pupil Premium**

Pupil Premium is an opportunity for those eligible to secure additional funding for their child. This money is used to support them in their learning, as well as subsidising things such as school trips. Please do let us know if you think you are eligible for this, or you can apply directly. Further details can be found here:

[Overview - Free school meals - Staffordshire County Council](#)

## **School Meals**

Mellors have now taken over our catering and the food is sensational! Menus are all on our website and we encourage you to try them out!

The cost of a school meal is £2.60. This **does not apply to free school meals** for children in Reception or Key Stage 1, who will still continue to receive a school dinner free of charge, as will pupils eligible for Free School Meals.

## **Extra-Curricular Clubs**

Keep an eye out in the next two weeks – we hope to share an offer with you soon!

## **Uniform**

Looking smart is an important aspect of our school life and we want all of our children to wear our school uniform with pride. Uniform with logos on is available at [My Uniform \(myuniformltd.co.uk\)](#) or [www.wbglobaltrading.co.uk](#)

Logos do look smart but they are not mandatory and local supermarkets have perfectly suitable smart uniform items at very reasonable prices.

On a normal school day, all children should wear:

- Red crew neck sweatshirt/cardigan
- White polo or shirt
- Grey or black school trousers/skirt/pinafore dress or red gingham school dress
- Black flat sensible school shoes (shoes are to be plain with no coloured logos, smart plain black trainers are acceptable)

For safety, earrings must only be modest studs and no necklaces, bracelets or rings should be worn. If jewellery, outside of these guidelines, is worn please do not be offended if your child is asked to remove it for the remainder of the day. If you are planning to get your child's ears pierced, then the start of the summer holiday is ideal as hopefully they can then remove them independently for PE lessons.

Watches are acceptable. Smart watches, however, are worn at your own risk and school cannot accept any responsibility for loss or damage if these are brought into school.

All long hair should be tied back daily for school. Please use modest hair accessories only.

## **PE Days**

On a PE day, we would like to ask all children to come to school in their PE kit. This saves time changing, preserves privacy and hopefully helps with the washing at home too!

Our PE kit is as follows:

- Plain white T-shirt
- Black or grey PE shorts or leggings
- Trainers
- Warm tracksuit top and bottoms

Pre-loved uniform will be available in a swap shop from mid-September. If you have high-quality pre-loved uniform with plenty of life in it still, please bring into to school (washed and clean) so that it can be re-homed.

## **Birthdays**

At Winshill, we love sharing birthdays with our children! As such, from this year, children are invited to come to school in their own clothes on their birthday (or the day nearest to it of a holiday or weekend birthday). They are welcome to bring sweets or cakes to celebrate with their friends, but these should not include nuts and we ask that dietary requirements of classmates are considered.

## **Absence and Attendance**

We strongly encourage good attendance from all of our pupils. Every day at school matters and so we encourage children to be in school unless they are too unwell to be so. If your child is ill, please contact us via phone or email on the first day of their absence to advise off the reason why they are absent.

It is always our preference that routine medical or dental appointments be taken outside of the school day, though we recognise that this may not always be possible. Please do not be offended if we ask to see proof of the appointment. This is part of our MAT Attendance Policy.

**We cannot authorise any holidays in term-time.** Please be advised that such absences are recorded as unauthorised and may be subject to penalty notices (for children 5 years and over).

### **Communicating with Staff**

We greatly value positive, open communication with our parents. Each morning, a member of our Core Leadership Team will be available on the door to the main building, where any messages can be shared.

If you have a more complicated request, please make contact with the school office who will make an appointment for you with the most appropriate person in school.

From September, we will not be using the text messaging service to receive messages. Please call us or email [win-office@win.jtmat.co.uk](mailto:win-office@win.jtmat.co.uk) and we will get back to you.

### **Questions and concerns**

At Winshill Village, we are proud to be a 'family school'. We always work tirelessly in the best interests of your children and keep them at the forefront of all decision-making. We are committed to making their primary school days the very best years of their life.

If, however, something is not going right, you have suggestions on how we could improve something or you have any questions, concerns or worries, we do strongly encourage you to get in touch. We will always welcome you in, listen to you and act on your concerns.