



Whickham Parochial Church of England Primary School

Nurturing minds and hearts through God's love

Newsletter 14/2/23

Dear Parents,

It's been such a busy half term – I'm not sure where the time has gone, but we're almost at half term! Mrs Baird is doing an excellent job of keeping you all up to date with information through E-schools, but I thought it was important to get in touch with you to let you know of some changes and events that are approaching.

Don't forget, you can find lots of school information on our [website](#) – our letters are saved on there, you can find out about our curriculum, and we have our calendar and term dates too. If you are ever in need of information, it's a good place to start!

Cost of living

School Meals

We have all been very aware of rising costs lately and Parochial has not been immune. However, we want to do what we can to make the lives of our families as easy as possible. Our school meals cost has increased so that our school pays a larger percentage of the actual cost of each meal. We are very reluctant to pass on this cost to parents, so until September 2023, we will maintain the current price of £2.70. If you are struggling to pay for school meals and think you may be eligible for free school meals, please follow this link for more information: <https://www.gateshead.gov.uk/article/7433/Free-school-meals>

Uniform Changes

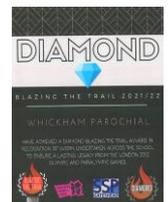
In our uniform survey last year, we found that most parents who responded were happy with the winter uniform and wanted to keep it (by a small majority). However, you pointed out to us that the gold and grey long sleeved shirts were tricky to find, especially in some sizes, and expensive to buy from our supplier. In order to help with this, we have made the decision to change just this one part of our uniform. Next October, when we come back after half term, we will come back wearing a white shirt (both boys and girls) rather than the grey or gold. If you have grey or gold shirts that you would like to get more wear out of, please feel free to consider the Winter of 2023/24 a period of phasing out the old uniform. However, by October 2024 we will be fully into the more cost effective and gender neutral white shirts. More details about the reasons behind this decision can be found in our Uniform Policy.

Dates for your Diary

Industrial Action – 28th February

The industrial action is only going to affect one class this time. **Year Two will be closed until 11am on 28th February.** Pupils will be asked what they would like to choose for their lunch the day before the industrial action. They will be welcomed into the main entrance at 11:00 am. We anticipate that more classes will be affected for the national strike action on 15th and 16th March. Many teachers nationally and locally are choosing not to liaise with head teachers to give advance notice to parents, so we appreciate their openness and support them in their right to take action on the very worrying matter of school funding.

Whickham Parochial Church of England Primary School
Broadway,
Whickham, NE16 5QW
Telephone: 0191 4887867
whickhamparochialprimaryschool@gateshead.gov.uk





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Coming Soon, Whole School Events (please also see our [website calendar](#))

Friday 17th February – Parent Governor Nomination deadline. If you would like to nominate yourself, you have until Friday. I've put a word version onto our letters page in case you wanted to complete the form electronically.

Friday 17th February – Foodbank Friday. As usual, the items will be gratefully received by the Newcastle People's Kitchen. Presently they are short of: tins of meat (ham/chicken curry/mince etc.), custard and gravy. They would also be very pleased to receive any gently used warm clothing.

Friday 17th February – last day of Spring 1. Break up for half term

Tuesday 21st February – Shrove Tuesday. We will remind the children that while they are on their week's holiday, on the day after Pancake Day, they will begin Lent. This year we will be hoping as many pupils as possible will complete the 40 acts of service and we will send the record sheets home before the half term begins. If these get lost on the way, they can be downloaded from our [website](#).

Monday 27th February – Return to school for Spring 2

Thursday 2nd March – World Book Day. We are very much looking forward to inviting you in to school to share a book with your child. Remember, this year our competition is not costumes – we are encouraging pupils who would like to, to bring in a shoe-box diorama of their favourite book. For more information, see [the letter on our website](#). We will also be enjoying a book fair from Usborne Books, which all children will have the chance to look at before World Book Day.

Friday 24th March – Mad Hair Day. This is our school council's first charity day, this time in aid of Cancer Research and MacMillan Nurses. See our [last newsletter](#) for more information.

Thursday 30th March – Easter Eucharist in school at 9:15am. More details to follow.

Friday 31st March – Break up for Easter holidays and foodbank Friday. Some pupils may wish to bring an Easter Egg as part of their donation, as this is one of the tasks on the 40 acts of service.

Many thanks as always for your support; we wish you a very enjoyable half term holiday.

Best wishes

R Walton
Mrs Walton