



Whickham Parochial Church of England Primary School

Nurturing minds and hearts through God's love

Newsletter 18/7/23

Hello parents – Welcome to the last newsletter of the year!



Governor round-up of the year - many thanks to our Chair of Governors, Mrs Gillian Surtees, for providing this.

As Chair of Governors at Parochial I would like to update you on some information about our roles and work within school for 2022/23. In February, Rachel Simpson Smith (parent governor) resigned after many years of dedicated and enthusiastic support and we welcomed Veronica MacCabe as a new parent governor. This summer, Mrs Dillon will complete her four year appointment as staff governor and we are very happy that Mrs Jackson will take up this role in September. Beth Smith, our Local Authority governor has decided not to continue as governor at Parochial after 30+ years which I'm sure you will agree is a fantastic commitment and dedication to the children and staff. Thank you to all our governors who give their time, expertise and support for the school.

We have just finished our round up of governor meetings and monitoring visits for 2022/23 and have continually supported Mrs Walton in the strategic direction of the school. This includes ensuring the school improvement plan is in place and we receive regular updates on its effectiveness. We approved the budget for the academic year and agreed areas of spending which included new laptops, internal decorating and improving drainage. We have approved and updated many policies to ensure we meet all our legal responsibilities for the children's education, safeguarding and staff well-being.

I hope you all have a wonderful summer break. My best wishes.

Gillian Surtees, Chair of Governors June 2023

School council

Our excellent school council have had their last meeting today, in which they wrote some ideas to help their successors in September. They have been a very organised and proactive bunch, and over the year they have achieved a great deal, including:

- Re-establishing top table on Friday lunch times.
- Campaigning for and achieving the establishment of a gardening club.
- Arranging two charity days for causes of their own choosing, which led to us raising more than £200 for Macmillan Cancer Support and to the adoption of an endangered animal per class.
- Sharing ideas for future changes to the two yards which we will work towards as the budget allows.

They also hoped to have a homework club established, which is something we will continue to work on. Very well done to all our school councillors – their classes chose them well!

Changes for September

Just a reminder – in response to the government requirement that the school week be a minimum of 32.5 hours, our opening and closing times will be changing. **The school day will begin with an 8.50am registration and will end at 3.20pm, giving us a school day of 6 hours and 30 minutes.**

We will continue to support a 'soft opening' each morning, adjusting this to commence with gates opening at **8.40am** to continue to afford the flexibility that we know parents value and reduce congestion at the gate. Gates will close at 8:55am.

Summer uniform will remain as it always has been, as our investigation found that the gold/yellow polo t-shirts were easy enough to locate. However, from return to school after October half term, we will move to the white winter shirts from Year 1 – Year 6. This is a transition year, and if you would prefer to use pre-loved or last years' shirts that still fit, please do so. Can we also remind parents that no nail varnish or jewellery other than small stud earrings and a watch are to be worn in school and no earrings should be worn on P.E. days, which you will be able to find on our class timetables on our website. These will be updated over the summer.

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





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Summer holiday support

We hope that everyone can manage to get some time away from work to be with their children during the six week holiday – please remember that some of the best times children have with their family can be paddling at the beach, walking to the park together or just having rainy day movie afternoons. The best gift you can give your child over the holidays is yourself. If holiday times are a bit of a financial struggle, here a couple of links to free or low cost days out near here:

<https://www.great-days-out.co.uk/outdoor-activities/free-days-out/north-east-england/>

<https://www.northeastfamilyfun.co.uk/2022/02/50-free-days-out-across-north-east.html>

There are also lots of deals in restaurants for children over the summer holidays:

<https://www.heart.co.uk/lifestyle/full-list-restaurants-free-meals-kids-summer-holiday/>

If you know of any other good deals, please remember to share them on your class WhatsApp pages!

Gateshead library service are running their annual summer reading challenge; children aged 4-11 can visit Gateshead Libraries to join a superstar team and their marvellous mascots and get involved in a Summer Reading Challenge themed around the power of play, sport, games and physical activity. Find out more here: [Gateshead Library Ready, Set, Read.](#)

Thank you!

Finally, we want to take the opportunity to thank you all. No school year is without its challenges, but we are continually reminded how very lucky we are to have a school community as supportive and engaged as the Parochial family. Thank you for trusting us with your children for another year, we have loved having them. We send our very best wishes to our Year 6 children – we will miss them lots but they are completely ready for the move to secondary school and will be an asset to their new schools.

Have a fantastic summer and we will see you on Tuesday 5th September,

Best wishes

R Walton

Mrs Walton and all the Parochial staff



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! Additionally, all dates are on our E-schools calendar.