



Weekly Newsletter: Friday 23rd October

Dear Parents and Carers,

Well, we made it to half term!

Thank you to all of our parents, staff and children for helping to keep us as safe as possible in these very difficult times.

I was very anxious about this term when we started in September, but in comparison to other schools in the area we have managed to escape a major outbreak of the virus in school. Sadly, two classes in Year 1 have had to self-isolate this half term and we will make sure that these classes get the opportunity to catch up on anything important they may have missed (including school photographs).



Overall we have had only three members of staff and three children test positive. From a combined school community of 705 this is far less than I had feared initially, but does show us the need to continue to remain vigilant and careful next half term.

I would like everyone to have a lovely restful half term and recharge their batteries for the long run up to the Christmas holidays.

It is clear that Christmas in school this year will be **very different** to any other. As we are not allowed to sing, mix bubbles, use the Hall for different bubbles rehearsing, we will not be allowed to put on our usual range of end of term productions and performances. However, this gives us an opportunity to try different things with the children in school and class teachers have a whole range of ideas of what we can do to celebrate at the end of term.

It will be my last half term as Head teacher of this wonderful school and I fully intend to make the most of my time left with the children and staff. After 10 years at the school, this is clearly not quite what I had envisaged, but we have to make the best of this situation and show the resilience and determination that the children of West Jesmond demonstrate every day to me.

Executive Head Teacher: Gary Wallis-Clarke MA in Education BA (Hons) NPQH

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National Teaching School
designated by



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Primary Science Quality Mark

This week we received our official PSQM Outreach certificate in recognition of our science provision at West Jesmond and our support with science to other schools and organisations. You can view our portfolio of evidence on our website at:

http://www.westjesmondprimary.org.uk/website/science_curriculum/453284



Friends of West Jesmond

It was lovely to see so many new faces at the virtual Friends AGM last night. For those of you new to the school, in more normal times the Friends work tirelessly with many fundraising events throughout the year in school which provides the income for many exciting events and resources to supplement learning and the school environment. The AGM was Helen Ingham's last

meeting as Chair. Helen has been a fantastic Chair since 2018, having previously been Vice Chair, dedicating many hours to numerous events and initiatives. As a school we'd like to say a huge thank you for all her enthusiasm and work. Susan Ashman is also stepping down as Treasurer to Co-Treasurer. Susan has been in post since 2014 and has done a wonderful job keeping all the finances in order and has also given up many hours of her time to support the school both when her children attended West Jesmond and after. Katie Copper, our Secretary, is also stepping down from her position as Secretary having done a brilliant job of keeping records. We'd also like to say thank you to them both for all their support and hard work. We're very lucky to have a new committee of Rebecca Wardle as Chair, Mr Jones replacing Mrs McVittie as Vice Chair, Vicki Ife as Treasurer and Melissa Brown as Secretary to work with the rest of the Friends to organise events in school this year. Watch this space!

Keeping up to date

As well as our weekly newsletters and Parent Mail you can also keep up to date with reminders and what is happening in school by following us on Facebook and Twitter. On Facebook search for "West Jesmond Primary School" and our Twitter handle is @west_jes_school

Year 6 Parents

Please make sure you have filled in your application form for a secondary school place with Newcastle City Council as soon as possible. Thank you.

Singing at the Cathedral

Attached to this newsletter are some leaflets and letters from our good friend Ian Roberts, the Director of Music at Newcastle Cathedral. They are looking to start up again a wide range of clubs and groups, so if this is something that you and your child are interested in, please do have a read and follow up with the Cathedral.

Violin lessons - spaces available!

Our peripatetic music teacher, Miss Montgomery, has space on her timetable for new violin players. Children in Year 3, who are interested in having lessons, should let Mrs. Hague know. Mrs Hague will then contact Miss Montgomery, who works for NEMCO (our instrumental music providers). Further details can be found on the NEMCO website: www.nemco.org.uk.

Tyne Met & Heaton Hawks FC Wildcats Centre Relaunch

As of Monday 19th October, fun, friendly, football for girls aged 5-11 is taking place at Cochrane Park, Etherstone Avenue, NE7 7JX. Sessions run on Mondays between 4-5pm and cost

£3 per week. These sessions are delivered by FA qualified female coaches and follow all Covid guidelines. Please click on the following link if you would like to book online: <https://bookwhen.com/heatonhawks-tynemet-wildcats>. If you would like any further details, please contact hannah.marshall@tynemet.ac.uk.

A look ahead to our Whole School Local Study Week - Shipbuilding from Miss Smith and Miss Byatt

When we return after half term it is our first whole school subject week of the year. It will be a week focused on humanities skills as the children explore the question '*Why was shipbuilding so important to our local area?*' Each year group will have their own big question that they are challenged to explore and answer by the end of the week. These are:

Reception: Who made ships?

Year 1: What was it like to work in a shipyard?

Year 2: What did shipbuilders and their families do in their spare time?

Year 3: Who were the women on the river?

Year 4: How did shipbuilding change with the times?

Year 5: How much power is in a union?

Year 6: Was the decline in shipbuilding inevitable?

There is a whole school homework and knowledge organiser for you to use over half term. These were sent out as attachments to the Parent Mail last week. We look forward to sharing the learning and outcomes of the week.

Parent Consultations

Just a reminder that we will be holding 10 minute telephone parent consultations after half-term. The dates for these consultations between 3.30pm and 6pm will be:

	Week 1	Week 2
Rec	Wed 4 th Nov	Wed 11 th Nov
Y1	Wed 4 th Nov	Wed 11 th Nov
Y2	Tue 3 rd Nov	Tue 10 th Nov
Y3	Tue 3 rd Nov	Tue 10 th Nov
Y4	Wed 4 th Nov	Wed 11 th Nov
Y5	Thu 5 th Nov	Thu 12 th Nov
Y6	Thu 5 th Nov	Thu 12 th Nov

You will be able to book these via a new phone app, Weduc.

Weduc

As you will be aware, we are always looking for more effective ways to keep our parents informed and engaged in their child's learning journey. We have been pretty successful in the past, but with new technology constantly being released, it's important that we provide you with the most effective, yet simple to use tools available.

We're excited to announce that we have now invested in Weduc, a new digital communication and engagement tool designed specifically to improve the way that parents and school staff communicate.

You will receive details via your email address held in school on how to join Weduc and set up your account.

I hope you have a restful and happy half term,

Gary Wallis-Clarke