



December Newsletter 2017

Thanks to our performers, producers and directors!

What a talented bunch of youngsters we have at Westwood! From the youngest Nursery pupil to the oldest Year 6, I am very proud of every effort during each of our Christmas productions. The singing was amazing, the acting was brilliant and the costumes were dazzling. Putting on a show of any scale requires a massive amount planning, organisation and commitment from my team of staff. It is a mammoth task to write a script, allocate every child a part to play, work out logistics and rehearse to a high standard. Even behind the scenes, a great deal of additional time and effort goes into preparing props, scenery, music, tickets, programmes and refreshments. For this, I thank you all! I am very lucky as a Head Teacher to have such a dedicated team behind me and such a wonderful bunch of children around me. I would like to extend my gratitude to all parents, carers and relatives who have supported the Christmas productions and events this year. Your contributions and supportive engagement is hugely appreciated and makes such a difference to the development of our school.

Positive Reflections

I really appreciated the positive comments received after the Christmas productions and events. Comments such as these are not only up-lifting and rewarding for the staff, they make it all worthwhile and encourage us to do more. It is vital for the positive reputation and image of the school for our good news to be visible beyond the school gates. I applaud those of you who did take the time to post appreciative and flattering comments about our events on social media. This is exactly what social media is best used for.

We had a record breaking Christmas Bingo-Ho-Ho this year. We had a packed hall and even with our emergency chairs, we struggled to get everybody in! Thank you for squashing in folks, it made for a superb, friendly atmosphere. As resident Bingo Caller, I had a great deal of fun with you all. Well done to all of our winners and commiserations to those who came so close! Don't worry, there's always Easter Bingo to look forward to and try a little harder. A huge thank you to the team of staff who worked tirelessly to organise and manage this fun event. We managed to raise just over £800 that will be directed towards our current school development priorities. Amazing effort!

Heading into 2018

The children start back with us on Tuesday 9th January 2018. It's only a 5 week half term and the last day for pupils is Friday 9th February. School starts again on Monday 19th February. The remaining term dates are listed below.

Last day of Spring Term	=	Friday 23 rd March
Start of Summer term	=	Monday 9 th April
Break up for half term	=	Friday 25 th May
Back for final half term	=	Monday 4 th June
School Closed for Jubilee	=	Tuesday 10 th July
Last day of school year	=	Friday 20 th July

Start of new school year 2018/19 = Wednesday 5th September 2018

Festive Greetings

Finally, on behalf of the entire school staff and governors, I would like to extend my best wishes to you and your family. I hope you have a joyous, happy and fulfilling Christmas and share plenty of fun and laughter. Nadolig Llawen a blwyddyn Newydd Dda!

Dear Parent/ Guardian/ Carer

Welcome to a first newsletter update from the Westwood School Governing Body; the first of many future Governor Newsletters. For those parents who are unsure of who the Governors of Westwood are, a complete list of elected members can be found on the school website. I write as current Chair of Governors on behalf of all Governors. School governing bodies are responsible for working with the school to ensure that it delivers a good quality education. Together with the Head Teacher, who is responsible for day-to-day leadership and management, they set the school's aims and policies.

This first update includes information on our new school website that is fully operational. All parents are encouraged to visit the website, not only to meet the Governors but to see what the school is about and all the achievements and activities your children are involved in. You may be surprised at the diversity of activities and opportunities that are on offer to your children in support of their all-round development.

We are particularly proud of the website, we have talked and received comments as to the need for one, and at last we have one. It has been achieved as a result of much hard work from a group of staff over the year and we all owe them a very big thank you. As you will understand, we are still feeling our way in regard to how parents and school want to use this step change in our ability to communicate with all parents and pupils. To develop this into a website we are all proud of, we need to use it and if we find that we want something more (or less) then we need to speak out by using the feedback facilities and blogs to identify the things that are important to us all. Without the use and engagement of all, it will just fall by the wayside and become another initiative that did not work, and another topic to moan about. It is our intent to develop the website into our main communication channel, enabling the monthly newsletters to be posted on the website thus reducing our cost base, which is a concern at present.

As Governors, our goal is to make our school *'the school of choice'* within the local community. This does not just mean exceptional teaching, it means providing a school that meets the needs and wishes of parents, pupils and the locality. Westwood needs to be widely recognised as a respectful learning establishment where its pupils achieve their best possible standards. We all feed into this ideal by the way we behave, the way we talk, and the way we engage with our school and community. This is very easy to say but very difficult to achieve and the staff work tirelessly to achieve this. However, it is not only the efforts of the staff that are needed to achieve this goal. The Governors encourage every parent and pupil at Westwood to consider themselves ambassadors of the school and take every opportunity through their daily interactions with the community to demonstrate the calibre and nurturing nature of our school.

There are many challenges facing us, not least, our financial position is not where we would like it to be. The school has a delegated budget from County that is entirely driven by pupil numbers. The more pupils we attract, the greater the school budget. Hence our request for everyone connected to the school to become a positive voice to the community. It is sad to hear that some new families relocating into the Buckley area did not even know Westwood CP School existed. All other schools are known through word of mouth but not enough people advertise a positive viewpoint about Westwood. If we don't recognise how good we are, then how will newcomers to the area find out?

So to conclude, we have many challenges at Westwood during 2018, however this will not detract from the quality education we strive daily to provide. May I take this opportunity to wish you, your children and extended families a merry Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

Peter Shone
Chair of Governors