



Spring Update 3

4th April 2019

Dear Parents and Carers

As we get ready to break for Easter, there are one or two things I would like to draw your attention to, before I wish you all an enjoyable two weeks and a chance to spend some quality time together.

BREXIT!

In this time of European uncertainty, I need to inform you that it is now highly likely the UK will need to hold MEP elections and I received an email yesterday stating that they will be using the school for these on **23rd May**. If these go ahead (and your guess is as good as mine), the school will need to close to pupils on that day – staff will be in for INSET.

The majority Year 4 and Year 6 are on their respective school journeys and so there will be no impact here; it mainly affects the Year 3, Year 5 and Year 6 ‘remainers’ (appropriate choice of word?).

We are already closed on Friday 24th May and so that effectively means we will be finishing for May half term at 3.15pm on Wednesday 22nd May. I do apologise for this and the problems this may cause for some of you but it is completely out of my hands.

Parent Questionnaires

Over the last two evenings, we have carried out our annual parent survey to seek your views as to how we are doing as a school and to see what aspects of school life you are happy with and those which you would like me to investigate. I would like to thank all of you who took the time to complete a survey and in particular for the lovely comments you made. I will of course take time to evaluate them in detail over the coming weeks and share your thoughts with staff, governors and of course you, our parent body.

If you didn't manage to complete a form and would like to, I have attached a digital copy with this correspondence. Please would you make sure they are returned to me tomorrow (5th April) so they may be included in our evaluation process.

Twitter

If you follow the school twitter feed you will have seen recently just how active it has been. It is interesting to note how many other schools are now coming on board with the use of this platform to share information and good news stories about their work. We lead the way on good practice.

We really enjoy reading your responses to our tweets but I would like to remind you that this platform is very much for positive news and comment. Should you have a concern or complaint you wish to make, I would ask you refrain from posting on the twitter feed and use alternative means such as email, or even better word of mouth. I will take steps to remove posts from our twitter feed which I feel are not in the right spirit.

With regards to twitter, it is our plan to have a separate twitter account this year for our two school journeys. We were very aware last year that there were quite a few posts over the course of the week and perhaps it might have been better if they were on a separate feed. We have listened to feedback and will endeavour to get this sorted before the year groups depart. We will give you further details in the final parent meetings after the Easter break.

Road Safety

It has been brought to my attention that over recent days, there have been several 'near misses' between pupils in bikes and cars. Please would you talk with your child about the need to ride safely and carefully when out and about around the very busy roads of Hitchin.

I have been in consultation with various agencies about local schemes and initiatives to highlight to the pupils' their responsibilities in this but I would urge you to do the same.

I need your help

I'm giving you as much notice as possible for something I would like to do at the start of the next academic year. There are two pieces of work which would be far more productive if we could consult with parents.

There are changes coming in relating to the teaching of Relationships and Sex Education from September 2020 and to ensure we meet the needs of our pupils and our community I would like to discuss the proposals with you.

The other piece of work I would like to seek your views on is the way we report to you in the summer term. I want to make our school reports as useful as possible and for that to happen, I would be interested to hear what exactly you would like from us, which also ties into our statutory obligations.

If you would like to be involved with either or both of these projects, look out for details coming home in the latter part of the summer term.

Walk to School Week

Thank you to all our pupils who took part in the recent competition / project relating to how pupils come to school. The charts have been collected in and we will find out after the break whether or not we have won a prize.

Linked with this, I have been asked to draw your attention to the dates for National Walk to School Week which is week commencing 20th May. For us, it is potentially going to be 'Walk to School Three Days!'

50th Anniversary Ball

It will soon be here! Saturday 29th June is the date for our 50th Anniversary Ball and tickets are selling well. There is still time to get a group of friends together and come and join us for this celebration. Details are on the school website but you can also get information and help with tickets etc. from Mrs Cook in the school office. Please spread the word to former Whitehill families with whom you still have contact.

That's it from me for now. I will see you at the parent consultation evenings and also on the playground before and after school. Be sure to look at the new website and let me know what you think. What else would you like to see on it?

Best wishes,

Steve Mills

Headteacher

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www.whitehill.herts.sch.uk