



Update from Mr Mills



17th September 2019

Dear Parents

As we come to the end of our first full week, there are a few things to draw your attention to which will hopefully ensure a smooth term ahead.

Crossing Patrol

You will have noticed if you come to school from the Whitehill Road side, our crossing patrol has changed. Mr Waluk (our Site Manager) has taken over from his wife. It is lovely to have that additional security on the zebra crossing but for it to work well, I have been asked to remind you of a key 'rule'.

Please would you make sure you do not cross when Mr Waluk is on duty until you have been told to do so? It might look clear but we need to ensure he is in position before stepping onto the crossing. This also applies to adults without children.

Wraparound Care

I am well-aware of the waiting lists to get children into Fun Club for after school provision. With Bluebells closing suddenly, I have had meetings with the manager of Brighter Days Kids Club which has a base at Wymondley School and am delighted that they have been able to offer places to pupils from Whitehill and Highbury. I was impressed with the provision they described and their robust procedures and I am looking forward to visiting shortly.

If you need provision for your children after school, details of Brighter Days is now on our school website.

Sports Teams

As we get into the term, the many clubs and extra-curricular activities we are lucky enough to have at Whitehill will get underway. From these, there will be many fixtures and opportunities to represent the school. All my staff do an amazing job juggling teaching with coaching and then running fixtures. I am sure you realise it is not possible to put every child who attends a club, in every representative team. The teachers will pick the team they feel will do the best job on each occasion and I trust them with this. I would ask that you also respect their decisions and encourage your children to keep practising hard and more importantly keep enjoying the opportunities as they arise.

Signing In / Out

Those of you who have been in school over the last two days will have noticed a lovely new shiny 'signing in device' by our reception. We have done away with both the visitors' signing in book and also the pupil arriving late / leaving early book. All of this will now be done on this easy-to-use system.

Mrs Cook, Mrs Lanni and I will be on hand to help you during these initial few weeks but I can assure you it is straight forward. Should you need to sign in or sign out your child for any reason, you simply click on the 'Pupils' icon and you will then be able to search for your child who is listed alphabetically using first names. By clicking on your child's name, you are then given the option to sign in or out.

We will also use this system for visitors to the school with the system logging details and printing a photo ID for each person. It is a far safer and more efficient system especially in the event of an evacuation, for example.

Twitter

We have a very active twitter account as the majority of you know. At the start of each year we tend to get lots of new follower requests from our new to Whitehill families. Because we lock our account to keep it safe, we have to approve you when you apply to follow. We can do this easily when you have provided us with details of your twitter names via the information booklet you complete, or where your name and picture are clear. There are still some, however, which are pending as we haven't been able to verify your details. If you are still waiting for your request to be approved, please would you contact the office so we can confirm who you are and get you access to our daily tweets.

Consultations

I have mentioned on several occasions now my desire to hold two separate parent consultations on issues affecting aspects of the curriculum at Whitehill. Whilst I haven't booked specific dates yet, please keep an eye out for details if you would like to be involved. The two areas are going to be the new statutory Relationships and Sex Education syllabus and also the format of our school reports. I look forward to working with some of you on these projects.

Parent Governor Vacancy

You will have received recently a letter informing you of a vacancy we currently have for a parent governor. The deadline for nominations is Monday 23rd September. If you are considering this post and would like to have a chat, please feel free to make an appointment or catch me on the playground. Our governing body do a wonderful job in supporting me and the school and this opportunity would give you a new insight into life at Whitehill.

Extra-Curricular Activities

We have finalised the extra-curricular opportunities which will be running this term and an overview is being sent out with this letter. I am extremely grateful to all my staff who run one of the many clubs available and provide such rich experiences for our pupils. Pupils will be given all the necessary information they need should they sign up for any of these and should the club take place after school, a permission letter will be sent home.

And finally...

Can I say a huge congratulations to the Year 6 pupils who have been awarded an ambassadorial role in school at the end of last week? Whether they are our new Head Boy and Girl, a House or Sports Captain or one of the Ambassadors, they all did very well indeed with their speeches, interviews or letters. The final decision was very difficult indeed. We have an excellent team once again.

As always, should you have any questions or comments, please feel free to chat with me when I am on the playground each morning.

Best wishes,

Steve Mills

Mr Steve Mills
Headteacher