

# WINDERMERE PRIMARY SCHOOL



Newsletter 13

22nd May 2017

## Diamond Anniversary

Plans for the diamond anniversary celebration and library opening are well underway. Hopefully the weather will be fine and we will be able to have our picnic lunch on the KS1 playground. All of the classes will have an opportunity to rock 'n' roll with JiveSwing and we are looking forward to see a school full of slicked back hair and polka dot skirts - not necessarily together!



We have already dusted down some of the old photographs, laughed at the hair styles and been amazed by the changes that the school building has undergone over the past 60 years. Some past pupils have already been in touch, but please pass the word around as we know that there are grans and granddads, mums and dads, aunts and uncles out there, who came to Windermere many years ago. We would like them to join in our celebrations, but ask that they let the office know so that we are able to cater for them.

### Donate a Book or Book Token

As mentioned previously, we are asking parents and visitors to donate either a book for the new library or a book token to mark the occasion. We have already received some fantastic donations towards the library from parents and governors. Every donated book (or book purchased using a donated gift token) will carry a label inside with the donor's name, so children in future years can see who has given them an opportunity to enter the magical world of reading.

Some of your children will be aware that we are part of KPMG's reading partners scheme. Every week two ladies, who have been trained by KPMG as part of this initiative, generously give up their Tuesday mornings to listen to some of our children read. They are able to give each child a really valuable opportunity to share the joy of reading. As a result of this link, KPMG have very kindly donated £500 towards our new library.

### Anniversary Keepsake

To mark the occasion we have some very special anniversary badges to give the children and staff. I hope that these will become treasured mementos, which will be dug out of jewellery and trinket boxes in another 60 years' time.



### ...NEWSFLASH...

We still have one more training day to fit into our school calendar for this year. We had hoped to arrange special training for staff from an outside provider, but this has not been possible. Therefore we will be holding our final inset day on Friday 21st July. This means that the last day for children will be on THURSDAY 20th JULY. The Sports Assembly will now be held on Wednesday 19th July and the certificate assembly on 20th July.

## Parents Forum

On Friday we held one of our Parents' Forum sessions. These are organised by the governors so that parents have an opportunity to influence decisions and policies in the school.

The topic was 'How can we help you to help your children?' We are not arrogant enough to believe that we are the only people educating your children. Indeed, parents are always a child's first teacher - teaching them how to walk, talk, eat, play etc.

However, the school curriculum has changed over the past few years and sometimes bears little resemblance to the curriculum you may have experienced. As a result, many adults feel anxious about helping with homework in case they contradict the class teacher and others would like to understand what their children are learning.

We have previously run curriculum information evenings and it was clear that a variation of these would be welcome in the autumn. There were also requests for open mornings/afternoons and some helpful reference material on grammar and maths.

Using social media and email to share topics and learning objectives was also considered, so look out for us trialling some new ideas.



## Spuds

The annual potato growing competition is underway! The seed potatoes have been planted into our potato bags, covered with compost and watered. Miss Baldwin seems to have some hidden potato growing knowledge, so it could be that this year Miss Clark's class has some competition to grow the most potatoes.

### Learning Outside of the Classroom

Over the Easter holidays we weeded the garden and did a lot of tidying up around the school. Year 3's classroom has resembled a greenhouse in one corner, but hopefully the danger of frost has now passed, so they have been planting the school garden with beans and other vegetables and fruit.

In the autumn term we will be taking our planting a step further.

We are due to receive a consignment of trees (free from the Woodland Trust) for planting around the school grounds. We will definitely be looking for some willing volunteers to help out planting them. Needless to say these are saplings, not fully grown trees, but they still require fair sized holes for planting.

The Woodland Trust are keen for children to be involved in environmental projects and learning outside the classroom. They have invited us to plant trees at Heartswood in November and this together with some other tree related activities will collect points for our Green Tree Schools Award. We are fortunate to have beautiful grounds and to be located near to many other areas of natural beauty, so it is essential that our children get opportunities to learn how to look after this heritage.





## BMX Madness

Mike Mullen, UK Halfpipe Pro Champion and former World Master Halfpipe Champion, came to see us last Thursday. Although he did show us some BMX tricks, that wasn't his purpose in coming to visit us.

We have been successful in being selected for a pilot programme with the Youth Sports Trust, called **Hertfordshire Developing Well**. The aim is to develop pupils' emotional and mental wellbeing through workshops and assemblies with successful sportsmen and women.

Mike spoke to the whole school in assembly to explain how he learnt to develop resilience and cope with setbacks in his career. He then ran a workshop with selected pupils to encourage them to have faith in themselves and to develop a growth mindset.

Mike will be returning to us for more workshops later in the year.

---

## Staffing

As the school year comes to a close, we will be making some staff changes this year, both in terms of some staff moving on to pastures new and some staff moving year groups.

### Deputy Headteacher

I have been very ably supported by Miss Clark and Mrs Thomas this year, who have both taken on the role of Assistant Headteacher whilst we recruited a Deputy Headteacher to replace Mr Harries. They have seized the opportunity with both hands and ensured that the leadership of the school has continued smoothly.

As you will have heard in the press, recruiting teachers is a challenge, so I was thrilled that we had such an incredible response to our job advert back in January, both in terms of quality and quantity of applications.

As a result we have been able to appoint a Deputy Headteacher, who already has leadership experience at a large school in Hertfordshire. **Miss Bentley** will be joining us in September and I am looking forward to welcoming her to our school. There will be an opportunity to meet her on 13th July, which is our transition day.

### Pastures New

Windermere is a friendly and welcoming school, so as a result many of our staff have been here for quite a number of years. However, being a small school, career progression is limited and sometimes teachers need to move schools to gain experience and promotion elsewhere. So this year we will say good-bye to **Mrs Martindale**, who, after 13 years as a class teacher here, is taking on the post of Pre-Prep Leader at an independent school in Hemel Hempstead.

We wish her well and know that we will miss her soft Irish accent, quiet, but firm manner and her unparalleled tea-making skills. Mrs Martindale took on the challenge of Reception after teaching Year 6 - quite a leap, but she quickly established routines and implemented new practices that will continue after she leaves.

**Mrs Thomas** will also be leaving us this summer to take up a new role at a two-form entry primary school in the centre of St Albans. She has been at the school 9 years, which seems a short time by comparison, but is actually a lengthy time in teaching. For a long time the Reception teacher, Mrs Thomas took a leap of faith and moved into KS2 - Year 6 no less! - four years ago. Armed with this experience and that of Assistant Head this year, she is now keen to share her expertise elsewhere.

As the Literacy subject leader, Mrs Thomas has been a key player in implementing *Talk for Writing*, which we use to teach writing and that has helped us to improve our standards of writing over the past couple of years. She will be much missed, but we wish her well in her new school.

Also off to pastures new after 9 years, is **Mrs Wiggins**, who provides PPA cover in Year 4 and Year 5. However, she is not off to another school, but will be working with children in a different capacity, with the added benefit of being able to enjoy term time holidays. We are, of course, deeply envious and she will be greatly missed, not least by the netball team, who have achieved wonders in recent years, under her tutelage.

-/cont.

## Family Fun

**Mrs Gilmartin** has been at the school for more than 12 years. She has worked in every year group as well as running after school clubs and the breakfast club. However, she was recently offered a new role which she really could not turn down - a chance to look after her young grandson! We will very much miss her here, particularly her fantastic displays, but she and little Noah will continue to be regular visitors for us, so we will be keeping in touch with her.

## New(ish) Faces

Obviously to fill the vacancies we have needed to recruit new staff. **Miss Baldwin** has been with us for the year on a fixed term contract, whilst we recruited a Deputy Headteacher. I am delighted to tell you that she has now accepted a permanent contract with us and will be able to continue all the fantastic work that she has already done in PE. We will also be joined by **Miss Fisher**, who is an ex-pupil of the school. Details of class allocations will be shared after half term.

## Surprise Success

With winter sports finishing, it was time to dust down the kwikcricket equipment. A fixture had been arranged at St Albans High School, but I have to confess with only two practice sessions beforehand, expectations were not high for our girls. However, they did us proud and managed to beat the hosts. Well done to our cricketers!

### ...Breaking News...Breaking News...Breaking News...Breaking News...

Our netball team played an end of season friendly against Camp School, winning 15-0. What a fantastic result to finish the season and to say farewell to Mrs Wiggins.

## Forthcoming Events ...

- 23rd May - Reception 2017 Parents' coffee morning
- 29th May - 2nd June - Half term
- 6th June - 50's Day - Diamond Anniversary
- 8th June - Class photographs
- 12th June - Year 1 Phonics Screening
- 16th June - Year 3 & 6 Afternoon Tea
- 19th June - Year 1 & 2 Afternoon Tea
- 20th & 21st June - Year 4 Residential trip to Phasels Wood
- 21st June - Year R visit to Paradise Wildlife Park
- 23rd June - Year 4 & 5 Afternoon Tea
- 26th - 30th June - Year 5 & 6 Residential trip to Newland Park
- 29th June - Year R Afternoon Tea Party
- 30th June - Year 2 visit to Childwickbury Arts Fair
- 6th & 11th July - Parent Consultations
- 4th July - Sports Day
- 6th July - Duathlon
- 8th July - Summer Fair
- 10th July - Year 1 visit to Southend
- 13th July - Transition Day
- 17th & 18th July - End of Year Performances
- 19th July - Sports Assembly
- 20th July - Certificate Assembly
- 20th July - End of Term - **School finishes at 2pm**

## Contact Us

**Windermere Primary School**  
Windermere Avenue  
St Albans  
AL1 5QP

Tel: 01727 853360  
Fax: 01727 855878

Email:  
admin@windermere.herts.sch.uk

Website:  
www.windermere.herts.sch.uk

Twitter:  
@WindermerePS



## Ready, steady, ... stop - no kit!

We are still finding that children are missing their PE lessons because they have left their PE kit at home. Please help your child to ensure it is in school every day.



## Active Kids - FINAL CALL (almost)

Time to dig deep in your handbags and pockets - let's find those final lingering vouchers and bring them into school before the end of June.