



West Hill Primary School
(a partner in the SMILE Learning Trust)
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Headteacher: Cheryl Boulton



Thursday 4th April

Dear Parents and Carers,

Ref: March update

As we come to the end of this half term, we would like to take this opportunity to update you on the work of the Interim Executive Board (IEB) and key developments within the school.

The IEB has been working diligently to review and strengthen several key school policies, including the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy, and Supporting students with medical conditions and the administration of medicines policy. We have also conducted both a Parent and Carer Survey and a Staff Survey to gather valuable feedback and insights from the school community.

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to those who took the time to complete the parental survey. The results have been carefully analysed and have provided us with important insights into how parents and carers feel about the school and its leadership. We particularly appreciate the detailed feedback that many of you shared alongside your survey responses, as this helps us shape our ongoing work.

Since the February half term, and during the ongoing absence of Mrs. Boulton, the IEB has been actively supporting our Executive Headteacher, Penny Hammett, and the dedicated staff at West Hill Primary School. Our priority remains to ensure that the children continue to receive high-quality education and support in a stable and nurturing environment.

In addition to overseeing the implementation of the revised policies, the IEB has carried out several essential audits, including those related to safeguarding, health and safety, and data protection. These reviews have been invaluable in providing the IEB with a comprehensive understanding of the school's operations and ensuring that best practices are upheld.

We were delighted to welcome Mark Walker, our new Primary Advisor, to school to work alongside staff. He is currently a new member of the School Effectiveness Team for Devon County Council. Mark had a full school tour, meeting and discussing with our pupils and staff. He has begun to understand our strengths and is working with our team to make improvements and to continue to raise standards across the school.

We have also carried out a fire drill, ensuring that our emergency procedures remain effective, and that pupils and staff are well-prepared. Additionally, on our staff training day on Friday, 4th April, we will be carrying out further professional development activities to focus on health and safety, and safeguarding at West Hill Primary School.

The children have had some amazing experiences this half term too. Highlights include the Space Dome Planetarium visit on 14th March for the whole school, a trip to the Royal Albert Memorial Museum for Year 3, the PGL residential trip for Year 6, a Year 2 animation workshop, and the Easter Experience at



church for Years 3-6. These enriching opportunities have provided valuable learning experiences and memorable moments for our pupils.

The IEB is very grateful for the support provided by the PTFA in funding these extra special events. The children were enthralled with Korky Paul the author/illustrator on his recent visit to school.

Looking ahead to next term, we have some key events taking place. Pupils will be undertaking important assessments, including the Key Stage 2 SATs tests, the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check, and the Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check. These assessments play an important role in monitoring pupil progress and identifying areas for further development.

The IEB will continue to meet frequently, and their focus remains on the strategic direction of the school, Monitoring and reviewing school improvement and ensuring safeguarding and statutory compliance is upheld.

The Interim Executive Board would like to take this opportunity to extend their heartfelt thanks to the entire West Hill staff team, led by Mr. Pantling, for their unwavering dedication and positivity throughout this term. Despite the challenges that come with any academic year, their continued commitment to the pupils and the school's vision has not gone unnoticed. Their hard work, resilience, and teamwork are truly appreciated, and we are grateful.

At present, we are unable to provide a definitive update regarding Mrs. Boulton's return. However, we want to reassure you that the school continues to be effectively led by Penny Hammett, with the full support of the IEB and the Governing Board of the Fort Federation. While this is a temporary arrangement, we are extremely grateful to Penny and her team for their leadership and commitment during this period.

We acknowledge that Mrs. Boulton's absence has created some uncertainty for staff, parents, and children alike. Please rest assured that the IEB remains focused on ensuring that all children at West Hill Primary School receive the best possible education. We also recognize the importance of stability for the school community, and while we are unable to provide a timeline for when greater certainty will be available, we will continue to keep you informed with regular updates.

In the meantime, we wish you all a happy and peaceful Easter break. Thank you for your ongoing support and engagement.

Best regards,

Iain Grafton

Iain Grafton
Chair of the Interim Executive Board
On behalf of the Interim Executive Board

Penny Hammett

Penny Hammett
Executive Headteacher