



*All Individuals Matter*

# Winchelsea News

## January Newsletter

Happy New Year! I hope you all had a fantastic Christmas with friends and family and have enjoyed the festive break. We are looking forward to building on our successes in 2024 and already have many plans in place for the year ahead.

### **Christmas fundraising**



I hope you all enjoyed joining us for the Christmas plays. It was lovely to see so many happy, smiling faces – both on and off the stage! We are extremely grateful to all who supported our Christmas raffle – either buying tickets or providing some great prizes. We had wonderful support from local businesses and parents who donated some wonderful items ranging from vouchers to be used in our neighbourhood shops to items of confectionery and pamper products to make some beautiful hampers. As a result, we raised £412.05 which will be used in school to help subsidise the ever-growing cost of class trips which we know the children love and which we value as a part of our excellent curriculum provision. Thank you to FOWS for organising the raffle and for giving up your time to talk to local businesses and to sell raffle tickets at our performances.

### **Change of direction**

It is not easy for me to write this next section of the newsletter, but I have recently informed the governors of my decision to resign from my post as Headteacher at the end of this current academic year with my last day of employment being August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024. This has not been an easy decision as I have loved my time at Winchelsea Primary school and am inordinately proud of the developments and progress the school has made over my 15+ years as its Head. I have loved the team spirit of the staff, valued the support of the governing body, enjoyed building strong relationships with parents and the wider community and, above all, been thrilled every day by my contact with the children who never fail to remind me why I have loved being a teacher and ultimately a Headteacher. Winchelsea has changed so much since I took up the mantle of leading it and times have not always been easy, certainly at the beginning when the school was not financially in a good position and staff were faced with redundancies. Since then, we have gone from strength to strength, secured a strong reputation in the locality, become a school of choice beyond our immediate village and been over-subscribed for consecutive years showing our well-deserved popularity. I have weathered three OFSTED inspections - the last two being as close to an outstanding judgement as is possible. The school has not only developed its teaching and learning provision in exciting and creative ways but there has been extensive development of the building itself and grounds. The Smartpod and sensory garden have been the most recent projects to create great opportunities for the coming future for our pupils. I am not leaving Winchelsea with the intention of pursuing Headship anywhere else – for me it has only ever been about Winchelsea and many have said I am like a stick of rock – Winchelsea is written all the way through me! However, I do now feel it is time for me to explore other avenues. I am proud of the achievements of Winchelsea and pleased to leave it as a legacy for a new Headteacher to build upon. I have informed governors at this point in the year to ensure that Winchelsea has every opportunity to seek and appoint the best person possible to follow me and they will keep parents informed about the recruitment of my successor. In my remaining time at Winchelsea please be assured that my devotion and dedication to the school will not waver and I will continue to be relentless in my work and commitment to Winchelsea. I hope to be supportive in providing a smooth and effective transition to a new Headteacher for September 2024. I would like to thank parents past and present for your support for both me and the school over the years and wish Winchelsea all the best for a happy and successful future.

### **Wintry weather**

So far, we have been lucky with the weather conditions. However, occasionally heavy overnight snow or other conditions may prevent staff or children from reaching school. In these circumstances I will tweet a closure message (so make sure you are following me @Winchelsea1). In addition, we will try to get an email or text message to parents and a notice will be placed on the school gates advising parents that the school is closed. Closure is also sometimes necessary if boilers malfunction or burst pipes occur (or more recently when Ruskington suffered from flooding!) and then the school is required to close on health and safety grounds. Please be aware that school closure is only taken in exceptional circumstances and wherever possible we will maintain normal working arrangements for staff, children and parents.

### **Suitable clothing**

As the weather at this time of year can be unpredictable, children need to come to school suitably dressed. There are lots of children who do not have warm coats which are needed for playtimes and lunchtime breaks when children can become cold. Gloves, scarves and hats can also be worn. However, sweatshirts and hoodies that are not part of school uniform should not be worn as a substitute for a coat. Footwear also needs to be suitable for the weather conditions and whilst boots or wellies may be appropriate for walking to school they should not be worn in school all day so children will need to bring a change of footwear for the classroom. Similarly, trainers are not acceptable. A suitable PE kit for both indoor and outdoor sessions should be in school at all times. Please make sure that all items of clothing are clearly named as we seem to have an ever-growing pile of lost property!

### **Parking and cars on/around our school site..... REMINDER!!**

Parking has always been difficult around our school site, especially with the potential volume of cars that might access the through-road at any one given time I would again request that parents try to avoid bringing cars onto the school site. Winchelsea has always promoted walking, scooting or cycling to school by children where this can be done safely. St George's have asked me to request that parents do not park on their site or on the access road near their school as they also have concerns about congestion with buses and taxis and need to ensure the safety of their pupils too. If you must use your car, please think about parking beyond the school boundaries such as the Co-op which is only a short walk away and be mindful of residents living on the surrounding estate who sometimes tell me that their drive accesses are being compromised. By following these guidelines, we aim to ensure our site remains as safe as possible. **I have had some complaints about cars that are stationary but parents leaving their cars running while they drop off their children or wait to collect them. Please could all drivers be aware of high levels of exhaust fumes and air pollution and be mindful of others at the school gates.**

### **Sickness reminder**

The school operates under guidance regarding pupil sickness absence, which is statutory and advised by county. In order to minimise the spread of infections it is advised that children who have suffered from sickness/diarrhoea should remain off school for a minimum of 48 hours, even if they appear to be feeling a lot better. **School needs to be informed of absence every morning that your child will not be attending (unless agreed on first day of absence), even if they are suffering from the same ailment. Please call the office rather than waiting for Mrs McCann or Miss Brooks to contact you as this takes up a lot of their valuable time which can be saved if you leave a message on the answerphone system. If you would rather email please use [enquiries@winchelsea.lincs.sch.uk](mailto:enquiries@winchelsea.lincs.sch.uk).** This is part of the school's strong safeguarding systems which ensure that we can account for every child's whereabouts if they are not in school.

### **Dates to the end of this term**

January 3<sup>rd</sup>: Term starts (Please note this is Wednesday)

February 12<sup>th</sup>- 16<sup>th</sup>: Half Term

March 7<sup>th</sup>: World Book Day

March 18<sup>th</sup>: Writes photographs (classes/clubs/teams)

March 28<sup>th</sup>: Term ends (Please note this is a Thursday)

### **Future term dates for 2023/24**

April 16<sup>th</sup>: Term starts (Please note this is Tuesday)

May 6<sup>th</sup>: Bank holiday (school closed)

May 13<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup>: Year 6 SATs week

May 27<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup>: Half Term

July 19<sup>th</sup>: Term ends

### **Future term dates for 2024/25 (to assist holiday planning ahead!)**

September 4<sup>th</sup>: Term starts (Please note this is a Wednesday)

October 21<sup>st</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup>: Half Term

October 29<sup>th</sup>: School re-opens (Please note this is a Tuesday)

December 19<sup>th</sup>: Term ends (Please note this is a Thursday)

January 6<sup>th</sup>: Term starts

February 17<sup>th</sup>- 21<sup>st</sup>: Half Term

April 4<sup>th</sup>: Term ends

April 22<sup>nd</sup>: Term starts (Please note this is Tuesday)

May 5<sup>th</sup>: Bank holiday (school closed)

May 26<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup>: Half Term

July 22<sup>nd</sup>: Term ends (Please note this is a Tuesday)

### **Emails and texts from school, our website and Twitter**

We want to ensure that information can be received by parents efficiently so we use our school email system to send out letters and other correspondence. Please make sure school have your correct contact details and those of your emergency contacts. We also use a texting service to get information to you e.g. when clubs have had to be cancelled at short notice. Our school website: [www.winchelsea.lincs.sch.uk](http://www.winchelsea.lincs.sch.uk) is designed both to promote the school in the wider community and give information to parents who are selecting a school for their children, but also to provide information for you. Information sent out from school is published on our website along with school documentation and policies. If you love seeing photos of what your children are getting up to in school then please follow us on Twitter. Each teacher has a Twitter page and I am also regularly tweeting! I can be followed at **@Winchelsea1**. Once again, I hope the information in this newsletter has been helpful.