



Dear Parents,

With Parents' Evening the focus of next week's school activities, I thought it pertinent to write and reflect on how we have settled back in to the start of a new academic year. We, as a staffing body, are proud of our school. We are proud of the achievements we have made and we are proud of the plans and developments we are making or are planning to make. We know we don't always get it right but are reflective enough to embrace feedback in order to improve the offer for our children. We so very dearly want the best for all of the community and will work relentlessly to achieve this. With this in mind, I want to appeal to us all in order that communication regarding the children is constructed in an appropriate fashion.

Whilst we accept that parents will need to discuss things with us, please do try to avoid the start of the day; this is vital preparation time for morning lessons. If communication, beyond that of a passed-on message, is required, please email or call the office to arrange a suitable appointment time. Similarly, unless there is a safeguarding concern (in which case, email/call the office to speak to the safeguarding lead), please raise issues with class teachers in the first instance before meeting with phase leaders and then myself, as headteacher.

In addition to this, please do remember that we, too, want the very best for each pupil and so want to work closely and successfully with you. Although rarely an issue at West Monkton, a reminder that aggressive or threatening behaviour cannot and will not be tolerated. With a clutch of new teachers at the school, we are determined to make West Monkton a beacon of excellent practice and look forward to encouraging all of our school family to play their part in making this happen...

All the very best

James Blackmore

Headteacher

Important Information

Shoe Box Appeal – We shall be launching our very popular Operation Shoe Box this week. Leaflets and shoe boxes are available from Reception.

Bishop Peter's Visit

The bishop is visiting the school on Tuesday. It's a great opportunity to meet our pupils and see the school. He will also be planting a tree!

Parent Board

We were delighted to have a great turn out at our first Parent Board meeting of this academic year. We have now got parent representatives for most year groups who are happy to attend meetings and represent ideas and feelings from their cohort of parents.

Our representatives are: **Nursery: Tammy H, Kelly D** (Amelia)

Yr R: Louise H (Toby), **Ntideka B-F** (Angela), **Lucy P** (William),

Svetlana B (Maxim)

Yr 1: Amanda Q (Ezra), **Kate V I** (Maya)

Yr 2: Lucy P (Rosie), **Svetlana B** (Milana), **Kelly D** (Jake), **Louisa H** (Bella), **Lisa S** (Ava)

Yr 4: Tammy H (Efrem), **Kelly D** (Isabelle), **Michelle W** (Marney)

Yr 5: Julien K (Eliana), **Michelle W** (Danny)

If anyone is interested in being a representative for Yr 3 or 6 please see Mrs Lawrence, next meeting is on 20th November at 2.30pm.

Polite Request

All bikes and scooters must be dismantled before entering the school grounds in the morning. At home time please walk with your bike/scooter until you are outside the school gates. Thank you.

Junk Modelling - Next half term, year 4 will be taking part in some junk modelling to start their new topic. Any donations of the following would be greatly appreciated & can be dropped off at Kite or Crane classrooms:

Cardboard boxes, tubes, plastic containers i.e. yoghurt pots, buttons, tin foil, milk carton lids, bottle lids, plastic bottles etc.

Pound and Part Day – New Date Monday 4th November

We will be holding a non-school uniform day on Monday 4th November. This is to support and add much needed resource for the play shed as part of the OPAL project. We are asking children to bring a £1 and a part for the play shed. Collection barrels will be at the gates for all parts, hand your pound to the class teacher.

Required items... kitchen utensils, pots and pans, buckets, guttering, plastic boxes, outdoor paint, fairy doors, plastic figures and animals, chalk boards, vehicles, lengths of wood, any other loose parts you think a child could bring to life with some imagination. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

School Photos – School Photos will be taken on Tuesday 5th November.

Family Learning

Workshops so far....

Thank you to all YrR and Yr1 parents who attended bread-making sessions and 'the truth about food' talks! Everyone enjoyed learning how to make bread and the talk gave everyone 'food for thought' about our modern diets. **Coming soon.....**

Literacy Boost Course for Year 1 – 15th and 22nd October and 5th and 12th November.

Phonics Workshop for EYFS parents – 24th October

Maths Workshops – date in November TBC

Thank you - A big thank you for the massive clothes collection for our Harvest Collection.

What's happening this fortnight?

Monday 14 th October	Dance – a-thon for NSPCC
Tuesday 15 th October	Bishop Peter
Tuesday 15 th October	Parents Evening

Wednesday 16 th October	Parents Evening
Wednesday 23 rd – Friday 25 th October	Kilve Residential Trip
Wednesday 23 rd October	Year 5 Exhibition

Headteacher: Mr James Blackmore

Chair of Governors: Mr Paul Spencer

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West Monkton C.E. Primary School Newsletter

Where everyone has the courage and confidence to fly.

Safeguarding- As you know it's been 'Mental Health Awareness Day' this week and with this in mind, I would like to use the newsletters over the next few weeks as an opportunity to share advice on some of the more common experiences we see with children and their mental health. This week I have chosen to focus on anxiety...

All children and young people get anxious at times, and this is a normal part of their development as they grow up and develop their 'survival skills', so they can face challenges in the wider world. We all have different levels of stress we can cope with - some people are just naturally more anxious than others, and are quicker to get stressed or worried. There are many ways you can help your child to manage their anxiety. If you feel your child's anxiety is not getting any better or is getting worse, and your efforts have not worked, contact your GP to get professional support.

These are things that can really make a difference:

1. Talk to your child about anxiety, what is happening in their body and why it happens. Many children and young people don't know what they are feeling when they are anxious, and it can be very frightening and overwhelming. They might even think they are very ill or that they are having a heart attack.
2. Help them to recognise anxious feelings so they can tell when they are becoming anxious and can ask for help.
3. Tell your child it will be okay, and the anxiety will pass. It can be helpful to describe the anxiety as a wave to ride or surf that gets smaller after it peaks.
4. Get your child to [breathe deeply and slowly](#), in through their nose for three counts and out through their mouth for three counts.
5. Distract them by focusing on something else.
6. Give them a cuddle or hold their hand if they will let you - touch can be soothing.
7. It can help to talk to your child about finding a safe place in their mind - somewhere that they feel relaxed and happy. It may be a grandparent's or friend's house or a holiday beside the sea which they can picture when 'wrong thoughts' come into their head or they are feeling anxious. Sometimes holding a memento, like a seashell or pebble, can help.
8. If your child is feeling the need to check things or repeat certain actions, suggest they count up to 10 before they start checking as a delaying tactic.
9. Encourage your child to notice what makes them anxious. Talking it through can help but your child could also try keeping a diary or a 'worry book'.
10. Make a 'worry box'. Your child can write each worry down and post it in the box out of sight. Small children will enjoy decorating the box too. They can leave the worries in there for, say, a week to see if they were worth worrying about (if not they can be torn up). Alternatively, you could designate a specific 'worry time' for around 10 or 20 minutes, (but not too close to bedtime, or when the child is in bed), so worries can be saved up for that time. This gives the message that we are in control of their worries and not vice versa.
11. Work on positive-thinking. Name their worst case scenarios and think through together how to sort out the situation if it happens, e.g. 'I'm worried that we'll miss the bus.' 'What do you think we could do if that happens?' 'We could get the next bus'.
12. Help them maintain a healthy lifestyle with regular exercise to reduce the levels of stress hormones, good sleeping habits, calm bedtime routines, limited screen or computer time in the evening, and a healthy diet.

Where can I get help?

[Young Minds Parents Helpline](#) - Call us for free 0808 802 5544 (Mon-Fri 9:30 - 16:00).

[No Panic](#)

- Support for people struggling with panic attacks, OCD, phobias, and other related anxiety disorders.
- Also provides support for carers of sufferers.
- Helpline: 0844 967 4848 (Daily 10:00–22:00). Charges apply.
- Youth Helpline for 13-20 year olds: 0330 606 1174 (Mon-Fri 15:00–18:00). Charges apply.
- Having a panic attack? Crisis Number with recording of a breathing technique: 01952 680835 (24 hours)

[OCD Action](#)

- The national charity that provides support and information to anybody affected by OCD.
- Helpline: 0845 390 6232 (Mon - Fri 09:30-17:00). Email: support@ocdaction.org.uk

[Triumph over Phobia](#) (TOP UK) - The OCD and Phobia Charity runs a network of self-help therapy groups.

[Anxiety UK](#)

- Anxiety UK is a national charity with local services all over the UK. The website includes [resources for parents](#) concerned about their child's anxiety.

[Royal College of Psychiatrists](#)

- Anxiety Factsheet: [Worries and Anxieties, Helping Children to Cope: Information for Parents](#)

Louisa Blackmore - Pastoral Coordinator (Safeguarding Lead)