



Dear Parents,

As I write this, I am reflecting on what has been the most tiring and exhausting of half terms. Looking back, I am so very pleased with the arrangements that we have managed to put into place that allowed us to be as COVID secure as possible. The expectation of the government is that we do this as well as offer a full curriculum offer. Whilst there are areas of school life (Collective Worship, singing etc.) that are still not allowed, I am pleased with what we have been able to accomplish. We continue to be driven by our values and this underpins our curriculum work; we engaged in a Recovery Curriculum, assessed the children's knowledge and understanding following school closure and now are using this information to teach high quality lessons and run interventions for those who may need it. West Monkton School is certainly somewhere near pre-COVID. The staff are now ready for a break but have enjoyed being back together with the children.

The second half of the Autumn Term is always busy - we are already adapting Christmas plans to meet the guidance so expect to hear more when we come back. It won't be what we are used to in school but we are determined to make it just as special as Christmas past... I know I say this at the end of every letter but we are very appreciative of your ongoing support. We know it has been a trying start to the year for all of the community but our attendance is high and the children are slowly settling back to school life. We rely on your support and thank you for everything you have done.

Wishing you all the very best...

*James Blackmore*

Headteacher

**Harvest Festival** - A huge thank you to all the families who showed their generosity by giving to our Harvest collection for Taunton Open Door. Taunton Open Door were hugely grateful for the donations and have said what a difference it will make to those in need.

**End of an Era...** Sadly, today marks the end of an era for two of our most loyal and long-standing members of the After-School Club. Both Sarah and Judith Taylor (combined service) have been part of the team for decades! Therefore, we are sure you will agree, they deserve a break...and despite the fact we will miss them greatly, have chosen to step down and enjoy a different balance of school-life. We would like to take this opportunity to thank them both for their commitment to the club and to wish them all the very best! The good news is: they're still very much part of the school, fulfilling their roles as Lunchtime Supervisor and Teaching Assistant.



**PTA AGM** -The PTA AGM will be held, via zoom, on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> November. If you would like to attend, please register your interest at [westmonktonpta@outlook.com](mailto:westmonktonpta@outlook.com).

**Parents' Consultations** - Following the Covid guidance for schools, we are unable to host face-to-face parent consultations in school this term. Your child's Autumn report will be sent via class dojo on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> November. Please see the Parent Mail sent on 16<sup>th</sup> October for full details.

**Class Allotment Design** - The whole school took part in a homework activity to research, design and plan their own new class allotments this week. Mr Benbow was completely bowled over by the enthusiasm that this task generated, as well as the creativity and detail that children across the school showed in their amazing efforts. Well done to everyone, and we are all looking forward to seeing your plans put into action as the year progresses.



**Staggered Times for after Half Term**

- Reception - Reception gate (8.45am-2.45pm)**
- Y1 - KS1 gate (9.00am-3.00pm)**
- Y2 - KS1 gate (9.15am-3.15pm)**
- Y3 - KS1 gate (8.45am-3.00pm)**
- Y4 - KS2 gate (9.00am-3.15pm)**
- Y5 - KS2 gate (9.00am-3.15pm)**
- Y6 - KS2 gate (8.45am-3.00pm)**

**What's coming up ...?**

Monday 26 <sup>th</sup> October	Half Term Begins
Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> November	Inset Day
Tuesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> November	Return to School After Half Term

Thursday 5 <sup>th</sup> November	Pupil Reports via Dojo
Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> November	Children in Need Day 🧡
Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup> November	PTA AGM via Zoom

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.

## Family Learning

Thank you to all the Year 1 and 2 parents who joined our first Zoom Phonics Workshops this half term. We all embraced the new method of learning together! We all look forward to a time when we can welcome adults into school to learn along with their children ... but for now virtual experiences with resource packs to go home are a good alternative. Watch this space for a virtual EYFS phonics workshop and Yr3/4 Reading Workshop.

## Other Family Learning Opportunities run by SS&L

SS&L are running three fun, online workshops to bring children and their parents/ carers together this half term!

## Flipping Good Fun - Draw with

Flipaclip: <https://www.sslcourses.co.uk/courses/course/flipping-good-fun-draw-with-flipaclip/>

## Movie Making-

<https://www.sslcourses.co.uk/courses/course/movie-making/>

## Star in your own cartoon-

<https://www.sslcourses.co.uk/courses/course/star-in-your-own-cartoon/>

\*These workshops are free to anybody aged over 19, who lives in Somerset or BANES, and has lived in the UK for the last three years.

Lucy Lawrence

Year 1 Teacher and Family Learning Coordinator



## School Council

The school council have been working very hard to come up with COVID-friendly ideas that the whole school can get involved in to raise money for the very special causes that Children In Need support. After, a very democratic vote, the council have voted to raise money this year by doing a whole-school Joe Wickes-a-thon! Throughout the day, there will not be a moment where no one is doing a Joe Wickes style work out! Each class will continue this activity in a Mexican wave style from class to class throughout the day. Details of the JustGiving page will be sent out shortly, so watch this space! 😊

Mrs Barker

## Piano Lessons at West Monkton School Autumn Term

After a long break, piano lessons have got off to a fantastic start this term. All pupils are working hard and receiving lots of excellent parental practice support which has enabled pupils to make progress good this term.

I am looking forward the remainder of this term's lessons.

I do have a limited number of spaces left on this term's timetable for piano and singing lessons, if you wish your daughter or son to start please ask the school office for an enrolment form.

Stephen Holman

## Pastoral and Safeguarding

Hello again! Firstly, I want to thank all of our parent community for continuing to support our school, and more importantly, helping keep your children safe. As we go into half term and the potential of more restrictions put upon us, we appreciate the value online platforms, social media and other devices can offer. There are many positives to be gained from these, however, as always, I would like to share some resources with you to ensure the experiences remain positive ones:

1. <https://www.internetmatters.org> - Helping parents keep their children safe online
2. <https://www.bt.com/skillsfortomorrow/home-life/childrens-screen-time> - Helping parents manage screen time, getting the balance right...
3. And I'm sure many of you might want to indulge in a movie or box set over the break -

## Netflix Parental Controls

Many families use Netflix as one of their main sources of viewing, with adults and children enjoying the choices available and being able to watch what you want, when you want.

For parents and carers, it is vital to supervise what our children are watching and use the settings available to reduce the risk of them coming across inappropriate or upsetting content.

Netflix has it's own guide to using Parental Controls at: <https://help.netflix.com/en/node/264>

## Children's Screen Time - Home Life - Skills for Tomorrow | BT

Find out more about the impact of screen time on children and get practical tips to make it work for you and your family. [www.bt.com](http://www.bt.com)

Many thanks for your continued support!

Helen Newstead DHT and DSL

## Applications to West Monkton Primary & Heathfield Community School

If your child is due to start or transfer school for September 2021, it is now time to make your application. The deadline for primary phase applications is **15<sup>th</sup> January**. The deadline for secondary phase applications is **31<sup>st</sup> October**. Please apply online by visiting:

<https://www.somerset.gov.uk/education-and-families/>

## Parking at School

Parking on site is available for blue badge holders only. Please display your blue badge on your dashboard to enable the Premises Manager to identify those able to use our disabled parking bays. We have very limited car parking spaces at West Monkton and we are seeing cars parking in the disabled bays of our car park. We really do rely on these spaces being used for our most vulnerable children and so ask all of our community to avoid unnecessary use of these designated spaces. Thank you.

**Please remember West Monkton is a NUT FREE school. We ask our families to support us in this, and not send children to school with any products containing nuts.**