



### **Dear parents and carers,**

Welcome back to another school year, and a special welcome to all pupils and families who are joining Wessex for the first time. We hope you enjoy being part of the Wessex family and that your children have had a successful and happy start over the past two days.

We hope you all had a great break and that your children are feeling refreshed and ready to learn. The school looked clean, fresh and ready to welcome everyone back earlier this week. From visiting classrooms over the past two days, it's clear that children are pleased to be back and are already working hard to impress their new teachers.

### **The Wessex Way and Our Motto**

In our assembly yesterday, we revisited our school values, behaviour expectations and character curriculum - all key parts of our *Wessex Way*. What we haven't considered for a while though, is our school motto: *Inspiring excellence; everyone, every day*.

We explored the difference between aiming high and striving for excellence and the children were challenged to use the language of excellence in their learning. Do ask your children what they think excellence looks like at school - and perhaps use this as a discussion started for what excellence at home looks like too!

### **Reception Starters**

We also welcomed our new Reception pupils this week for their first few days at school. Congratulations to all of them for such a confident and assured start to school life. Mrs Corbett, Mrs Eves and the EYFS team have been very impressed with how smoothly the children have settled in and begun their journey with us.

### **Staffing News**

We have some exciting news to share - huge congratulations to Mrs Denning and her husband, Jon, as they are expecting a baby after Christmas! We're already working hard to ensure that Mrs Denning's role in the school is covered during her maternity leave. Planning is underway and once arrangements are confirmed, we'll share them with you ensuring a smooth and sufficient handover.

### **Young Voices Is Calling Again!**

For the past two years, our Young Voices choir, led by Mrs Eves, has taken part in this incredible spectacle at the O2 Arena. Please see the attached letter for more information. In short, if your child loves singing and wants to perform alongside thousands of other enthusiastic children with a live band of professional musicians, then sign up now! Year 3 pupils upwards please.

### **Meet the Teacher Sessions**

Meet the Teacher sessions take place next week so families can meet staff and hear about the curriculum, expectations, homework and how to support learning at home. These will take place next Wednesday at both 3:30pm and 4:00pm, allowing families with more than one child to attend multiple sessions. These are take place in the yeargroup classrooms.

Please note these are not one-to-one meetings. If you would like to speak to your child's teacher individually, please contact the school office.

### **Uniform and PE Kit**

Thank you to everyone who has ensured their child is wearing the correct uniform at the start of this year. A reminder that our uniform policy can be found on the school website: [www.wessexprimary.org/uniform](http://www.wessexprimary.org/uniform).

Please note:

- Necklaces and chains are not permitted in school.
- Children should wear plain black shoes—some children have returned wearing shoes with coloured details, which are not part of our policy.
- After a year of transition, our new PE kit should now be worn. Children should no longer wear green hoodies for PE. PE t-shirts should be the black ones available from Goyals.

On that note, we understand that Goyals may be out of stock in some sizes. In the meantime, children may wear their old green PE t-shirt or a plain black, green or white t-shirt.

PE days were shared last term, but for ease, this information is included for your reference.

### **Attendance and Punctuality**

We are incredibly proud of how our attendance statistics have improved over the past few years. This is a testament to the commitment of families who ensure their children only miss school when absolutely necessary - thank you.

The government continues to emphasise the importance of school attendance and we fully support this. We will continue to monitor attendance closely and contact families where attendance falls below expected levels. Please remember that unauthorised absences during term time may result in a Penalty Charge Notice (fine), so holidays and trips should not be arranged during school terms.

As part of the monitoring of attendance, we also examine punctuality levels for pupils. Currently, too many children are still missing vital minutes at the start of the day.

A reminder:

- School gates open at 8:45am and children must be in their seats for registration by 8:55am
- Arriving 10-15 minutes late each day can result in over an hour of lost learning each week. Research shows that children who arrive late are more likely to fall behind academically, socially, and emotionally.

### **School Dinners**

Please remember to book school dinners on Arbor at least the day before. If meals are not booked, children may be offered a jacket potato instead of their preference.

### **Contact details or address changes**

Summer is often a time when families move house or change phone numbers. Please check your details on Arbor to ensure they are up to date. We must have at least two emergency contact numbers for each child—please add these if they are missing so we can reach someone in case of an emergency.

Wishing you all a very restful weekend before normal service resumes next week.

**Mr Beavan**