

# Wednesday Whistle

We have reached the final days of term and for the first time since March we can look forward to a break and taking the opportunity to rest, relax, spend time with our family and friends and recharge our batteries. By this I mean both our physical and emotional batteries – both have been drained through the continuous demand of the last 16 weeks.

Through your hard work, determination, resilience and ability to constantly problem solve we have successfully navigated our way through an unprecedented time of national crisis and looked after our children with care and professionalism.

Although this has been an extremely demanding time we have learnt much, some of which will be incorporated into our future patterns of working. One such area is the manner in which we use our IT systems and how we have developed a blended approach to curriculum delivery. We have also realised how we need to improve the IT connectivity between our schools such that we enhance the ease and ability for colleagues to communicate, pool resources and share work. We therefore now have a clear intent to step further forward and align our IT platform and systems to a consistent industry standard for the benefit of all.

Whilst we have many hellos in waiting for the autumn term it is time to say a few farewells. Many of these will be celebrated in schools but I'd like to take the opportunity to signpost a couple here.

It is time to say goodbye to our very dedicated, incredibly hard-working, talented Headteacher of Woodford Primary School. Phil Harvey began her teaching career 34 years ago and has spent almost 25 years of it at Woodford in various roles- Deputy Head and then acting Headteacher of the old Woodford Junior school, Assistant Head when the old Woodford Infants and Juniors amalgamated and finally Headteacher of the Woodford Primary we all

know today. To try to describe Phil's tremendous contribution to Woodford, Plym Academy Trust and eventually WeST in a short paragraph is very difficult.

Phil has always been steadfast in her dedication to the children and has always had their best interests at the core of all her thinking and decision making. She cares passionately about every child in terms of both their personal safety and wellbeing and their holistic education. She has very high standards and through her thoroughness and attention to detail ensures that all children experience quality first teaching across the curriculum. Phil became Head of Woodford at a very challenging time for the school and has successfully led the whole team to build a thriving school which she is leaving in a very strong and stable situation with a bright future ahead of it. When the Plym Academy Trust was formed, Phil played a significant part in its development and success- her collaboration with the other four head teachers enabled that MAT to thrive.

Apart from pursuing excellence in teaching, Phil is also passionate about the environment and educating the next generation about their role in caring for our planet. In 1999 Phil went to Australia on a Millennium Fellowship to survey Platypus which triggered a close connection with that country (both of her children are now Australian citizens). At home, Phil cares for a wide menagerie of animals and a natural habitat. We all wish her a lifetime of happiness, good health, relaxation holiday adventures and an exciting, fulfilling new chapter.

Holbeton Primary School says a very fond farewell to Jackie Rundle this summer along with a huge vote of thanks. Jackie became the Headteacher in 2016 at a time when the school was in experiencing a degree of uncertainty and vulnerability. Jackie's warmth, her can-do attitude and sheer determination enabled her to quickly win the confidence of the community along with staff and the children. (continued on next page)

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Since those early days, Holbeton Primary School has built a reputation for outdoor learning, making the best of the beautiful school environment, local woodland and fantastic beach! Every morning the children are met with a welcoming smile and a friendly word or two, making a positive start to everyone's day!

The school has made strides forward and we join the community in thanking Jackie for her hard work and commitment, including her appearance in the village pantomime! Jackie is now seeking a new adventure and we wish her every success in the world. Thank you Jackie – you will be missed by us all.

I extend two more farewells to Helen Tipping and Ian Cload. Both are very successful and experienced Headteachers whose service in that leadership capacity was recognised and celebrated by their respective schools. It is here though, that I thank them for their significant contribution to the work and formation of our trust.

Firstly Helen. Helen transitioned from the role of Headship at Stowford School to a system leader role in WeST at a time when school trusts were just starting to develop. This was a brave yet confident step to make. Helen was instrumental in the bid writing process for Sherford Vale School, and, when we were awarded the school she literally oversaw the school from plan, to steel frame to completion and the very first children walking through the front door for the first time. It is hard to believe that Sherford Vale School is now nearly full and operating with a seven class structure!

Helen has been instrumental in shaping how we work and designing the hub structure that we now recognise as our model of working. From a personal perspective I have enjoyed her unwavering support, her determination to succeed and her infectious sense of humour. I know that Helen will keep in touch with what we are up to and wish her well.

I am disappointed to have only worked with Ian for just under two years since he is the consummate professional who has added such value to what we do.

Ian goes about what he does in a calm and reassured fashion, sharing his knowledge in a collegiate manner. Behind his unassuming style is a steely determination to get things right for the children. Ian, quite simply, is not swayed by the latest fad but deeply rooted in effective pedagogy and leadership that helps children achieve. Ian's relatively short time with WeST has seen him invest his energies in making things better for the longer term.

I have thoroughly enjoyed working alongside Ian and will miss his support and camaraderie.

I close this year's cycle of the 'whistle' by wishing everyone a safe, restful and peaceful summer break.

Take care.

Best wishes,

Rob Haring



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## Staff Survey Update (Report attached to e-mail)

It is a pleasure to be able to close the school year by providing our WeST Staff Survey Report and Action Plan. Taking the themes identified from your responses, Executive and Senior Trust/School leaders have developed a WeST plan to address a number of the key issues. Thank you to all of those staff who participated in the survey and who have helped to shape the way forward in recent weeks and when our schools reopen in September.

## Microsoft Teams—Our New Collaborative Tool

WeST has identified Microsoft Teams as the preferred collaborative tool for use across the Trust. With a significant number of our schools already using Teams to varying degrees this will assist in ensuring our offerings are consistent, reliable and supportable across the organisation.

Our senior leaders are currently investigating how best to implement and/or enhance the use of Teams, which will include a training for staff.

More information will follow in September, but in the meantime, please feel free to look over a range of training videos which colleagues from Hele's School have shared with us. These provide a valuable insight into the capabilities of Teams and how we can best use it to support staff communications and the delivery of online learning.

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLd3cQSa4zSeZlegDPZUA-AXpgTqs-rXHD>



## Cycle to work

As part of its ongoing commitment to employee wellbeing, WeST are currently exploring the possibility of working with the provider Cyclescheme to offer Trust employees the opportunity to benefit from a Cycle to Work scheme. A Cycle to Work scheme operates as a salary sacrifice scheme and some of the benefits for employees that Cyclescheme promote include:

- Eligible employees can save between 25% and 39% on the cost of a new bike and accessories whilst spreading the costs;
- Range of brands available;
- Cyclescheme work with 2,000 retailers nationwide; 26 in the WeST local area
- Easy to use portal to manage your application;



The Trust is currently at the planning stage but if you are interested please look out for the Wednesday Whistle in September when we will be asking you to express your interest. Meanwhile further information about the scheme is available on the Cyclescheme [website](#).

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## Rainbow Room at South Dartmoor CC

Last academic year the Religious Studies department at SDCC was successful in gaining one of 3 places on the Tesco Bags of Help scheme. Their bid was advertised at various local stores and shoppers were given the chance to add their shopping tokens to promote the RS cause. The project with the largest number of tokens at the end of the given period is always awarded £4000. The RS department at SDCC won second place with their bid, and the sum of £2000 to redecorate their suite of rooms. they decided to spend the money on rainbow chairs to remind everyone of the hugely significant time through which we've all been working.



Westcountry Schools Trust

## NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the  
Westcountry Schools Trust will take  
place on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2020 at  
6.00pm

This will be a virtual meeting on  
Microsoft Teams

If you will be attending, and in order to be added to the Team, please  
email Mrs Billinghay (Clerk to the Trust) at [sbillinghay@westst.org.uk](mailto:sbillinghay@westst.org.uk)

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## NOTICE BOARD

### Vacancies

The following vacancies are currently being advertised within our organisation:

#### Ashburton Primary School

- Teaching Assistant (Maternity cover)

<https://www.ashburton-primary.devon.sch.uk/vacancies/>

#### Chaddlewood Primary School

- Teaching Assistant (3.5 hr/ week)
- FTE 0.7 Teacher

Contact [lebsworth@chaddlewoodschool.org.uk](mailto:lebsworth@chaddlewoodschool.org.uk) for further information.

#### Coombe Dean School

- Premises Manager

<https://www.westst.org.uk/news/?pid=7&nid=2&storyid=102>

#### Hele's School

- Maintenance Caretaker

<https://www.heles.plymouth.sch.uk/news/?pid=9&nid=2&storyid=166>

#### Ivybrigde Community College

- PACE Coordinator
- Examinations Administrator
- Part-time Receptionist
- Administrator (fixed term)

<https://www.ivybridge.devon.sch.uk/news/?pid=9&nid=3>

#### Wembury Primary School

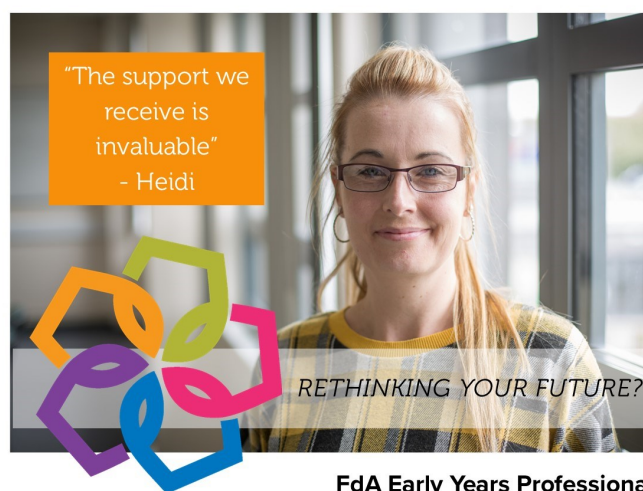
- Clerk to Governors

Contact [admin@wembury-primary.devon.sch.uk](mailto:admin@wembury-primary.devon.sch.uk) for further information.

#### Yealmpton Primary School

- Teaching Assistant (temporary)

<https://www.yealmpton-primary.co.uk/page/?title=Vacancies&pid=107>



**FdA Early Years Professional**  
**FdA Inclusive Education | FdA Learning and Education**  
**FdSc Mental Health and Wellbeing of Children and Young People**

Foundation degrees accredited by the University of Worcester.  
Weekly sessions delivered live online or in Plymouth.  
Designed to fit in alongside work and family life!

**We're still recruiting for September!** Contact us to find out more.

#### The Learning Institute



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[www.learninginstitute.co.uk](http://www.learninginstitute.co.uk)

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