

Wednesday Whistle

We are now only two days away from what would have been recognised as a traditional half term break. As we reach Friday we will have completed the first six weeks of the summer term in unprecedented fashion with the vast majority of our children engaged in 'home learning'.

The number of children attending Educare has continued to rise. Last week we saw over 1000 places occupied in Educare through the week. Our daily total is now nudging towards the 300 mark.

I am restating here that Educare will only be available on Wednesday 27th and Thursday 28th May in the 'Half Term' break. From Monday 1st June each WeST primary school will provide Educare in its own setting.

We have been working industriously to plan, consider and risk assess the wider reopening of our schools. We have produced a comprehensive WeST toolkit to guide and support our work.



As such it is our intention to open our primary schools more widely from Monday 8th June. We have established some overarching principles as to how this phased approach will work but school leaders are actively interpreting this guidance in terms of each schools own context. In the first week of wider opening each WeST primary school will continue to provide Educare but also phase in children in Year 6 and Year 1.

We continue to await the DfE's detailed guidance on secondary reopening but, in its absence, we have

begun to plan for a phased return of Year 10 students from Monday 15th June with the anticipation of Year 12 joining the week beginning Monday 22nd June.

Encouraging news is that we are led to believe that some of the laptops from the DfE scheme could shortly be on their way to some of our most disadvantaged children.

I now ask that you take the time to read all of the recent HR guidance that has recently been circulated and signposted later in this edition of the Wednesday Whistle. These documents are really important, should be supportive and will help feed into our overall risk assessment process.

I signoff by again recognising the fantastic work you are doing to support our young people and families through these most challenging of times.

Best wishes

Rob



Stronger Together...every child in a great school

Wednesday Whistle

A message for Year 8, from Team Year 8



The children of Buckfastleigh Primary School have been working creatively at home on all sorts of home learning tasks



New 3G pitches for SDCC and Callington CC



We have been lucky to experience amazing weather in recent weeks. The great weather has also meant that progress on laying a new 3G pitch at South Dartmoor CC has moved forward at a rapid rate. The 3G pitch replacement at Callington CC have also started, although more extensive work will be needed.

In the photographs you can see the new pitch at SDCC. The grass is a two tone green, giving the appearance of real grass, and is 50mm long! There is still some work to go (including laying 185 tonnes of sand!), and after this is completed an FA registration test will be taken to show that the pitch is high grade and suitable for semi-professional football and hockey games.

Both pitches will also be used by the wider communities and local sports companies can hire the pitches. This means the pitches are not only a place for our students to stay active, but also a centre that people can use to socialise through sport.



Wednesday Whistle

WeST HR Updates



WeST Guidance on Staff Availability

Please see attached a guidance note which confirms that that all staff have been asked to complete a **Staff Status Declaration Form** (available from your local office) in order that the data can be used to inform 'Reopening' Risk Assessments across each of WeST schools and business units.

Please note the requirement to complete an individual Covid-19 Staff Risk Assessment in discussion with your manager if you are in the 'clinically vulnerable' group (template also attached). Thank you in advance for your cooperation and support in completing this exercise and allowing us to plan thoroughly with you all for the next phase of educational provision.

Your opportunity to influence and shape our plans for the next phase of educational provision...



In the period Wednesday 3rd June to Wednesday 10th June we will be opening our WeST-wide **Covid-19 Staff Survey**. Details of how to access the survey will be published via the Whistle on 3rd June. We hope that as many of you as possible participate in sharing your personal insights into the impact of the pandemic on your work and wellbeing, letting us know how our Trust leaders can best support you over the coming weeks. Having this information to feed into our decision-making will be of great value.

Pension Automatic Re-enrolment

A reminder that 1st May 2020 was WeST's automatic pension re-enrolment date. Those staff who have opted out of our pensions schemes and who meet eligibility criteria have been/will shortly be contacted with confirmation of their automatic re-enrolment and provided with further information about their options. Full details can be found [here](#).

Testing for Covid-19

Tests are now available for our staff and members of their household who have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms and are self-isolating. A test will provide confirmation of whether symptoms are caused by the virus and will enable you to decide when you are well enough to return to work. Tests can be booked directly via the government's online system [here](#) and guidance on how to do this is provided [here](#).

In the first instance we would encourage you to book a test directly if you are able, however, as an employer we can also do this on your behalf if required. Please contact your manager or the HR Team should you require support to do this.



Wednesday Whistle

Kindness matters more than ever

Hello WeST Colleagues

Kindness is a principle that makes all our lives better and it's important to us that we are kind to each other at work and to ourselves.



Being kind can mean asking someone how they are or helping out with a task. It can also mean taking care of ourselves and asking for support if we need it. If you want some more ideas about how to be kind to yourself and how you can look after your mental health. WeST has partnered with Able Futures and they are available to provide support at no cost to you.

This week is **Mental Health Awareness Week** and this year the theme is kindness. To help you remember ways you can be kinder to yourself and to other people, here are some little things you could try to do each working day this week.

- 1) **Take your full lunch break** – eat something nutritious, go out for a short walk and don't start back at work until you've had your full lunch break.
- 2) **Ask someone you work with if there's anything you can help with** – sometimes just sharing some ideas about a new task is a good way to help someone you work with relax and feel more confident about what they are achieving.
- 3) **Post something kind on your social media** during Mental Health Awareness Week and use the hashtags #KindnessMatters and #MentalHealthAwarenessWeek.
- 4) **Arrange to take your tea break with someone you've not caught up with for a while.** Having a quick virtual chat while you're both making a cuppa could be a way to ask someone if they need to talk about anything that's on their mind.
- 5) **Share an inspiring story of kindness** that you've seen in action with us by replying to this email so we can share some of the kind things you are all doing and feeling at the end of this week.

For more information on how kindness affects our mental wellbeing, [visit the Able Futures website.](#)

Able Futures delivers the Access to Work Mental Health Support Service which can give you nine months support from a mental health professional at no cost to you.

There's no waiting list and you can apply online or by calling **0800 321 3137**.

If you are experiencing issues such as anxiety, depression, grief or stress, or are struggling to deal with problems such as debt, disrupted sleep or relationship breakdowns that may be affecting your mental health, Able Futures can help you build resilience, tackle issues, feel better and learn new ways to manage your mental health throughout the ups and downs of life.

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Wednesday Whistle

NOTICE BOARD

Vacancies

The following vacancies are currently being advertised within our organisation:

Chaddlewood Primary School

- 2 x Cleaners

https://www.chaddlewood-primary.plymouth.sch.uk/web/pre-sent_vacancies_and_application_forms/45730

Coombe Dean School

- Food and Art Technician

<https://www.eteach.com/job/food-and-art-technician-1103137?lang=en-GB&frmsrh=Y>

WeST

- HR Officer/Advisor

<https://www.westst.org.uk/news/?pid=7&nid=2pid=7&nid=2&storyid=98>

Woodford Primary

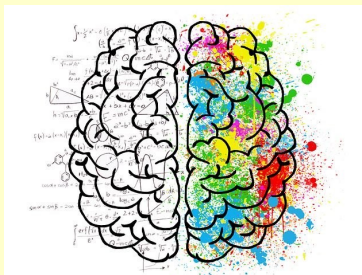
- KS1 Teacher (Maternity cover)

<https://www.woodfordprimary.co.uk/vacancies/>

The popular mindfulness app "Headspace" is offering sign-up for education colleagues for a free 12-month period if you work in a UK school. Follow this link to complete the short ID verification process to set up your free account. <https://www.headspace.com/educators-covid-19>

What is mindfulness? Mindfulness is the ability to be present, to rest in the here and now, fully engaged with whatever we're doing in the moment.

Why not try it - you can start Headspace with no previous experience of mindfulness to meditation.



CLOSING DATE EXTENDED—Lead Practitioner for Mathematics - required from 01 September 2020 (Leadership 9 - Fixed term contract 01/09/20 to 31/08/21)



The Lead Practitioner for Mathematics will promote and implement strategies for raising attainment and progress in Mathematics across all WeST schools. Working in partnership with the School Improvement Team, Headteachers and Mathematics Subject Leaders, the role involves both strategic leadership of subject development across the trust, alongside day to day support of Mathematics departments. This will include activities such as coaching, planning, leadership development, modelling strong practice, data analysis, curriculum development and support with student intervention.

Some specifics:

The post is fixed term for 12-months (01 September 2020 to 31 August 2021).

We are increasing the amount of time allocated to the Lead Practitioner role. Currently it is 0.2 (1 day) per week but from September this will be 0.4 (2 days) per week.

The remaining 0.6 would be in the candidate's home school teaching.

The successful post holder would relinquish all internal school responsibilities for the duration of the secondment (this would need to be discussed with your Headteacher). The successful candidate's current internal school role (or equivalent) would be protected during the secondment (again – this would need to be discussed with your Headteacher).

The post would be paid at Leadership 9 (partly funded by both WeST and the home school).

The full job description and person specification is attached.

To apply....

If you are interested in applying for the position, you would need to discuss this with your Headteacher and have their full agreement first. Please note – this may be dependent on backfill capacity.

If your Headteacher is in agreement, please submit a letter to Rob Diment via Beth Alford on BAford@westst.org.uk (max one-side of A4) explaining why you would like to do this role and what you can offer, by **01 June 2020**. A video interview will take place later that week.