

Wednesday Whistle

It certainly goes without saying that there has never been an end of term 'run-in' like the one we are currently experiencing. With less than two weeks until all our children have finished the academic year there is just so much going on.

I wrote a few weeks ago about each WeST school operating, in a fashion, four mini-schools. I highlighted Educare, curriculum delivery, remote learning and the crucial work being undertaken to keep in touch with, and check on, our most vulnerable children. Whilst the balance of children in each category might have shifted and new routines established, these four strands continue to operate and meet the needs of the children in each group.

I make a point of this since I now suggest that we have a fifth team who are grappling with the DfE guidance and the 'on the ground practicalities' to plan for a full reopening in September. Add to this the 'pressure cooker' effect of their only being 8 days until we break up for the much-needed summer holiday!

I pause here to celebrate the terrific work of everyone and the contribution they have made to ensure the success of our teams. It is important that we spend some time next term to step back and reflect on the new skills we have learnt, how adaptable we have become and that through adversity we have remained solution focused. It is with this determination to succeed and perseverance to find a solution that we can look forward to the September, however it might look, with confidence.



This leads me to signpost our new toolkit to support our planning for the full reopening in September. A significant part of this document is the Risk Assessment section to help ensure we consider and mitigate the risks that lie ahead.

We know, through published national data, that the rates of infection and fatalities in the SW region have been very low when compared to national averages. We can assume from this that we have taken sensible, careful and thoughtful steps to reopening our schools. As we now move to full reopening, we cannot become complacent and must adhere to Public Health England (PHE) advice. PHE have now moved on from the initial 'Hierarchy of Controls' to a more sophisticated 'System of Controls'. The nine controls are grouped into two categories: Prevention and Response. The toolkit embraces the 'System of Controls'. This is an exercise in the balance of risk – how to balance and minimise any risks from the coronavirus with providing the curriculum. I have confidence that through our thorough planning and effective teamwork we will achieve this balance in a sensible and safe fashion.

Continuing the theme of teamwork, I am delighted to introduce and welcome Dean Hughes who joined WeST this week as our IT strategist. Now, more than ever, we need our IT systems to work at all times and underpin what we are trying to achieve. I am sure you will extend a warm welcome as you meet him in your schools.

Best wishes,

Rob Haring



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Staff Survey - Action Plan

Thank you to all colleagues who contributed to the staff pandemic survey. Having analyzed the responses and reviewed each comment the Executive Team are working with school leadership teams to prepare an action plan to address key themes. This will be alongside the ongoing risk assessment and toolkit work to address COVID-19 circumstances and ensure continuous improvement.



Once the action plan has been developed this will be shared in future editions of the Wednesday Whistle for all colleagues to contribute and share our ongoing progress. If you have any particular questions or concerns please liaise with your school leadership team.



Revised Capability Policy:

Please find attached a draft of WeST's revised Capability Policy. This has proceeded through consultation with our Trust HR Committee, senior leaders and JCNC union representatives, and we now invite comments from staff ahead of finalising the policy for adoption by Trustees and implementation later in September.

We would ask you to please forward any comments or questions to HR@westst.org.uk by Friday 11th September. Any questions will be used to develop a FAQs to accompany the policy launch.

Saltram Meadow

The progress of our new school at Saltram Meadow continues as you can see from the most recent photos. Claire Duncan (Head of Dunstone Primary as of September) is due her first site visit later this week. Hard hat, safety boots and Hi-vis jacket will be mandatory for Claire to see the progress and layout of the building for herself.

Wall colours have now been agreed (this is one of the most important decisions to make, I am sure you will agree). Although the completion and handover date has slipped back due to Covid-19, progress is improving and the programme is almost back to full capacity.



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Westcountry Schools Trust

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the
Westcountry Schools Trust will take
place on Thursday 23rd 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 Billingham (Clerk to the Trust) at sbillingham@westst.org.uk

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PE Funding set to continue for 2020 – 2021 – Arena Support for the next academic year.

Arena is part of the West Country schools Trust and we currently offer PE and outdoor learning support services to schools. Following the Government's announcement on 5th July 2020 'We are delighted to report that the Department for Education (DfE) has confirmed that the Primary PE and Sport Premium funding will continue at £320 million for the 2020/21 academic year. Importantly, the DfE has also sanctioned any PE and Sport Premium funding from the current academic year (2019-20), that schools **were unable to use**, as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, can be **carried forward** to utilise in the next academic year. (DfE 5th July 2020)

We are now in a position to release our packages of support for the coming academic year. These include;

- Healthy hearts Healthy minds
- Healthy movers
- Wild Tribe First Aid
- Developing emotional resilience thorough outdoor learning
- National Curriculum Outdoors Training with the newly published series of books

We have a proven track record of providing PE and outdoor learning PE curriculum delivery and training to schools across Cornwall and Devon. Please click [here](#) for further information.

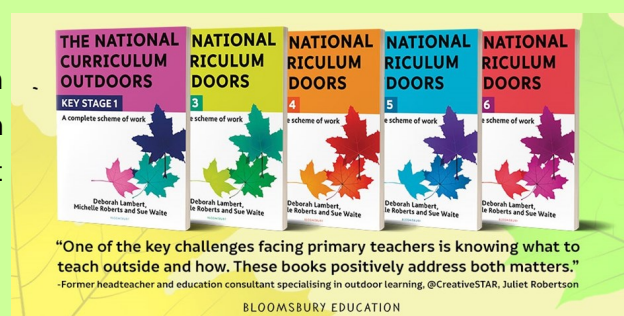
We are also delighted to inform you that the 'National Curriculum Outdoors' books we have been involved in writing, which were published last week have received an excellent review from Juliet Robertson who is a well- known internationally for her work in outdoor learning. Juliet stated 'This is a brand-new, set of 5 books about teaching outside. Given the outdoor emphasis as children and staff return to school, it's a timely publication. It has been a tremendous undertaking by the authors: Deborah Lambert, Michelle Roberts and Sue Waite.

Right now, with the outdoor emphasis recognised as a sensible approach to preventing and reducing transmission rates of COVID-19, this set of books could be the best summer reading you do this year'. (J Robertson Creative Star Learning July 2020)

If you wish to purchase the books they are available direct from Bloomsbury with a 30% discount currently or through the Arena partnership.

Outdoor learning will be vital in schools returning in September and catch up funding can be used for health and well- being programmes. If you require any support in this area please do not hesitate to contact us

enquiries@arena-schools.co.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/>

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>

Westcountry Schools Trust

- Exexecutive Assistant

<https://www.westst.org.uk/news/?pid=7&nid=2&storyid=101>

Yealmpton Primary School

- Teaching Assistant (temporary)

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

Mental Health Helplines ([click here for more info](#))

Whether you are worried about yourself, a colleague or a loved one, these helplines and support groups can help to offer advice:

Anxiety UK

- Charity providing support if you have been diagnosed with an anxiety condition.
- Phone: 03444 775 774 (Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 10pm; Saturday to Sunday, 10am to 8pm)
- Website: www.anxietyuk.org.uk

CALM

- CALM is the Campaign Against Living Miserably, for men aged 15 to 35.
- Phone: 0800 58 58 58 (daily, 5pm to midnight)
- Website: www.thecalmzone.net

Mind

- Promotes the views and needs of people with mental health problems.
- Phone: 0300 123 3393 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 6pm)
- Website: www.mind.org.uk

No Panic

- Voluntary charity offering support for sufferers of panic attacks and obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD). Offers a course to help overcome your phobia or OCD.
- Phone: 0844 967 4848 (daily, 10am to 10pm). Calls cost 5p per minute plus your phone provider's Access Charge
- Website: www.nopanic.org.uk

YoungMinds

- Information on child and adolescent mental health. Services for parents and professionals.
- Phone: Parents' helpline 0808 802 5544 (Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 4pm)
- Website: www.youngminds.org.uk

