



West Malling Church of England Primary School and The McGinty Language SRP



NEWSLETTER 12th September 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

This week I would like to extend a very special welcome to our new Chestnut children and families. Following several days of individual meetings with Mrs Penfold, the children started their West Malling journey on Monday and have certainly seemed to enjoy spending the mornings getting to explore the classroom and are beginning to take the first steps in establishing new friendships. Starting school is such a big step for children (and parents!) and I know from personal experience what an emotional time it can be. The children have settled incredibly well and there is a lovely atmosphere in the Chestnut classroom.

Similarly, moving classes is an equally big step. The fact that it is within the same school does not matter, and change can be very unsettling for some children. Please remember that we are all here to offer support – after all, the children are the most important thing for all of us, parents and staff alike. If you have a question or a query, do try and catch the class teacher at the end of the day, or feel free to email through to the class email address. Each class has an email address of the form mulberryteacher@west-malling.kent.sch.uk with just the class name changing each time (e.g oakteacher, ashteacher, etc). I am also out on the gate most mornings and in the playground after school, so please come and have a chat if I can help with anything.

Despite it being only the first full week of school, a number of Year 6 children undertook their 11+ test yesterday and I would like to say how proud I was of their focus and concentration. All any of us can ever do in any situation is our very best, and every single child in the room certainly did that.

Next week sees Year 6 head down to the PGL Activity Centre at Grosvenor Hall, near Ashford, along with a number of members of staff. Lots of schools plan a residential visit for their Year 6 children, but very few do this in September at the start of the school year. We see the trip not as a reward for finishing school, but as an opportunity to develop valuable teamwork and leadership skills, that can then be brought back into school for the remainder of the year – a way to enhance the rest of the last year of primary school.

One request from me to finish the newsletter this week, please. In all Tenax Schools Trust schools, no child should be wearing a Smart watch to school. While these are wonderful technological devices, children's focus in the classroom needs to be exclusively on their teaching and learning, and Smart watches act as a distraction. Equally, they are not cheap items, and I would not want any to come to harm during less structured break and lunchtimes. The only watches that should be worn in school should be basic digital or analogue watches.

With best wishes for the weekend,

Mr Rye

WHAT'S ON?

Friday 12th to Tuesday 16th September

Children in Year R (Chestnut Class) in school until 1pm

Wednesday 17th September

Children in Year R (Chestnut Class) start full days

w/c Monday 15th September

Year 6 residential trip to PGL Grosvenor Hall

Year 5 start swimming lessons

Wednesday 17th September

Kent Messenger coming in to take Chestnut Class photo for inclusion in their *First Class* supplement. ONLY children with photo permission will be included

Friday 19th September

Messages to be sent between 2.30pm and 4pm to confirm, or otherwise, places at after school clubs

Monday 22nd September

Year 5 swimming

School clubs start today

Friday 26th September

Macmillan cake sale after school (on the KS2 playground)

Monday 29th September

Year 5 swimming

Thursday 2nd October

Change to the published menu – please see menu sent with this newsletter

Monday 6th - Wednesday 8th October

Sibling (those in school not younger) & individual portraits being taken

Year 5 swimming

Achievers of the Week

YEAR	NAME	Commended for
Year R	Whole Class	For starting their primary school journey so well
Year 1	Keira	For her perseverance and being an excellent role model
Year 2	William	For his kindness and enthusiasm for learning
Year 3	John-James	For his excellent contributions and attitude to his learning
Year 4	Mason	For settling in well and showing good values
Year 5	Daniel	For fantastic participation in class this week
Year 6	Luke	For his exemplary role-model behaviour

Caterlink – Lunch Accounts (for parents who pay for their child's meals)

We are reminding an increasing number of parents to top-up the balance on their child's lunch account. Please ensure that accounts are always in credit. Caterlink operate a 'no debt' policy; if you do not have any credit please send your child in with a packed lunch.

Please note: the cost of a hot mid-day meal increased to **£3.05** from 1st September.

Macmillan Cake Sale – Friday 26th September

I will be holding a cake sale after school in aid of this wonderful charity. Any donations of cakes, whether home baked or store bought, will be very gratefully received. Thank you for your support. Jo White, families & Community Manager.

Squirrels Section, 1st West Malling Scout Group

There are vacancies in the Squirrels section at 1st West Malling Scout Group for children aged between 4-6 years starting in January 2025 and for the terms ahead. The children must be aged 4 years to attend.

Please email justjo-westmallingscouts@hotmail.com for further information.

ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY

THIS WEEK'S ATTENDANCE:

CLASS	Attendance
Year R	98.3%
Year 1	99.4%
Year 2	100%
Year 3	96.3%
Year 4	97.9%
Year 5	95.8%
Year 6	97.6%

Whole School Attendance

97.9%

Yearly attendance to date:

96.5%

The children in Year 2 have been in school every day this week



Well done Year 2!



PUNCTUALITY PANDA

CLASS	% Arrived on time
Year R	100%
Year 1	98.1%
Year 2	97.1%
Year 3	99.4%
Year 4	98.6%
Year 5	100%
Year 6	99.4%

Well done Years R & 5 – you arrived on time every day this week! 😊

Safeguarding

As a school we believe that safeguarding is not only about protecting children and young people from abuse and neglect, but also their families too. It is our intention, therefore, to support families by signposting them to universal services which may assist families when they are facing difficulties themselves. For reference, our Safeguarding Team is: Mr David Rye (DSL), Mrs Jo White (Deputy DSL), Mrs Gemma Hawken (Deputy DSL) & Mrs Sophie Ogden (Deputy DSL) and we are the people you should contact should you have any safeguarding concerns.

Wednesday 10th September was World Suicide Prevention Day. While this was not something discussed with children in school, the key message of the Day this year was that if you have concerns about someone's state of mind, take action, interrupt their thoughts and show them you care.

<https://www.samaritans.org/support-us/campaign/world-suicide-prevention-day/>