

Tuesday 2nd September 2025

Dear Parents/Carers,

Welcome back everyone! And to our new parents, **welcome to Westgate!**

I hope you have all had a lovely summer. It is hard to believe that the (almost) 6 weeks have gone already – time does fly! Westgate staff have all been in school this week for our training days but have also got the school ready for the new school year.



Tomorrow, we welcome back our Year 1 to Year 6 children. We look forward to welcoming our Reception children from Thursday. They will be in school until 12pm on Thursday and 1.15pm on Friday, starting full time from Monday 8th September.

There are 190 **teaching days** in the school year. However, maintained schools set five teacher training days called Professional Development (PD) Days. The term dates and PD Days for 2025 – 2026 are at the end of this letter but can be found on our website and the weekly newsletter.

In this letter, I will try to give you as much information / reminders about school as possible. If there is something here that I have not covered, please do contact the School Office and I can get it into a future newsletter. Letters and communication are usually sent out electronically. If you are unable to receive letters etc. in this way and require paper copies to be sent home, please contact the school office. All letters and information can be located on our website. Please contact the School Office (admin@westgatecp.co.uk or 01284 755988) if you have any questions.

The School Day

The school day starts at 9am. Gates open at 8.50am (the Spread-Eagle gate opens at 8.40am) and classroom doors are opened at 8.50am so that registration and lessons can start promptly at 9am. All gates are locked at 9am. If you arrive after that time, you will need to bring your child in via the School Office.



Children in Reception have a flexible playtime and spend a lot of time in their outside area: the Reception playground or the forest area. All other pupils have a 15-minute breaktime each morning. All children have a 1-hour lunch break and during both break and lunchtime they go outside to play.

Each afternoon, the gates are opened at 3.25pm. Reception children can be collected at that time. All other children will be dismissed at 3.30pm. Gates are closed at 3.40pm.

Gate names

To help our new parents, here are the names of each of the gates and where they are located in school:

Spread-Eagle Gate - the gate that leads to the big playground from the path along the river. This gate is at the back of the school.

Car Park Gate – this gate is at the front of the school. This gate can be accessed via the path that goes through the staff car park.

Early Years Gate – this gate is also at the front of the school (to the left of the School Office) and takes you down a ramp and leads directly to the Early Years (Reception) area.

Parking / Car Free Site

The safety of the children, parents and staff is our priority. As such, please remember that you should not be bringing a car onto site at the start or end of the day at all unless you:



- have a disabled badge
- have made a prior arrangement with the office and have a Westgate 'Free Parking' badge
- are dropping off for Breakfast Club/collecting from After School Club.

Please come and speak to us if you believe you may be entitled to a Westgate 'Free Parking' badge.

Mr Marsh regularly monitors this, at both ends of the day. We would be grateful if you could continue to help keep our site safe.

Thank you for your support with this.

Wraparound Care

We have a successful Breakfast Club and After School Club, which are open for children from Reception to Year 6.



Breakfast Club runs from 7.45am to 9am, with flexible drop off.

After School Club runs from 3.30pm to 5.15pm, with flexible collection.

There are a range of activities for children to choose from whilst attending the clubs. Spaces are still available in Breakfast Club and After School Club. If you are interested in either of our Wraparound Care Clubs and would like more information, please contact the School Office or visit our website page: <https://www.westgatecp.co.uk/wrap-around-care/>

Absences

All absences should be reported to the School Office. If your child is ill and will not be coming into school, please phone or email the School Office to let them know as soon as possible. There is a voicemail option to leave a message if the phones are engaged or if you are ringing before 8am. Please be aware that if you do not contact us each day your child is absent, the School Office will follow school procedures and will contact you.

There are forms for any planned absences, available from the School Office if you need to request an absence. It is important that these are completed and handed in at least 2 weeks before the planned absence.

Walk to School permissions for Year 5 and 6 children



Walk to School permission forms have been sent to our Year 5 and 6 pupils. Please ensure you read the permission forms carefully and sign them if you would like your child to walk to/from school independently.

Please note that all children are expected to be collected from any clubs they attend even if they have walk to school permission. Please also be aware that Walk to School permission can be withdrawn if behaviour on the journey to or from school is not appropriate.

Open Classroom Sessions / Contacting the class teacher

Our first **Open Classroom** session will be on **Wednesday 24th September from 3.30pm to 4pm**. Gates will be opened as normal at 3.25pm. Once children have been dismissed, parents will be welcome to go into their child(ren)'s classroom(s) to see the learning that has taken place thus far. Parents' Evenings are scheduled for the last week of this half term – more information to follow.



We ask that where possible you catch teachers at the end of the day to speak to them. If you have any concerns or would like to arrange a meeting with them, please speak to them directly or email them via the School Office:

admin@westgatecp.co.uk

Arbor - our new communications and payment package

Just a reminder that we have now moved over to a new system for payments and for communications - Arbor.

Many of our families have had a parent or carer log on. For those that have not yet done so, information has been emailed out, or you can contact the School Office for help.

Please note that this is the only way to pay for lunches, wraparound care and other items - you cannot pay on ParentPay.

Payments for lunches and Wraparound Care (WAC)



As a reminder we are not able to carry debts for either of these items. From September, if your child has attended a WAC session or taken a lunch that has not been paid for, you will be contacted by email at the end of that day and asked to pay. If payment is not made, then your child will not be able to have a school lunch the following day (a packed lunch will need to be provided) and they cannot attend the WAC session. This is important for both families and school; so as not to get into a situation where debts are owing and we thank you for your support with this.

School Lunches

Children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are all entitled to universal free school meals. These are paid for by the Government and are not linked to benefits related free school meals. In Year 3 and above, lunches must be paid for unless you receive benefits related free school meals.



For all pupils - if you feel you may be entitled to benefits free school meals, please talk to the School Office who can talk to you about how to apply. School receives additional funding for children on benefits related free school meals.

School lunches should be paid for in advance using Arbor – see above. Again, if you need any help setting up or using Arbor, please contact the School Office.

Children can choose a hot meal (including a vegetarian option) or a cold pick and mix. The 3-week menu can be found on our website.

PLEASE NOTE, WE ARE A NUT FREE SCHOOL. This includes chocolate spread.



We are a Healthy School and ask that at break time the children eat a piece of fruit or cereal bar. In Reception, Year 1 and Year 2, children are provided with a snack to eat at break time.

Uniform

We ask that pupils come to school wearing a school uniform. Our school uniform is made up of a blue sweatshirt or cardigan and a white or blue polo shirt. These items should be worn with **plain black or grey trousers or a knee length skirt/dress and black shoes or trainers**. In the **summer**, grey or black tailored shorts or blue and white checked summer dresses can be worn.

Trousers, skirts and plain polo shirts can be bought in all major supermarkets and other retailers. **These can be plain and do not have to show the Westgate logo** although branded items can be bought here:

<https://westgate.resuffolk.co.uk/>

Please come and speak to us if you have any questions. Please also refer to our Uniform Policy, which can be found on our website.

PE

There will be no PE sessions this week. However, they will start week commencing 8th September.

Children should wear their PE kit to school on PE days. The PE kit consists of:

- Plain white or royal blue t-shirt
- Black, grey, or navy shorts / jogging bottoms (or tracksuit on colder days) – these should be as plain as possible. Shorts should be at least mid-thigh length
- Dark trainers



Autumn Term PE days are as follows:

Mondays: Finches, Robins, Eagles and Foxes

Tuesdays: Foxes, Wagtails, Hawks and Falcons

Wednesdays: Year 5 children, Squirrels and Otters (*Y6 will be swimming on Wednesdays – see separate letter)

Thursdays: Ladybirds, Butterflies, Hedgehogs, Otters and Finches

Fridays: Squirrels, Wagtails, Robins and Hedgehogs

Website

We have made a few changes to our website as the company that hosts it for us has changed so there will be a changeover sometime later this week. The same familiar pages are there but the look is slightly different. We hope the new format will be as intuitive as the old site but do let us know if you have any queries or need support with finding something.

School Policies can be found on the school website. Please note that policies being updated in September will be uploaded to the website once they have been approved by the Governors.

Grounds

We are also changing our Grounds contractor and have had a period where we have had no work carried out on our site. This means there are a few more weeds than we would like to see but before too long things will be looking better again! We are grateful that the grass has been kept at bay by the dry weather over the summer holidays!! Please bear with us whilst we are in the transition period.



PTA

We have an active PTA, who organise a number of fundraising events during the school year. Please contact the school Office if you are interested in joining the PTA. Look out for details on their next coffee morning.



Finally, we hold a Celebration Assembly on a Friday afternoon (starting on Friday 19th September). Children's achievements in and out of school are celebrated. Children are welcome to bring in medals, trophies, certificates etc. to share in assembly. We also have a shout out in the newsletter. If you / your child would like to celebrate any achievements in a newsletter, please email the School Office any information – photos welcome!

There is a lot of information in this letter, but I hope it gives you some of the information you need without being too overwhelming. If there is something here that I have not said or you have any questions, please do contact the School Office and I can get it into a future newsletter. Don't forget to look out for the weekly newsletter and to check out our website: <https://www.westgatecp.co.uk/>

Kind regards,

Mrs Kidd (Headteacher)

Class Names / Teachers

Reception

Ladybirds = Mrs McGhee (Mon – Wed) and Mrs Eley (Thurs & Fri)

Butterflies = Mrs Heuer (Mon – Wed) and Mrs Lingwood (Thurs & Fri)

KS1 (Years 1 and 2)

Finches – Mrs Howe

Robins = Mrs McLean (Mon & Tues) and Mrs Cleaver (Wed – Fri)

Wagtails = Mrs Bates (Mon – Wed) and Mrs McLean (Thurs & Fri)

LKS2 (Years 3 and 4)

Otters = Miss Buono

Squirrels = Mrs Knowles (Mon -Wed) and Mrs Gaught (Thurs & Fri)

Hedgehogs = Mr Marsh (Mon) and Mr Scott (Tues – Fri)

Foxes = Mrs Grahn

UKS2 (Years 5 and 6)

Eagles = Miss Nichols

Falcons = Mrs Linstead

Hawks = Mrs Fenning

Kestrels = Mrs Dalgoutte (mornings only)

Teacher of the Deaf = Mrs Dalgoutte

SENDCO = Mrs Sawyer

ELSAs = Mrs Spencer and Miss Clifton

TERM DATES 2025 - 2026

Autumn Term

Term starts: Wednesday 3rd September

Half Term (children not in school): Monday 27th October to Friday 31st October

Term ends: Friday 19th December

Christmas Holidays (20th December to 5th January)

Spring Term

Staff Training Day (children not in school): Monday 5th January

Term starts: Tuesday 6th January 2025

Half Term (children not in school): Monday 16th to Friday 20th February

Term ends: Friday 27th March

Easter Holidays (28th March to 12th April)



Summer Term

Term starts: Monday 13th April

Half Term (children not in school): Monday 25th to Friday 29th May

Staff Training Day (children not in school): 22nd May

Term ends: Friday 17th July

Staff Training Day (children not in school): Monday 20th July

Dates for the Diary (dates to be confirmed shown in red)

23rd Sep = School Photos (individual and Siblings) – more info to follow

24th Sep = Open Classroom Session (3.30pm – 4pm)

21st and 23rd October = Parents Evenings

16th Oct = PTA Disco

27th – 31st Oct = Half Term

6th Nov = Flu Immunisations

14th Nov = Children in Need

11th Nov = Open Classroom Session (3.30pm – 4pm)

5th Dec = Christmas Fair – tbc

10th Dec = Flu Immunisations – catch up

11th Dec = Christmas Jumper Day

11th Dec = KS2 Christmas Carols (2.45pm)

11th Dec = Christmas Dinner Day





Brooklands Close, Bury St Edmunds, IP33 3JX

Tel: 01284 755988

Email: admin@westgatecp.co.uk

Headteacher: Mrs Rhonda Kidd

16th Dec = Reception Christmas Performance (9.30am)

17th Dec = KS1 Christmas Performance (9.30am and 2pm)

19th Dec = last day of term – children are invited to bring in toys/games from home

20st Dec – 5th Jan = Christmas Holidays

6th Jan – children back to school

6th Feb = Number Day

5th March = World Book Day

17th and 19th March = Parents Evenings

w/b 11th May = Y6 SATs Week

