

Friday 4th September 2026

Dear Parents/Carers,

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

It has been lovely to welcome everyone back and it has been a wonderful 2 days. Today, our Reception children joined us for the morning, and it is fair to say that they had a lovely time. They will be in school until 1.15pm on Monday, starting full time from Tuesday 8th September.



In addition to all our new pupils across the school, I would also like to welcome our new members of staff: Mrs Vaughan, Mrs Peters and Miss Golding.

There are 190 **teaching days** in the school year. However, maintained schools set 5 teacher training days called Professional Development (PD) Days. The term dates and PD Days for 2026 – 2027 are at the end of this letter but can be found on our website and on the final page of 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 other forms of communication are usually sent electronically. If you are unable to receive communications in this way, and require paper copies to be sent home, please contact the school office. All letters and information can be found on our website. Please contact the School Office (admin@westgatecp.co.uk or 01284 755988) if you have any questions.

Open Classroom Sessions / Contacting the class teacher

Our first **Open Classroom** session will be on **Tuesday 22nd September from 3.30pm to 4pm**. Gates will be opened as normal at 3.25pm. Once children have been dismissed, parents will be welcomed into the classroom to see the learning that has taken place so far. Parents Evenings are planned 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

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.

We monitor this where possible 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.

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

The School Day

The school day starts at 9am. We ask that all children are in school by 8.55am so that we can start promptly at 9am. Gates open by 8.50am (the Spread-Eagle gate opens at 8.40am) and classroom doors are opened at 8.50am. All gates are closed 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 the 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.

Gates are opened at the end of the school day at 3.25pm. Reception children can be collected then. 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:

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 in the staff car park.

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

From Monday, Key Stage 1 (Year 1 and 2) will be dropped off / collected from the same location to make things easier:

Finches - via their **outside** classroom door, accessed via the steps in the car park (where you have been picking up at the end of the day).

Robins – via the external door that leads into the Key Stage 1 area, (close to the internal door of their class) where the children have been dropped off each morning).

Wagtails – via their **outside** classroom door (this is what has been in place already, so no change).

Absences / Attendance

As we begin a new school year, we would like to remind families of the importance of regular and punctual attendance. Every day at school matters. Being in school every day gives children the best opportunity to learn, make progress, build friendships, develop confidence and feel a strong sense of belonging. Even occasional days missed can add up over time and can have an impact on learning and progress.

We understand that children are sometimes unwell or that there may be exceptional circumstances when a child needs to be absent. 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.

Please continue to let us know promptly if your child is unable to attend and speak to us if there are any difficulties affecting their attendance. We are committed to working with families to provide support where barriers to attendance arise.

We would also like to remind parents and carers that holidays during term time will not normally be authorised. Under Department for Education guidance, leave of absence can only be granted in exceptional circumstances and each request must be considered individually. A family holiday for leisure purposes is not generally considered to be an exceptional circumstance.

There are planned absence forms 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 (where possible). Where leave is taken without authorisation, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and the Local Authority may issue a penalty notice.

Please refer to our website page for more information on attendance: <https://www.westgatecp.co.uk/attendance>

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 them to choose from. Spaces are 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/>

Information about activity clubs will be sent out soon.

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.

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 Dinners



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, dinners must be paid for unless you receive benefits related free school meals.

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

School dinners should be paid for in advance using Arbor. 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](#).

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.

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



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 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.**

We ask that jewellery is not worn to school. Any earring should be studs/flat and must be removed on PE days.

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 Sessions

PE sessions start next week for children in Years 1 to Year 6.

Children are asked to 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
- Please remove earrings

Autumn Term PE days are as follows:

Monday: Falcons, Hedgehogs, Wagtails and Finches

Tuesday: Robins, Falcons and Hawks

Wednesday: Otters, Foxes and Hedgehogs

Thursday: Wagtails, Finches, Robins, Otters, Ladybirds and Butterflies

Friday: Eagles, Hawks, Eagles and Foxes



*Y6 will be swimming on Tuesdays - see separate letter

**Reception children will begin their PE sessions on Thursday 17th September

Website

There is lots of information on our school website.

School Policies can be found on the school website. Please note that those for this year will be uploaded to the website once they have been approved by the Governors.

To access our website: <https://www.westgatecp.co.uk/>

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 of their next coffee morning.

Assembly

Finally, we hold a Celebration Assembly on a Friday afternoon (starting on Friday 18th 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 (starting on Friday 11th September) and to check out our website: <https://www.westgatecp.co.uk/>

Kind regards,

Mrs Kidd (Headteacher)

Class Names / Teachers

Reception

Ladybirds = Mrs Piggott (Mon – Thurs) and Mrs McGhee (Fri)

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

KS1 (Years 1 and 2)

Finches – Miss Howe

Robins - Mrs Cleaver (Mon & Tues) and Mrs Gaught (Wed – Fri)

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

After registration each morning, KS1 will split into year groups so there will be 4 classes, 2 for each year group. The fourth class will be:

Woodpeckers - Mrs McLean / Mrs Bates (mornings only)

LKS2 (Years 3 and 4)

Otters - Mrs East

Hedgehogs - Mrs Peters (Mon) and Mr Scott (Tues – Fri)

Foxes - Mrs Grahn

After registration each morning, LKS2 will split into year groups so there will be 4 classes, 2 for each year group. The fourth class will be:

Squirrels - Mrs Knowles / Mrs Peters (mornings only)

UKS2 (Years 5 and 6)

Eagles - Miss Nichols

Falcons - Mrs Linstead

Hawks - Mrs Vaughan

After registration each morning, UKS2 will split into year groups so there will be 4 classes, 2 for each year group. The fourth class will be:

Kestrels - Mrs Dalgoutte (mornings only)

SENDCO - Mrs Sawyer | Teacher of the Deaf - Mrs Dalgoutte

ELSAs = Mrs Spencer and Miss Clifton

TERM DATES 2026 - 2027

Autumn Term

Term starts: Thursday 3rd September

Half Term (children not in school) : Monday 26th October to Friday 30th October

Term ends: Friday 18th December

Christmas Holidays (19th December to 4th January)

Spring Term

Staff Training Day (children not in school): Monday 4th January

Term starts: Tuesday 5th January 2025

Half Term (children not in school) : Monday 15th to Friday 19th February

Term ends: Thursday 26th March

Easter Holidays (27th March to 12th April)

Summer Term

Staff Training Day (children not in school): Monday 12th April

Term starts: Tuesday 13th April

Half Term (children not in school) : Monday 31st May to Friday 4th June

Staff Training Day (children not in school): Friday 2nd July

Term ends: Wednesday 21st July



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

22nd Sep = Open Classroom Session (3.30pm – 4pm)

7th Oct = Flu Immunisations

9th Oct = Mental Health Day

12th October = The Big Draw

14th October = PTA Autumn Disco

20th and 22nd October = Parents Evenings

23rd October = Young Carers / Service Children session in school

26th – 30th = Half Term

3rd and 4th Nov = Indian Dance Workshops

4th Nov = Y5/6 trip to Gressingham Hall

13th Nov = Children in Need

19th Nov = Open Classroom Session (3.30pm – 4pm)

27th Nov = Non-Uniform Day for Rainbow Raffle

4th Dec = Christmas Fair

8th Dec = Rocksteady Concert

10th Dec = Christmas Jumper Day

11th Dec = Young Carers / Service Children session in school

15th Dec = Reception Christmas Performance (9.30am)

15th Dec = KS1 Christmas Performance (2.15pm)

16th Dec = KS1 Christmas Performance (9.30am)

17th Dec = KS2 Christmas Carols (2.45pm) – hot drinks served from 2.15pm

18th Dec = Carols at St Peters

18th Dec = last day of term – children are invited to bring in toys/games from home

20st Dec – 4th Jan = Christmas Holidays

5th Jan – children back to school

21st Jan = Young Voices at the O2

