



School Newsletter

4th September 2022



Welcome Back!

Welcome back! I hope you all had a fantastic summer and are ready for the term ahead. The staff had a busy week last week setting up the school and undertaking training in many areas including racial literacy, phonics, reading, safeguarding, allergen and anaphylactic training, amongst many other things.

We look forward to seeing Years 1 to 6 tomorrow (and the Nursery children who were with us last year and who are staying in Nursery again this year). A big welcome to the new Reception children (and families) who join us on Wednesday, and to the new Nursery children who are starting over the next couple of weeks.

As you know, we welcome a number of new staff to the school this year. Peter Baldwin joins us as one of the Year 1 class teachers, Joanne Hay returns to us to take up one of the Year 2 class teacher positions, Emma Pullenger is sharing a Year 3 class with Ana as well as teaching Computing from Years 1 to 5, Maha Nazir is the Year 5 teacher, and Tilly Williams joins Connor as one of the Year 6 class teachers. We also welcome Khadra Hashi who will be working as a Teaching Assistant in Year 4, and Nicola Hall has returned to Walnut Tree Walk, working now as a Teaching Assistant in Year 5. Alicia takes up her new role as Wellbeing Mentor, in addition to continuing in her role supporting Year 6 in the mornings, and Stephanie, who was a Teaching Assistant with us last year, starts her teacher training in Reception class this year.

Class newsletters from your child's class teacher will be emailed out to you tomorrow. PE, dance and swimming will all start this week, **starting on Tuesday**, so please ensure that your child has the appropriate PE kit for their PE or dance sessions (green t-shirts, which are available from the office, along with appropriate trainers and dark grey/black jogging bottoms, shorts or leggings). PE and dance days for each class are outlined on page 3 of this letter.

A reminder that the school day times have changed slightly for Key Stage 1. The school day is as follows:

Nursery and Reception: Start at 8:45am and finish at 3:20pm.

Years 1 to 6: Start at 8:55am and finish at 3:30pm.

I have included towards the end of this newsletter the information that was in the July newsletter for anyone who may have missed it as well as for all of our new families.

As always, please feel free to come and see me at any time if you have something that you would like to discuss, or to the Deputy Head, Sue, or the Assistant Head, Connor.

Best Wishes, Andrew

What's been happening at WTW over the summer...

It has been a very busy summer at Walnut Tree Walk with lots of building work taking place. We have been waiting for years for our roof to be fixed and finally this work has been done. Many of the top floor classrooms, particularly the Year 6 rooms, have leaked heavily during periods of heavy rain, and we are hopeful that the work that has been carried out means this will no longer happen.

Over the last four years we have replaced all of the children's toilets across the school, with the exception of the Key Stage Two toilets. I am pleased to say that these have now also been done - which was very much needed!

We have also upgraded our computer system with a new server as well as internal decorations and works to the hall floors.

Around the October half-term we will be having our Reception playground redeveloped to include a covered area that can be used by the children in all weathers, new play equipment and the whole area re-surfaced. This completes the main parts of the outdoor development work that we have been doing over the last four years (including the new Nursery playground, the pirate ship and play equipment in the main playground, the edible playground, and the garden area with the therapy cabin).

Covid Guidance

The guidance around Covid remains the same as it did at the end of the last academic year. We are working on the assumption that this year will be a 'normal' year and that we will not see anything like the disruption we have seen in the last two years.

If your child displays symptoms of Covid or tests positive, the guidance for children is to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for **three days** (for adults it is five days). Children can then return after the third day as long as they do not have a temperature or feel unwell. **There is no need to wait for a negative test result** after the third day if there are no symptoms remaining.

If you believe your child has Covid, please make sure that you let Sharon in the office know when you inform us of the absence so that we can monitor the number of cases in the school.

Key Information

What day will my child have PE? (no Monday sessions this week)

Reception: PE on Wednesday and Thursday

Year 1: PE on Monday and Tuesday

Year 2: PE on Tuesday (plus a session on Wednesday for Joanne's class)

Year 3: PE on Monday (plus a session on Tuesday for Talsia's class)

Year 4: PE on Thursday and Dance on Wednesday

Year 5: PE on Thursday and Dance on Wednesday

Year 6: PE on Friday, Dance on Thursday

Year 2 and 3 will also have swimming. This half term it is Aimee's Y2 and Ana/Emma's Y3 classes who will be going, and then after half term it will swap. They will then do the same in the Spring Term. Aimee's class will be swimming on Friday afternoons and Ana/Emma's will be going on Thursday afternoons. You will receive separate letters about this with a consent form that needs to be returned this week.

Where should children line up in the morning?

All children in Years 1 to 6 will enter via the Fitzalan Street gate. Year 1 to 6 parents will not come in the playground in the morning as the current arrangement is working very well and allowing the school day to start promptly.

Nursery parents will come through the playground so that the children can be handed to the Nursery staff team.

Reception children will enter via the Walnut Tree Walk gate. For the first week, parents can come into the playground, but from week 2 onwards they should be able to come through the gate and line up with their teachers.

If Reception children have siblings, they can either enter via the Walnut Tree Walk gate and then walk through the playground past the school building to line up, or parents can walk them around the block to the Fitzalan Street gate.

The school gates will open at 8:45am each morning.

Where do I collect my child from at the end of the day?

All parents can enter the playground at the end of the day to collect their children. Reception parents, please use the Walnut Tree Walk gate. You can then either leave through the same gate or walk around to the other side and leave through the Fitzalan Street gate. We ask that parents in other year groups only use the Fitzalan Street gate. The gates will open at 3:20pm but parents in Years 1 to 6 please wait outside the playground until 3:30pm as it is much easier for the classes to get to their collection points when the playground is empty.

What happens if my child is late?

It is really important that children arrive to school on time, and the punctuality at Walnut Tree Walk is generally very good. If you are late bringing your child to school, please ring the buzzer at the Fitzalan Street gate and then bring your child to the main office. You will then need to register your child on the electronic sign in system in the office, giving your reasons for being late.

Term Time Holidays

From September, term-time holidays will not be authorised unless there are very exceptional circumstances and there has been full attendance for the rest of the year. The school's attendance rate has been very adversely impacted by the large number of families taking holidays during term time. Any holidays taken, which are not for exceptional reasons and been agreed by school prior to booking, will be notified to the Education Welfare team at Lambeth.

When will we be able to book after school activity clubs?

After school activity clubs will start at the end of September. I will write to you about what is on offer and how to apply in the next couple of weeks. They will run in a similar way to how they did last year.

How do I book Breakfast and After School for the Autumn Term?

The booking system went live last week. Apologies for any problems some of you may have experienced. There were unfortunately difficulties with the site, which were out of our hands. A reminder of the costs:

Breakfast Club: £3 per day

After School Club (up until 4:30pm): £5 per day

After School Club (up until 5:45pm): £10 per day

Reading

For full information about how we teach reading at Walnut Tree Walk, please see our website under the 'Parents' tab. This year, Reception, Years 1 and 2 will all have a Reading Record book that goes between home and school. A comment will be written in this book once a week by a member of staff who has listened to your child read, and we would encourage parents to write in this book weekly too. Please note that teachers will only respond to any comments parents write in these books once a week. These books should be sent in every day in their book bag as the day the book is written in may vary from week to week. Year 3 will have a similar book but the purpose of this book will be for the children and teachers to write in, rather than their parents. Year 4, 5 and 6 will have a Reading Journal, which they will be taught how to use at the start of the term, but this is also for the children and staff to write in to encourage dialogue between the child and teacher about their independent reading. Parents in KS2 who wish to comment or discuss their child's reading should speak to their child's class teacher either in the playground or via email, rather than writing in the book.

Homework

All children should be reading at home daily, which is the primary focus of our Home Learning Policy. We only set formal homework in Years 4, 5 and 6. This will be set on a Friday and uploaded onto Google Classroom for the children to complete by the following Friday. We hope that this approach will allow flexibility as to when the children complete their work to fit in with everyone's different out of school schedules. Year 4 and 5 will receive one piece of English and one Maths, and Year 6 will receive three pieces of work per week.

Lunches

A reminder that we are a water-only school now. As with the children who have school dinners, packed lunches should also only contain water as a drink. For full details of our packed lunch policy, please see our school website. We will continue to provide a piece of fresh fruit for every child across the school to have as a snack at break time.