

Whitwell Primary School

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Head Teacher: Mrs S Tomlinson
Deputy Head Teacher: Mr T Stirling



17th December 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

Christmas

What a busy few weeks we have enjoyed at school!

The EYFS show – Whoops a Daisy Angel – was great and the youngest children loved to perform for the first time on the stage.

KS1 treated everyone to Christmas with the Aliens – this was really fabulous! Well done and thank you to everyone involved in both productions.



Kerry and the catering team produced a fabulous Christmas Dinner and children enjoyed eating with their party hats on! I'm sure the party lunch and class parties on Thursday will be just as exciting. Children can of course wear party clothes all day on Thursday but please ensure they are warm enough and wear sensible shoes. They should wear uniform as normal on Friday for church please. We will be leaving school at 9.05am. Please arrive promptly on Friday.

Thank you also to local firm **Planterior Landscape Services Ltd.** who donated our fabulous school Christmas tree for this year. It looks gorgeous, a real feature in the school hall. Thank you so much! If anyone would like the tree after school on Friday, please contact the school office.

And to everyone who contributed, we raised £144 for Save the Children by wearing Christmas Jumpers – well done!



Save the Children

Attendance

Attendance remains a high priority in school and is monitored weekly. Letters are generated to show patterns and to inform you if children fall into 'persistent absence' meaning they are off for more than 10% of the term. This is equivalent to half a day a week! Expected attendance is 96% over the year or higher. Currently our school attendance is 92.74%. We still have some way to go to improve! Our target set by the DFE is 94.1%.

Attendance has dropped recently due to so many children getting the winter flu virus. I'm hopeful that everyone will recover well over the Christmas break.

	Academic Year to Date			Academic Year to Date	
Nursery	84.52%		Year 3	92.77%	
Reception	91.23%		Year 4	94.31%	
Year 1	92.49%		Year 5	94.86%	
Year 2	94.49%		Year 6	94.76%	

Staffing

In January, we welcome Mrs Gregson, who is joining us to be the teacher in Y1/2 Jellyfish class. We are looking forward to working with her and she is excited to be joining our school and the Key Stage 1 team, having worked for several years in her current school. A huge thank you to Mrs Swift, who has led Jellyfish class since October. She will be missed and we will continue to invite her into school to cover staff absences.

Once again, we all wish Miss Morris the best in her new ventures outside of education.

If anyone is interested in becoming a Midday Supervisor, please look at the Derbyshire County Council website for details of a position now available.



Believe, Endeavour, Succeed Together!



Online Safety

A lot of worrying information is circulating around child safety online. Criminals continue to target children for exploitation purposes. Our children tell us they have people in games and on their phones on platforms that they do not know. We can keep them safe in school because of filtering and monitoring of the internet systems.

Please check which games and platforms your children are accessing. They may well have 'friends' that they do not actually know that they game with and 'chat' to. Children frequently tell us they use Snapchat, TikTok, YouTube, Instagram and What's App.



Derbyshire Safeguarding team have asked school to warn you of 'Add Everyone' What's App groups. These groups encourage users - often children - to add as many contacts as possible, sometimes excluding parents. This creates large, uncontrolled chats where strangers can join.

Why It's a Risk

- Groups can include hundreds of members, including unknown adults.
- Harmful content has been reported: explicit images, violent material, racist language, and requests for personal details.
- Children as young as nine have been added without consent.

What Parents Should Do

- Check your child's WhatsApp groups for names like 'Add Everyone' or similar.
- Update privacy settings: In WhatsApp, go to Settings > Privacy > Groups and set 'Who can add me' to My Contacts.
- Block and report any suspicious groups or individuals.
- Talk to your child about the risks of joining unknown groups and sharing personal information.
- Report harmful content to WhatsApp and, if necessary, the police.

Many children may have access to new technology over Christmas, and we want to help you to keep them safe. Please consider using parental controls on all devices and look at whether photographs can identify them and their locality.

PE and Swimming

In the New Year not all of Y5 will continue to go swimming. A group will now stay in school with Mrs Boldero-Gray and will do a PE lesson instead. Staff will inform you who is swimming and who is staying at school.

Reception class children will be bringing their PE kits to school to get changed into from the start of next term. Please send kit in a bag which will stay in school on your child's peg. The children need a plain white t-shirt, black or blue shorts and Velcro pumps.

For everyone else PE remains the same. Please make sure that children have plain – not patterned or coloured t-shirts and a blue or black sweatshirt and joggers or leggings. Individual days are shared on the school website on the class pages.

[Whitwell Primary School - Class Pages](#)

All that remains for me to say is thank you all for your continued support to school in 2025.

We all wish you a Happy Christmas and a safe start to the New Year – 2026.

In the event of bad weather, we will update you using teachers2parents texts. School re-opens on Monday 5th January.

Kind regards

Mrs Sarah Tomlinson

Headteacher

