



West Moors Middle School

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23rd July 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Over the course of the academic year, the pandemic has presented many challenges to us all as we have had to adapt to a new way of life. We are incredibly proud of what we have achieved as a school community, investing in the ITS Learning Platform and training staff to ensure that during lockdown, children at home and at school followed their tutor group timetable with 'live' lessons delivered via Microsoft Teams (including PE), and children uploading electronic assignment tasks for assessment and feedback. Caring about our children, we also ensured that we made weekly calls to parents and carers, tracking pupils' attendance for all sessions to monitor levels of engagement so we could follow up and encourage all children to engage in continuous learning opportunities aligned with our curriculum maps.

It was also wonderful to be able to support families with limited access to ICT facilities, disseminating school laptops to help support children to access their education provision from home. Our children did so well, adapting to this new wave of online learning as we recognise that it is very different learning virtually to learning in a classroom setting with a teacher in front of them. They are an absolute credit to you all and we could not be any prouder of them. I hope that parents and carers will agree that we have all risen to the challenges as best as we have been able to - both staff and children, to develop a meaningful and manageable online learning programme for all year groups on what has been a positive journey and also a challenge. More recently I am so pleased that we have been able to return to some greater sense of normality and with the vaccination programme I am hopeful for the future.

During the summer term, it has been wonderful to have our sports day with an opportunity for the whole school to take part and celebrate together in a spirit of friendly competition. Mr Connolly and Miss McCorkindale did such a sterling job organising this event and we are also grateful to Mr Brooks, our Chair of Governors, who attended to present the certificates and awards. In addition, our Sports Leaders in Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 were such a brilliant support, helping staff to make this event possible and it was wonderful to be able to share our Sports Day video on the school's Twitter feed.

Following an external assessment, we were recently awarded the Silver Rights Respecting School Award. This award recognises our school's achievement in putting the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child into practice within West Moors Middle School and beyond. It evidences four key areas for children in our Rights Respecting School community, including wellbeing; engaged participation; positive relationships; and high self-esteem. This difference that a Rights Respecting School makes goes beyond our school gates, making a positive impact on the whole community. Our RRS Lead, Mrs Burns, RRS Ambassadors, children in each year group, staff and leadership team were a credit to our school and the External Assessor shared how impressed she was with our collated evidence and the way in which our



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SCHOOL

Headteacher: Dr D Craddock PhD MA BSc (Hons) NPQH
Deputy Headteacher: Mrs D East BSc (Hons) PGCE SENDCo



Rights Respecting School journey has been implemented in practice, enabling the school community to learn about children's rights, putting them into practice every day. This Award is not just about what children do but also, importantly, what adults do. In our Rights Respecting School, children's rights are promoted and realised, and it is wonderful to observe how adults and children have worked to achieve this goal together.

We are also incredibly proud to be able to hold four separate, school bubble transition mornings to welcome our new Year 5 children, starting in September 2021, to our school and meet with teachers, LSAs and Storm, our school's Therapy Dog. Thank you to all children who have been in school for their good sense, observing all the necessary new rules and procedures now in place. And of course to all staff for their support for them.

Kindly supported by the John Thornton Young Achievers Foundation and Ferndown and Parley Rotary Club, for this year's project we were able to develop a gardening area on the school's grounds which included the construction of a polytunnel and wooden planting beds. This was a community effort as the governors, school staff and their families all came into school over the half term holiday period to work as a team to build the polytunnel which was quite something as the instructions were not the easiest to follow! But we got there and our children have been on a watering rota ever since tending to the fruit and vegetables grown. We have also had an afterschool gardening club and children have harvested and taken grown produce home to enjoy. Mrs Mein, our school cook, has also used our grown produce in food for the children at lunch time!

Then, we welcomed a new addition, and much loved, member to our school family called Storm who is our very special school therapy dog. It is incredible to watch how children who were previously reluctant to read, suddenly wanting to read to Storm at every opportunity with a lot of word millionaires and multi-word millionaires now across the school! It is also lovely that other Headteachers in Dorset have visited me to learn more about how I have led and implemented whole school change since becoming Headteacher here two years ago with plans ahead. It is really rewarding to see that what we have achieved here at West Moors Middle School is helping other Headteachers in schools across Dorset.

So, as a school, we certainly have not let Coronavirus stand in our way of making exciting progress on our developments this year and plans for the year ahead! This has been a real team effort in keeping the show on the road. My thanks to premises and cleaning staff who have been in school throughout, keeping the school clean. My thanks to our support staff for keeping the wheels of our organisation turning and to my leadership team, as we have agonised over the logistics of Government guidance, Public Health England guidance and timetabling.

To all of the WMMS community my heartfelt thanks!

We now have guidance from the Department for Education as to what school will look like in September. I am glad that all children will be returning to school without bubbles. However, we will continue to maintain our processes and procedures for keeping the school as safe as possible, including regular cleaning and making sure that all are able to sanitise their hands regularly. As always, we will continue to take heed of the latest advice from Public Health England. We will do our best but we must also ask that families do all

they can to prevent spread of the virus, by abiding by latest Government guidance, getting tested if showing symptoms and self-isolating if necessary.

The Government has started to produce advice about COVID testing arrangements for September but information remains vague at present. We will be testing all children in Key Stage 3 prior to the first day of term on Friday 4th September 2021 and a separate letter has been sent to the parents and carers of children in Year 7 and Year 8 on 21.07.2021 with further information. Regulations about who needs to self-isolate will change from September. Potential close contacts will not need to self-isolate but will instead be asked to take daily home tests before coming to school.

So as we come to the end of a successful if disrupted school year my thanks to so many groups associated with the life of the school: children, staff, parents, carers, governors and the PTFA.

We wish all of our Year 8 children transitioning into Year 9 the very best of luck at their new schools. We have high hopes and aspirations for their futures so now they can reach for the stars and follow their dreams. Through hard work and effort, they can achieve their ambitions in life and we very proud of how far they have come. It's also wonderful that many of them have even asked me whether they can come back to help as Sports Leaders in our afterschool clubs next year! We want them to keep in touch and let us know how well they are doing- and they will always be welcome at WMMS to either visit and/ or help with afterschool clubs if that is what they would like to do. To watch how they have grown both personally and academically has been a privilege and I, along with the rest of my team, are so incredibly proud of them.

My thanks to you all and best wishes for a restful summer break.

All best wishes,



Dr Deborah Craddock

From the Chair of Governors

As another school year comes to a close, as chair of governors, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all the staff and pupils for surviving an extremely challenging year under the continual threat of Covid.

In my frequent visits to school (always following safety guidelines!), I have been consistently amazed at the changes witnessed. A number of initiatives have been started and seen through; all have been based upon improving the children's well-being or increasing their learning potential.

Consequently, the school has gone from strength to strength and is in an extremely powerful position to maintain this upward trend.

My fellow governors and I would like to thank all the staff involved for their immense dedication under very challenging circumstances caused by the pandemic, and the children for the manner in which they have settled to their learning in the face of so much disruption.

Best wishes,

Derek Brooks