



# ETWALL PRIMARY

## SEPTEMBER *newsletter*

### WELCOME BACK!



A very warm welcome to all our families—both new and returning—as we begin another exciting school year together. It has been absolutely wonderful to see the children arriving each morning with big smiles, smart uniforms, and everything they need to start the day ready to learn. The classrooms are already buzzing with fantastic learning, and we are so proud of how quickly everyone has settled in. A huge thank you to parents and carers for your support in getting the children to school on time and prepared—it really does make a difference. We'd also like to extend our thanks to those who kindly donated pencil cases. Children who needed a pencil case and supplies have chosen from a great selection and we still have some kept aside for replacements throughout the year.

As always, we believe that strong communication and partnership between home and school is key to every child's success. Please do keep an eye on your emails and class dojo for updates, and don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or concerns. We're looking forward to a year filled with care, curiosity and ambition!



### UPCOMING EVENTS:

- 25th Sept - School photographer for individual and sibling photos
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Oct - Y1 Phonics and crafts workshop - 9am
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Oct - EYFS Phonics and crafts workshop - 9am



## School Photographs

Jane Stapleton photographers are coming in on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> September. The doors will be open from 7:30am for any sibling photos, including those younger than school age and those in secondary school. We have checked and double-checked that they will definitely be here on time this year! Individual photos will be taken and we always do our best to get in-school siblings photographed as well.

**The photographers will be based in classrooms so before-school club will be running in the hall as usual.**

## Lates

We have had a good start with attendance and punctuality but we are still getting a number of children arriving after, 8:50am. Please be aware that children should already be in the classroom at 8:50am and that gates are opened at 8:40am each morning.

We will be following up with those who are regularly late as part of our attendance duties.

## Governors

We will shortly be holding a parent governor election. Letters will be emailed giving further information but please do consider if this is something you might be interested in. Our governing body meet on a Tuesday evening and shape the strategic direction of the school.

## KS2 Young Leaders

As part of our commitment to nurturing confident and reflective learners, we're inviting children to complete a simple application form when expressing interest in joining one of our school committees. This is a wonderful opportunity for them to pause and think about their unique strengths, talents and interests. By recognising what they're good at and what they enjoy, children can make thoughtful choices about which committee would suit them best—whether it's Reading Ambassadors, School Council, or I-Vengers. It's a lovely way to build self-awareness and encourage a sense of ownership and pride in their contributions to school life.

We will send out the information to parents once children have had the assembly and encourage parental support with their (short!) applications.





# Spotlight on...Mrs Carter

## Early Help Support

At times, family life can feel a little overwhelming, and it's perfectly okay to ask for a helping hand. That's where our wonderful Early Help and Family Support Worker, Mrs Carter, comes in.

Mrs Carter works with families across a wide range of areas—from supporting parents with referrals for children who may have emerging special educational needs, to helping parents and children who are struggling with emotional-based school avoidance. She's here to listen, guide and support, always with kindness and understanding.

If you feel you could benefit from a chat or some advice, please don't hesitate to reach out—we're here to help.

During the day, Mrs Carter can be found teaching phonics in KS1, teaching Kingfishers one afternoon a week and then in The Hive for the rest of the day. The Hive is our safe space and Mrs Carter is always has a warm welcome with a cup of tea, a biscuit or a milkshake!





# HEALTHY SNACKS

## Early Years and Key Stage 1

The government provides free fruit and vegetables to all children in Early Years and Key Stage 1. It's part of a national initiative to encourage healthy eating habits from a young age—and we think it's brilliant! By offering fresh fruit and vegetables, children begin to understand the importance of making healthy choices and looking after their bodies.

We find that many children who do not (or will not!) eat fruit/veg willingly at home are more than happy to sit with their friends and peel oranges together, munch away on apples and pears or bite into a strawberry! They quite like the fun of the tomato seeds spraying everywhere and trying to identify new vegetables such as sugarsnap peas or whole baby cucumbers.

We really strongly encourage fruit and vegetables in Early Years and Key Stage 1 so that we are helping children to build healthy habits and to enjoy these options for later on - and they are free! If your child has any issues and needs an alternative snack, please let their teacher know and make it a healthy one from the list below.

## Key Stage 2

We'd love to see these healthy choices continue in key stage 2 also, so if your child brings a snack to school, please consider sending fruit or vegetables. It's a simple way to support their wellbeing and help them build lifelong healthy habits. When children reach Year 3, the free fruit and vegetables stop but we hope that many children have developed a taste for healthy snacks and continue to reach for them.

However, it's always a challenge to keep things interesting for children as well as trying to avoid snacks that have added salt, fat or sugar. Below are some additional ideas below for those who want to mix it up a little but remain healthy and tasty.

Please **avoid chocolate, sweets or crisps** but do try...

A babybel or piece of cheese.

Homemade snack - flapjacks or other oat/wholegrain snacks - **NO NUTS PLEASE!**

Vegetable sticks - a range of different colours is ideal

Bread sticks or small pitta breads - perhaps with some cream cheese

Rice cakes, plain pretzels

Banana bread, malt loaf, carrot cake are all items that can be sweetened naturally and still provide a small serving of fruit/vegetables

Yoghurt tubes



## Harvest Festival

The children in school will be celebrating a harvest festival on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> October.

This is the same day as our PTA Scarecrow Festival so we

hope to fill the hall with autumnal scarecrows and some kind donations of food.

Our food is donated to the Padley Centre which then distributes food to those who need it most.

In the days leading up to the Harvest Festival, children are encouraged to bring in tins, packets and jars, as well as packets of biscuits, tubes of toothpaste and bottles of washing up liquid. We are grateful of all donations but please ensure all food items are sealed and in-date.



## Half-Term Project

We offer all children the opportunity to create some remembrance art over half-term. I would love to create a gallery of this artwork on our school website and also share this on Class Dojo.

Please send all photos of this art through to:

**[parentmail@etwall.derbyshire.sch.uk](mailto:parentmail@etwall.derbyshire.sch.uk)**

It would be helpful if as many photos as possible could be sent through during/at the end of half-term and by Friday 7<sup>th</sup> November at the latest.

I will put on your child's first name and their age when I display them.

However, please let me know on the email if you'd rather either of these were not included.

Check out Pinterest for some great remembrance art ideas!







## Welcome back to... Miss King

We are thrilled to welcome Miss King back to Etwall on a temporary basis. Miss King is teaching in both Little Owls and in Red Kites classes. There are lots of children in school that she knows very well and she has slotted straight back into our fabulous school.

## Puppies and Dogs

Please ensure that dogs don't come into school grounds, including the school car park. Just outside the school gates is a great place to leave your canine companions whilst you collect/drop off at school.

We do have two dogs that are 'support dogs' or 'assistance dogs'. These are allowed on site because specific permission has been given by the headteacher.

We understand that puppies do not like to be left alone by the gates so please make arrangements for your child to go in with a friend (or member of school staff) as puppies are unpredictable and so should not be in the school grounds, even if carried.



## Headlice

Please check your child's hair for headlice. Parents are reporting that headlice are frequent visitors in the younger classes. Please check and treat regularly!

## Holiday Requests

A reminder that term-time holidays cannot be authorised. Exceptional circumstances for leave of absence authorisation include weddings of immediate family members, funerals and other such situations. On a personal level, we empathise with requests but please understand that time out of school for holidays will not be granted and may result in a penalty notice.

## Road Safety Awareness

I have been made aware of some inconsiderate parking or stopping on zig zags to drop children off. Whilst we always encourage parents to take a note of the number plate and report to the police, we also urge all of our parents to be safe and to be considerate of our neighbours when on school runs.

Dave is now back on crossing patrol every day. He does have the occasional appointment or training day so he's asked me to let you know in advance that there will be **no crossing patrol on Monday 24th November**.







# AND FINALLY...

## **Etwall Primary School Swimming Pool**

Our swimming pool has been a huge part of our school history and many of our current parents talk fondly of learning to swim in it. Others also talk less fondly as, for some, it was just under a poly tunnel and was not quite as pleasant as it has been for children in recent years!


However, school funding means that we are no longer in a position to fund the repairs or maintain the pool even if the extensive repairs were completed. The boiler, machinery and mechanics required to keep the pool safe for users is decades old and the repair costs are in excess of £100,000.

We know that the pool at Etwall Leisure Centre is available for use and this would be just a 5-10 minute walk from our school, allowing us to maintain the curriculum requirement of teaching swimming as part of the Key Stage 2 PE curriculum. We will therefore be moving our swimming lessons for Y3/4 to the leisure centre. Whilst we will not be able to swim as often (certainly during this academic year), all children will be able to swim together, rather than having to use our own pool in small groups.

There will be a formal letter coming out to you shortly, but I also wanted to inform you on this newsletter as you will already be aware that we are not currently using the pool or hiring it out.

We have spent a considerable amount of time making this difficult decision and it has certainly not been made lightly. We have also discussed in depth what else the building could be used for so that it still serves the community.

There is a current opportunity for schools to apply for a grant to convert space into a nursery. Our initial ideas are that we could convert the building to a governor-run nursery for 3-4 year olds, including wraparound care to match the school day. We would be very interested to hear your views on this. Therefore a letter will be sent out shortly inviting you to share your thoughts and ideas.







# DO YOU KNOW ANY CHILDREN READY TO START SCHOOL IN SEPTEMBER 2026?



If so, we have an opportunity for children and parents to visit our school and meet our staff.

We are holding stay and play sessions on Friday 24th October between 9:30am and 12pm.

Please register your interest by contacting the school office on 01283 732301 or by emailing [info@etwall.derbyshire.sch.uk](mailto:info@etwall.derbyshire.sch.uk)

Your child can play with any other visiting children in the classroom, accessing our provision whilst you have the opportunity to chat to staff and tour the school.

If you wish to book a tour when children are in school, please contact the school office and we will find a time to suit you.

