



West Lodge Primary School Newsletter

Respecting each other, learning creatively, challenging all.

4th December 2018

Dear Parents/Carers,

Exciting News – West Lodge in The Sunday Times

Firstly, I would like to share the exciting news that West Lodge appeared in the Sunday Times list of the top 500 primary schools in England. West Lodge was at number 226 out of 16,776 primary schools in England – placing the school in the top 2% of primary schools in England. The criteria that The Sunday Times used involved using the three tested subjects at the end of Key Stage 2: Reading, Grammar, Punctuation & Spelling and Maths. When considered in conjunction with our holistic ethos and achievements as an inclusive school this is a remarkable achievement that we should all feel very proud of. Earlier this year, I mentioned that we were chosen to appear in The Parliamentary Review, I have included a link to the article below once again – which outlines our ethos and achievements. At West Lodge, we are always very reflective and continuously looking for ways to improve.

<http://www.theparliamentaryreview.co.uk/organisations/west-lodge-primary-school>

Upcoming Concerts and Shows

As we approach the end of term we are all looking forward to the upcoming concerts and performances – the staff and children are working very hard in the rehearsals and I can assure you that you will be in for a treat when you come to watch the show. The performances were all memorable: Reception – Shine Star Shine (Wednesday 12th at 9am or 2pm); Year 1 – Minty Mouse's Christmas Tail (Friday 14th Dec 9am or 2pm); Year 2 – Sparkle Monday 17th 2pm and Tues 18th Dec at 9am) and Year 3 – Cinderella Rockerfella (Tuesday 18th at 2pm and Wednesday 19th Dec at 7pm).

Staffing Changes

I am also writing to inform you of some staffing changes. We will be saying goodbye to the following staff at the end of this term: Miss Rolnick, Miss Fenton, Mr Mendis, Mrs Holcombe and Mrs Stalley.

Miss Rolnick is taking up a role as a Read, Write, Inc Consultant Trainer in January. Read, Write, Inc is a passion for Miss Rolnick and the opportunity arose allowing her to take this different route in her career. Miss Rolnick joined West Lodge as Deputy Headteacher in September 2015 and as played a crucial role in a period of transition for the school as West Lodge changed Headteachers. She has been instrumental in the leadership of the school in this new era – leading the curriculum as well as the development of teaching and learning. Miss Rolnick has driven the embedding of Read, Write, Inc in Reception and Key Stage 1, thus helping to ensure children develop a strong foundation in phonics and early reading. In addition to this leading on the positive changes we have made to the children's lunchtime experience through the OPAL and Recipe for Change programmes. As a result of this change, I will be reviewing the structure of our leadership team. In the short term Mrs Rackham will be extending her working week to five days, this will enable Mr Bennett to relinquish his teaching responsibility for Purple Class. In addition Mrs Haines will be increasing her working days to four days a week. This will provide the school with increased leadership capacity. Mrs Meenagh, our Early literacy Consultant, will also be increasing the number of days she will be working during the Spring Term – to provide specific support for our Early Years team.

Mrs Holcombe is also leaving West Lodge at Christmas as she is relocating to Somerset. Mrs Holcombe joined West Lodge First School in September 2004, this was prior to the amalgamation. She worked in a number of roles across the school – working initially in reception as a classteacher and then across all the year groups in Key Stage 1 and year 3. In recent years Mrs Holcombe has worked incredibly hard setting up interventions and systems to support pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL). This also included leading training sessions for staff. Mrs Ahmed, who also has experience in this area, will be taking on the intervention groups and providing support for pupils with EAL.

We also say goodbye to Mrs Stalley this term. Mrs Stalley joined West Lodge in September 2011 as an Autism Advisory Teacher – she has worked one day a week at West Lodge over the last seven years. As the former deputy headteacher for Alexandra Special School Mrs Stalley brought a huge amount of experience to the role – supporting pupils and providing training and advice for staff. Mrs Stalley played a crucial role in the establishment of Kaleidoscope and she has provided invaluable expertise over the years enabling us to build our knowledge, capacity and experience in this area. To such an extent, that we are now a Learning Hub for other schools.

Miss Fenton would like to gain a range of different experiences during her time in the UK would like to pursue a role as a day to day agency teacher, this will provide her with greater flexibility. Miss Fenton has brought great energy and enthusiasm to her role as Orange Classteacher. She has really enjoyed her time with Orange Class and played a crucial role in supporting their transition from the EYFS curriculum to Year 1. Miss Corby is returning from her travels abroad and re-joining the West Lodge staff team in January – she will take up the role of Orange Classteacher. Miss Corby taught at West Lodge during 2016-17 and 2017-18 has a Year 2 classteacher – she is an excellent teacher. Miss Corby will be in school on Wednesday 12th December for a transition day.

Miss Zhang is now able to extend her stay in the UK and will continue working at West Lodge from January. She will continue as classteacher for Aquamarine Class. We are delighted that Miss Zhang is able to extend her stay.



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Mr Mendis has taken up a new role in the field of logistics – Mr Mendis joined West Lodge in September 2017 and has worked hard supporting children in Year 6 and within Kaleidoscope – his calm, positive demeanour has had a very positive impact on a number of children. We have appointed Mr Barrell as the replacement for Mr Mendis, Mr Barrell has gained a wide variety of experience in previous roles working with children and adults with additional needs.

I would like to pay tribute to Sam Harvey and Michael Clark, who have both been Governors at West Lodge since 2012 – their terms have come to an end. Sam Harvey has taken on the role of Creative Arts Link Governor, Rights Respecting Schools Link Governor and Chairperson of the Quality and Standards Committee. Michael has been PE Link Governor and a crucial member of our Resource Management Committee. They both worked incredibly hard in their roles supporting the school and providing useful challenge to the leadership team – enabling us to continue our journey of continuous improvement. We are very grateful for all their hard work and support.

Mrs Jacqueline Duncan, who worked as a lunchtime supervisor, recently left to take up a full-time carer role. Mrs Bridie McCarthy, Mrs Caroline Byrne and Mrs Renata Malhotra have all recently joined the staff to work as lunchtime supervisors

I would like to thank all the staff who are leaving for the hard work, commitment and dedication they have put in to their roles whilst at West Lodge. We wish them all the very best in their new adventures. Thank you, once again, for all your continued support – I do believe we are very fortunate to have such a supportive and active parent/carers body.

Kind regards,

Jim Dees
Headteacher

School Improvement Partner Visit

We recently had a visit from our new School Improvement Partner, Sue Cox. Sue has 19 years' experience as a Headteacher in three different schools. In addition, Sue is also an experienced Ofsted inspector. I have included a summary of her report from the visit (see below).

The Headteacher led the IP through a tour of the school. Throughout the school we saw that pupils were very well behaved and engaged in their learning. There is a happy, relaxed and purposeful atmosphere in the school and relationships are warm and supportive. Pupils were confident and happy to explain their learning. Pupils confidently talked about the success criteria for their learning tasks which help them understand how to be successful. We saw some examples of high-quality writing when visiting a Year 3 class. One pupil proudly showed his model of a round house which he had completed as a homework challenge. Pupils in Year 6 talked about the text they are currently studying, and the Headteacher explained the school's approach to using high-quality texts to inspire pupils' writing.

The learning environment is attractive and stimulating and a wide range of different curriculum subjects were evident in the many displays around the school. We saw many examples of high-quality art work using a range of different media. The school's 'diamond' values are displayed prominently throughout the school. The school benefits from additional specialist rooms for IT and the school is a specialist learning hub for other Harrow schools.

We visited the kaleidoscope provision for pupils who have a diagnosis of autism. We could see how well these pupils were being cared for and supported by individual members of staff. Pupils spend some time in the specialist provision and at other times they are supported in the classroom. The Headteacher explained how arrangements are tailored to pupils' individual needs. We could see that pupils were settled and happy and clearly 'at home'.

A strong feature of the school is the leadership opportunities given to pupils through house captains, digital leaders and other responsibilities such as being 'table captains' during the lunch break.

The outside grounds are spacious including dedicated play areas for the early years (EYFS). The school also has a wonderful thatched round house and a nature trail through an area of established, mature trees and shrubs. The school is continuing to enhance outdoor provision.