

Widmer End Community Combined School & Pre-School Newsletter

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Friday 16th January 2026 (8)

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Dear Widmer End families,

I am delighted to say that we have welcomed back Mrs Sadler and Ms Atkins this term. They have both been very much missed while they were away, and it has been lovely to see them back with the children and staff. I am also pleased to share that Mrs Van der Merwe will be returning to school next week. Thank you to everyone for the compassion, kindness and understanding shown during this time – it has meant a great deal.

It is with mixed emotions that I also share the news that our much-loved Pastoral Leader, Miss Allen, will be leaving us at February half term to take up an exciting new role with the Local Authority, supporting pupils with Special Educational Needs. Whilst this was a difficult decision for her, we are incredibly proud of her and are so pleased that her skills and dedication will continue to benefit children beyond Widmer End. She will be a huge loss to our school community, and we will miss her terribly. We wish her every success and happiness in her new post. The recruitment process has already begun, and we hope to appoint someone who will continue the excellent pastoral work we value so highly here.

The children have thoroughly enjoyed working with the Springbucks gymnastics team, who have led taster sessions for children across all year groups. Pupils in Reception and Year 1 have also had great fun taking part in a multi-skills competition at Holmer Green Junior School. In addition, Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 were thrilled to participate in drama workshops this week, which were met with huge enthusiasm - they always have so much fun!

Looking ahead, we are busily organising a range of sporting and enrichment opportunities, including upcoming football and netball tournaments. We are also excited to be hosting an inter-schools chess tournament here at Widmer End, proudly organised by our Year 6 pupils. Further details to be announced soon!

Have a lovely weekend!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Mrs Hillier'.

Exciting Trips This Term

We have some wonderful trips coming up this term! Our little Pre-Schoolers are heading to Odds Farm to see the baby animals; We are very excited that Reception are creating pizzas and investigating a large library in Amersham. Year 1 are off to the brilliant Milestones Museum, discovering transport of the past, whilst Year 2 take a wildlife adventure to Whipsnade Zoo. Year 3 will learn all about Ancient Egypt at the Ashmolean, whilst Year 4 try to spot the illusive sloth at the Living Rainforest. Lastly, Year 5 discover Volcanoes and Space tech at the NHM London and Year 6 are lucky enough to head to Hazard Alley, a highly anticipated trip. These, along with all our workshops, sports fixtures, Bikeability amongst others, makes for a busy term!



Dates for your Diary

Monday 19th January

- Wear Bright Mufti to 'Beat Blue Monday'

Monday 26th January

- Year R Height & Weight Checks with The School Nursing Team
- Bucks Fire Visit Year 5

Wednesday 4th February

- CofE Church Assembly

Friday 4th February

- PTA Hot Dog Day! Book [HERE](#)

Monday 9th February

- Year 6 Trip to Hazard Alley

Friday 13th February

- Year 4 Living Rainforest Trip
- Year 2 Sharing Assembly
- Break Up For Half Term

Monday 23rd February

- School Reopens 8:30am

Wednesday 25th February

- Year 3 Trip to the Ashmolean
- CofE Church Assembly
- Friendly Mixed Netball Match vs Little Kingshill HOME

Friday 27th February

- Year 6 Tag Rugby at HGSS
- PTA Pub Quiz

Monday 2nd March

- Travelling Book Fair Opens

Wednesday 4th March

- Year 4 Trip to the NHM London
- Friendly Girls Netball Match vs Little Kingshill AWAY

Thursday 5th March

- Year 6 Girls Netball Tournament at Pipers Corner School

Friday 6th March

- PTA Hot Dog Day



Awards This Fortnight

Shining Star



Shance

Merit Awards



- Year R - Rory & Alaynah
- Year 1 - Primrose & Edward
- Year 2 - Myrah & Hallie P
- Year 3 - Lexi & Deen
- Year 4 - Joseph T
- Year 5 - Bella & Margot
- Year 6 - Evan & Finley

Congratulations and thank you for being excellent role models to your peers!

Beating the January Blues – Blue Monday !

January can sometimes feel like a long and gloomy month, and Blue Monday is often described as the saddest Monday of the year. Statistically, it usually falls on the third Monday in January and is linked to a combination of factors such as cold weather, shorter daylight hours, post-Christmas tiredness and the challenge of getting back into routines after the holidays.

At Widmer End School, we believe that small, joyful moments can make a big difference to how we feel. To help combat the January Blues, we are inviting children to come to school wearing bright and cheerful clothes on Blue Monday. Children are also welcome to bring in a small cuddly toy from home for comfort and reassurance during the day.

Throughout the day, children will also be encouraged to focus on kindness, positivity and looking after their wellbeing. From sharing smiles with friends to enjoying creative activities, we aim to create a warm and supportive environment where everyone feels valued and happy.

Thank you for supporting us in spreading positivity and helping our school community shine brightly, even on the bluest of Mondays!



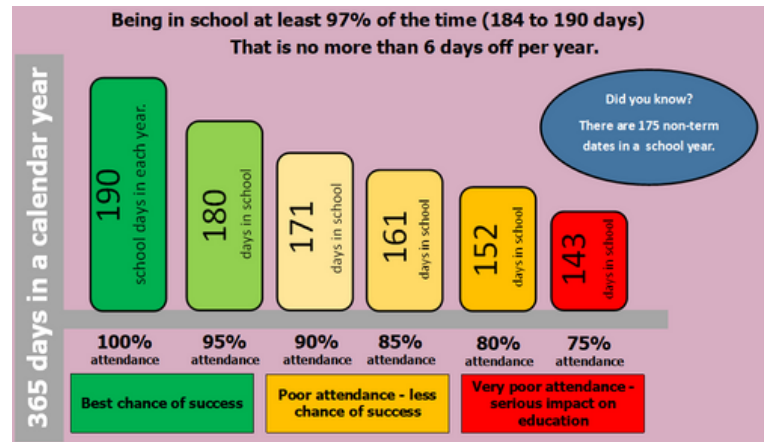
Attendance

School average this academic year

95.7%

The last 2 weeks:

- Reception - 96.67% - 2 Late Marks!
- Year 1 - 100% - 1 Late Mark!
- Year 2 - 96.70% - 4 Late Marks!
- Year 3 - 94.24% - 3 Late Marks!
- Year 4 - 97.04% - 5 Late Mark!
- Year 5 - 97.86% - 1 Late Mark!
- Year 6 - 98.5% - 4 Late Marks!



Every Minute Counts!

LATENESS = LOST LEARNING

(Figures below are calculated over a school year)

5 Minutes late each day	3 days lost!
10 Minutes late each day	6.5 days lost!
15 Minutes late each day	10 days lost!
20 Minutes late each day	13 days lost!
30 Minutes late each day	19 days lost!

Be at the classroom on time and ready to learn!

The Dog House

Channel 4's 'The Dog House' is looking for local families to offer a loving home to a rescue dog and share their reasons why on the show! If you're interested, find out more [HERE](#) or email thedoghouse@fivemilefilms.co.uk.

NEW YEAR, NEW LEASH OF LIFE

ADOPT A RESCUE DOG & BE PART OF CHANNEL 4'S *the Dog House*

APPLY HERE

C4THEDOGHOUSETAKEPART.CO.UK



MHST Updates & Webinars

We're pleased to share the latest updates and opportunities from Bucks Mind, supporting the mental health and wellbeing of young people and families across Buckinghamshire.

Become a Young Expert by Experience

Do you know a young person who is passionate about mental health, or who has lived experience they'd like to use to help others?

Bucks Mind is looking for young people aged 13–25 to join their Young Experts by Experience group. This group plays a vital role in shaping and improving mental health services in Buckinghamshire by sharing real experiences and ideas.

It's a fantastic opportunity for young people to have their voices heard, build confidence, and make a meaningful difference. [Click here to find out more.](#)

Unmasking Parenthood Campaign

Bucks Mind, alongside local partners, is supporting the Unmasking Parenthood campaign, which aims to reduce stigma and provide vital support to parents.

The transition to parenthood can be overwhelming, and many parents struggle silently. By 'unmasking' the emotional and mental health challenges that some new parents face, this campaign encourages parents to prioritise their mental wellbeing, recognise the signs of distress, and seek help when needed, supporting the wellbeing of the whole family.

Support is available, and no one needs to face these challenges alone. [Click here to find out more.](#) Samaritans are on 116 123 or text SHOUT to 85258.

Parent Webinars

Bucks Mind will be hosting their termly parent webinars again this year. These sessions are open to all parents and carers in our school community and cover key topics affecting children and young people's mental health.

[Spring 2026: Social Media & Mental Health](#)

[Summer 2026: Exams, Stress & Transition](#)

Lastly, some dates for your diaries!

Children's mental health week is the 9th-15th February, with Mental Health Awareness Month in May.

Spotlight On SEND!

Auditory Memory - Top tips to support at home

Auditory memory is the brain's ability to process, store, and recall spoken information. The 'listening memory' is essential for learning.

- When playing games or doing activities such as baking or crafts which involve lots of instructions, try to **reduce distractions** which makes it more difficult for the child to concentrate e.g. turn off the TV and radio, sit them with their back to the window.
- Think 'steady' – **reduce the speed** of your talking to give the child more time to process what you are saying.
- After you have asked a question, **count to 5** to give them time to take in what has been said and think of their response (this feels like a long time for the person waiting, but is needed for the child to process what you have said and put together a response). Try not to interrupt the child while they are thinking.
- Make sure you have the child's attention before giving them an instruction. Say their **name first** (e.g. James (wait for him to look at you).....can you.....
- Reduce the number of words you use in instructions and emphasise the **key words** (e.g. say "James, get the cups and plates rather than 'can you do me a favour and get the cups and plates out of the cupboard please?'). Encourage the child to repeat back the key words (underlined) to you before going off to follow the instruction.

SEND Support Phone Line

We are open everyday between 10am and 4pm and until 6pm on Tuesdays. The line is for parents, professionals and anyone with enquiries about SEND in Buckinghamshire.

Please note that the support line is open between 10am and 2pm during school holidays and is closed on Bank Holidays.

01296 382135

Please contact Mrs Ross-Wood for any SEND related enquiries. SEND@widmerend.bucks.sch.uk



Pre-School Updates

Happy New Year to you all. It has been lovely seeing all the children back after Christmas, telling us their Father Christmas stories and interacting with their peers again.

This term we have welcomed some new children who are settling well and are beginning to understand the Pre-School rules and boundaries as well as making friends.

As we start the New Year, we begin our journey on a literacy scheme called NELI. Every week, a new book is introduced where we listen to the story and learn 4 words associated with that story. This week's story is "Neon Leon". Please ask your child what kind of animal is Leon and what is so special about him.

This half term we are also looking at Emergency Services and so we have already talked about doctors and dentists. I wonder what emergency service we will look at next week?

Have a lovely weekend everyone.

Deborah



Guiding Children's Digital Lives

As children grow up in an increasingly digital world, many parents have questions about screen time, online safety, gaming, and the right time to introduce devices and social media. At Widmer End School, we are committed to supporting families in navigating these challenges in a positive, informed, and age-appropriate way.


Widmer End School is proud to be part of the Chiltern Area Partnership (CAP); a group of local schools working together to share knowledge, resources, and best practice. Through this partnership, schools across our area take a consistent and supportive approach to children's digital wellbeing, helping to improve the school experience for all children.


As part of this work, we follow the Guiding Digital Childhoods approach, which encourages:

- Healthy and balanced use of technology
- Age-appropriate access to devices and online platforms
- Strong relationships, play, independence, and real-world experiences
- Open and supportive conversations between parents and children

We encourage parents to visit our [Guiding Digital Childhoods page](#) on the school website to learn more about the principles we follow and how families can be supported at home.

Please also save the date for the brilliant workshop coming up! See details [HERE](#).

 Wednesday 4th of February

 7.00 pm (online)

 Let's Talk About Our Kids and Their Tech

Gymnastics Sessions Enjoyed By All

Years R-5 were treated to specialist gymnastics PE sessions, last Friday and today. [Springbucks](#) wanted to showcase just some of the equipment they use during their exciting gymnastics club on Friday mornings. All the children thoroughly enjoyed themselves and we spotted some perfect poise and balance! More photos of the children are on the class pages of our school website.





WORKING TOGETHER
ACROSS LOCAL SCHOOLS
TO SUPPORT CONFIDENT,
CONNECTED FAMILIES
IN A DIGITAL CHILDHOOD



ENDORSED BY
 **SMARTPHONE FREE CHILDHOOD**
OFFICIAL PARTNERS SUPPORTING PARENT-TO-PARENT CONFIDENCE





Page Turners

Reading at home is a simple way to support your child's learning and build confidence. Just 10 minutes a day can help develop vocabulary, imagination, and a love of books.

It's not just about reading every word; talking about the story, exploring the pictures, or discussing characters is just as valuable. Re-reading favourite books also helps children feel confident and enjoy familiar stories.



Creating a short, regular reading routine makes reading a positive habit and shows children that reading can be fun and rewarding. Here's a fun Idea! Pause while reading and ask your child to guess what happens next from the illustrations.

Healthy Lunch - Hydration Heroes

We all know lunchboxes are important, but what your child drinks is just as crucial for keeping them alert, happy, and ready to learn! 🍷🌟

Sugary drinks like juice, fizzy drinks, and flavoured waters can give a quick sugar rush, but this is often followed by a crash that leaves children tired and hungry. Instead, let's celebrate water; the true superhero of hydration! 🧑‍🚒♂️💧

Simple Tips for Parents:

- Water first! Encourage children to drink a small glass of water before meals and throughout the day.
- Fun bottles – a brightly coloured or favourite character water bottle can make drinking water more exciting. 🌈
- Fruit infusion – add slices of orange, lemon, cucumber, or berries to water for a subtle, natural flavour. 🍓
- Set reminders – little sticky notes or an 'Alexa/Google' notification can help children remember to sip regularly at home. 🕒💧

Drinks to Limit:

- Fizzy drinks 🍷
- Sugary juice drinks 🍹
- Flavoured milk with added sugar 🥛

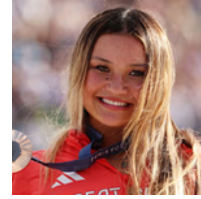
Quick Lunchbox Hydration Ideas:

- Small reusable water bottle with a squeeze-top lid 🍷
- Mini thermos with chilled water ❄️
- Ice cubes made with a small piece of fruit within for a fun twist ❄️🍊

💡 **Tip:** Make drinking water a family habit! Children are more likely to drink water if they see parents and siblings enjoying it too. 🧑‍🚒💧

Value Of The Term

COURAGE



"Fall down, get back up and keep on trying. That's how you learn."

In our Values assemblies, we started our focus on our value of courage. Children were introduced to Sky Brown, the youngest ever GB medallist at an Olympic games, who was chosen to inspire them to be brave and not give up on their dreams and goals. They learnt about how Sky taught herself how to skateboard from the age of 3, not giving up even when she had an accident leaving her in hospital with broken bones. Children learnt that Sky had the courage to get back on her skateboard and go to the 2020 Olympic games, feeling stronger than ever. Mrs Marshall introduced the words 'resilience' and 'tenacity' and taught the children that, being determined and never giving up will ensure that you succeed and achieve your goals.

Years R, 1 & 2 Drama Workshops

This Wednesday, our Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 classes took part in a lively and imaginative drama workshop based on the Midnight in the Toyshop theme. As the clock struck twelve, the children tiptoed into an enchanted toyshop where forgotten toys came to life. They met characters such as Belle Ballerina, who dreamed of disco stardom, Rebel Racer who was always raring to go, and Grumble the Dinosaur, who was constantly on the lookout for cake!

The session was packed with catchy songs, infectious dances and imaginative storytelling, and staff heard squeals of joy throughout the hall. The workshop leader was incredibly funny and engaging, even managing to make Mrs Saha jump out of her skin! The children had a fantastic time laughing, learning and building confidence, making it a truly memorable experience for everyone involved.

