



Ostend Place, Newcastle under Lyme, ST5 2QY | 01782 973790 | office@westlands.staffs.sch.uk



WORLD BOOK DAY

This year, World Book Day will focus on celebrating reading, creativity, and individuality. Children are invited to come dressed however they like – as a book character, a superhero or just in their pyjamas! There is no dress code as the day is all about being comfortable and being yourself.

We will also be having a visit from Enrich Education, who will be spending time with each class across the day to teach them how to play Quidditch. This means that if whatever they choose to wear isn't practical to take part in this PE event, they will need to bring something appropriate to change into (this can be PE kit, or just something comfortable and easy to move around in).

LIBRARY

We are working very hard in school on our new library, which will be called **The Reading Realm** following a whole school vote. This new space will be filled with books and cosy areas where the children can enjoy reading for pleasure.

As part of our World Book Day celebrations, we are asking the children to take part in a competition to design the door plaque for The Reading Realm. The children should have brought home an entry sheet – any entries will need to be returned on this entry sheet please.

If anybody has anything at home that they think might be of use to us in our new library (including bookshelves, comfy chairs or beanbags) please do let us know – we are working on a shoestring budget to create the library!

PARENTS EVENING

Parents Evenings will be on Monday 16th and Wednesday 18th March. Emails will be sent out this week with a link to book an appointment.

ARRIVAL AT SCHOOL

Children should be in the school building every day by 8:45am. We are getting quite a few families arriving late, with several children arriving in school between 8:45am and 9am. These children will be receiving late marks in the register, and are missing important parts of the school day, setting up the morning lessons. Children arriving after 9:05am are marked as 'U', which counts as an unauthorised absence for the morning session.

VALUABLES IN SCHOOL

We would recommend that children do not bring expensive water bottles, bags, earrings, watches or any other items of high value into school. Staff work hard to help the children look after their things and children are regularly reminded to put things away in bags and trays. However, classrooms are busy places and things can get misplaced or broken despite the best efforts of staff. We cannot take responsibility for any valuables lost or broken at school. **Can we also remind parents that smart watches should not be worn in school please.**

ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

Holidays during term-time cannot be approved, and we would ask parents to take holidays during the 13 weeks of school holiday. Any holiday taken in school time will be classed as 'unauthorised absence' and will be subject to Local Authority fines.

We also ask parents to make appointments for the doctors, dentists etc. outside of school time wherever possible. If you have an unavoidable appointment during school hours, we will need to see evidence of appointments to authorise the absence.

If your child is going to be absent from school for any reason, please let Mrs Laws in the school office know before 9:30am. You can either contact the office on 01782 973790 (leave a message if there is no answer), or contact Mrs Laws via Dojo or over email. Messages sent to the teachers do not always get to them until later in the day as they are busy teaching. You can of course message the class teacher as well, but please make sure you have called or messaged the office if your child is not in school.

Letters will come out this week to children with below 95% attendance for the year so far. Thank you as always for your support in continued good attendance at school.

FOOD BANK REFERRALS

We are able to issue vouchers for Newcastle food banks, through The Trussell Trust. If this is something you feel may be helpful to you, please don't hesitate to contact the school office.

We may need to ask for additional information about your household to claim the voucher, but all information will be treated in the strictest confidence.

PACKED LUNCHES

Can we encourage parents to send in healthy choices in their children's lunchboxes? We don't have a problem with treats to complement a healthy lunch, but multiple chocolate bars, crisps and sweets can lead to very distracted children in the afternoons!

Can we also remind parents that the children's water bottles should only contain water.

MEDICINE

Children **should not** have any form of medication with them in the classroom, other than inhalers. Any medication - paracetamol, ibuprofen, antibiotics or hay fever medication should be brought to the school office, where it remains for the school day. All medicine requires that a 'Request to Administer Medicine' form is completed (available from the school office).

FREE SCHOOL MEALS

If your circumstances have recently changed and you are entitled to Universal Credit or Income Support (or similar benefits) you may be entitled to free school meals. It is quick and easy to apply online at <https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/education/educational-awards-benefits/freeschoolmeals/apply-online.aspx>.

All children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 automatically get free school meals, however we would encourage you to apply for free school meals if you think you might be eligible, as this attracts additional funding to support your child's learning. There is also extra support available for school trips, clubs and music lessons if your child is eligible for free school meals

DATES FOR 2025-26

February

16-20 Half Term

March

2-6 Year 5 at Standon Bowers all week
3 PTFA meeting, 6:15pm
5 World Book Day
Quidditch lesson for all children
PTFA Bring & Buy a Book
16 Swimming pool on site for 2 weeks
Parents Evening
17 Governors meeting (Teaching & Learning Committee)
18 Parents Evening
27 PTFA Easter Breakfast
30 School closes for Easter holiday

April

13 Children and staff back in school
15 Bag2School Collection

May

11 Year 6 SATS week
19 Full Governors meeting
21 Whole School Photograph
25-29 Half Term

June

1 INSET day (school closed to pupils)
2 Children back in school
11 Summer Fair (Reserve date 18th June)
12 Stoke City Penalty Shootout
16 Governors meeting (Finance Committee)
18 Year 3 Ukulele Concert at Victoria Hall
25 Reception and Year 6 class photos, plus Year 6 leavers photos

July

7 Drama club evening performance
8 Drama club evening performance
18 School closes for Summer holiday
20 INSET day (staff only)

Pupils return to school on Thursday 3rd September 2026.

SCHOOL TERMS AND HOLIDAY DATES 2026/2027

PLEASE DO NOT BOOK ANY HOLIDAYS DURING TERM TIME

Autumn Term 2026

INSET Day	Tuesday 1 st September 2026
INSET Day	Wednesday 2 nd September 2026
School opens for pupils	Thursday 3 rd September 2026
Half Term	Monday 26 th October – Friday 30 th October 2026
INSET Day	Monday 2 nd November 2026
School closes for pupils	Friday 18 th December 2026

Spring Term 2027

School opens for pupils and staff	Monday 4 th January 2027
Half Term	Monday 15 th February – Friday 19 th February 2027
INSET Day	Monday 22 nd February 2027
School closes for pupils and staff	Friday 22 nd March 2027

Summer Term 2027

School opens for pupils and staff	Monday 12 th April 2027
May Day	Monday 3 rd May 2027
Half Term	Monday 31 st May – Friday 4 th June 2027
INSET Day	Monday 7 th June 2027
School closes for pupils and staff	Wednesday 21 st July 2027