Wester Overton Primary School and Nursery Class
October Newsletter

It's been a quick and very busy first term and it's hard to believe we're already into October.

Thank you to those of you who opted to have newsletters emailed to you. If you would like to have our November newsletter emailed to you please send me details of your email address to: gw14wovertonht@glow.sch.uk

Wester Overton is very fortunate to have a vibrant and successful fundraising group. I was amazed by the funds raised last year and the generous donations for the School Fair and Gala Day from companies such as T & A Fyfe Ltd and Avondale Services. Funds raised go into the ’School Fund’ and must be spent on activities, equipment and resources which directly influence pupils. Our main spend last session was on a class set of ipads including an ipad charging station, sturdy cases and a 3 year digital management license which allows us to purchase directly from i-tunes and have all ipads networked. I’m sure your children will have been talking about the positive impact of our new ipads on learning.

This year the school will be taking a more active role in supporting the Wester Overton Fundraisers, specifically in an attempt to recruit more parental support in the supervision and volunteering for events such as discos and school fairs.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our dedicated WOFS for the help and support they have given the school over the years and we are grateful for their continued efforts. A special thanks to Lorna Clarkson and Gail Mercer who took lead roles for many years. Their efforts are not to be underestimated and their continued involvement is of great importance to our school.

As fundraising events occur throughout the year we will be appealing to you all to help out where you can. I will share details of these events nearer the time through newsletters, bag drops, the Parent Council Facebook page and the school website.

Mandy Thompson
Head Teacher

Term Time Holidays
We have had a large number of families taking holidays during term time over this month and next. I just wanted to take this opportunity to remind you that if you are taking your child out of school for a holiday during term time, you must inform the school in writing. Where possible, the school will send you a letter of acknowledgement and a reminder that in line with South Lanarkshire Council policy, any holidays (unless in exceptional circumstances) are noted as an unauthorised absence. Work will not be sent home for children to take away on holiday, but will be sent home as homework on return.

MACMILLAN Coffee Morning
We were overwhelmed last Friday at the success of our first coffee morning and charity event for a long time. The support from staff and families through donations of home baking was amazing. We also had large numbers of parent helpers who were invaluable as the turn out to support our coffee morning was fantastic. A very special thanks to Mrs Moir for organising the event and to our House Captains for working so hard to get everything ready.

We are pleased to announce that we raised a whopping total of £1138.65

MACMILLAN Cancer Support
Nursery News

Staffing
We are absolutely delighted to welcome Mrs Jenny Neilson as our newly appointed Nursery Class Teacher. We are already feeling the benefits of her enthusiasm and experience within the Early Years.

Focus on Learning
Our new theme in the Nursery will be 'Once upon a tale'. This will involve looking at a range of traditional tales such as the 3 little pigs.

Parent Pay
We have been assured that the recent problems with Parent Pay have been resolved and would like to gently remind parents to pay for Nursery snack. If you continue to find difficulties please contact the office.

Inspection
We received an unannounced inspection from the Care Inspectorate on the 30th August 2016. We were delighted with the outcome of the inspection. The report has now been published on the care inspectorate website: http://www.careinspectorate.com/

Clothes
As our outdoor play area continues to develop, children are opting to spend more and more time engaged in outdoor learning. If we could ask that children come to Nursery with warm, waterproof clothing to facilitate playing in all weathers. If children have taken any Nursery clothes home could they please be returned as we are now running low. Any donations of clothes would be greatly appreciated.

Students
As many of you will know there is a significant shortage of teachers across Scotland. The Government are trying to tackle this by training more teachers. As a result many schools are being asked to take more students this session. This year almost all classes at Wester Overton will have a student teacher, including the Nursery. I am looking forward to the enthusiasm and motivation these students will bring to our school as well as the additional support they will provide for our children.

Clicker
Following a fantastic training session for all staff in August, we have been able to purchase a whole school clicker license for an amazing price. This will be one of the spends from the School Fund. Clicker is software for the computer which supports Literacy, especially in the Early Years or for those pupils who need support with Literacy. Some of the benefits include:

- Point-and-click access to whole words, phrases, and pictures. Sentence Sets, Connect Sets, and Word Banks. These will support writing at all levels.
- Intelligent word prediction. Encourages all pupils to use more adventurous vocabulary.
- Provides speech feedback. Gives the pupils the opportunity to hear their work read back to them and encourages them to actively review and self-correct their work.
- Audio note creator. Voice Notes enables pupils to record their own audio notes before they write. This gives them an opportunity to rehearse their sentences, and offers a powerful way for children to capture their initial thoughts and ideas.

Homework
Homework was brought up for discussion at the most recent Parent Council meeting. I am aware that different teachers across the school are using varied methods and approaches to homework. I have encouraged staff to try different, and more motivating ways to set homework and am aware that this has led to inconsistency across the school. Any formal changes to homework should involve dialogue with staff, parents and pupils and will be something we tackle in the near future. It is not a priority on our current improvement plan.
**Wester Overton Achievements**

We’ve had many achievements out of school since our last newsletter:

Thomas Wardaugh, R8, came second in the Strathaven Show School Drawing competition.

Mischa Marshall, from R13 took part in the World Individual Mounted Games at the beginning of the school year. She managed to reach the semi-final in the under 12 group and is now ranked within the top 10 in the world. This an amazing achievement Mischa. We are so proud of you!

Well done to all our Wester Overton STARS!

**Communication**

Many of you will be aware that the Parent Council at Wester Overton launched a Facebook page last session. This page has become a useful way of sharing information with parents. Any information will also be shared through bag-drops and in monthly newsletters.

From time to time we will send out a text message. These are, however, very expensive and only permit us to include 120 characters so can seem a bit curt at times.

We hope to start using our school website more, especially to show you class work and celebrate achievements.

**P7 Residential Trip**

I am happy to share that we have managed to book our P7 residential trip. Our P7s will be going to Lochgoilhead National Activity centre: [http://www.lochgoilhead.org.uk/](http://www.lochgoilhead.org.uk/)

The trip will run from Monday 22nd May until Thursday 25th May.

**Dates for your Diary**

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>Fri 7th Oct</td>
<td>Orthoptist Visit to the Nursery</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 12th Oct</td>
<td>R13 PE transition visit to Strathaven Academy</td>
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<td>Mon 17th Oct</td>
<td>School closed all week</td>
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<td>Mon 24th Oct</td>
<td>Parent Council AGM</td>
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<td>Mon 24th Oct</td>
<td>Childsmile for P1 and Nursery</td>
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<td>Thu 3rd Nov</td>
<td>Halloween Disco</td>
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<td>P1-3</td>
<td>6:30 - 7:30pm</td>
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<td>P4-7</td>
<td>7:45 - 9:00pm</td>
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<td>Wed 9th Nov</td>
<td>Parents’ Night</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thu 10th Nov</td>
<td>Parents’ Night</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 21st Nov</td>
<td>School closed for pupils - In-service day.</td>
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<td>Wed 23rd Nov</td>
<td>Parent Council Meeting 7-9pm</td>
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<td>Tue 29th Nov</td>
<td>Bubble Gum and Fluff for P6</td>
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<td>Sat 3rd Dec</td>
<td>Christmas Fair 12noon - 2pm</td>
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<td>Wed 14th Dec</td>
<td>Christmas Shows</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri 16th Dec</td>
<td>Christmas Shows</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thu 22nd Dec</td>
<td>Hopscotch Panto</td>
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Any parents willing to help out at the Halloween disco - please get in touch: 01357 521 870.

**Parental Comments**

We welcome your feedback at Wester Overton. Please feel free to share your views on this tear off slip and hand in to the office. Alternatively you can contact gw14wovertonht@glow.sch.uk