



Victoria Park
Primary Academy

School Newsletter published bi-weekly (#68) 4/04/25

A new (and final) term of the year: The Spring holiday has come late this year, the clocks have already sprung forward and the sun is shining. Due to the short nature of the Summer Term we are starting our new Challenge Packs early. Planning and Home Learning suggestions will be sent home on Monday, please take the time to share and discuss these with your child.

Whitehall Infants (Walsall): [Victoria Academies Trust](#) has grown this week as we add an additional school to our family. On Monday we will take 6 children from our Year 2 to visit Whitehall Infants, to share our Trust Values and learn what life is like at their school. We have also been welcoming children from another of our schools, Elm Tree Primary Academy, to share our garden spaces and nurture provision.

OPAL Open Lunchtime: A date for your diaries - we'd love to invite families in to see our OPAL lunchtimes in action. On this day we will talk through our project so far, and tour the playground zones whilst children play. This week we introduced rope swings, hammocks, a reading shed and pallet den construction. The children complete their own risk benefit analysis in assembly to decide how best to use the equipment and ensure that they know how to do so safely.

Easter Clubs (and Vouchers): [We're not expecting Sandwell Council to provide Free School Meal \(FSM\) Vouchers to families over Easter.](#) Instead they are offering their [Holiday and Food \(HaF\) clubs](#) to those who receive FSM. Again, I'd recommend all families check to see if they are eligible for FSM [here](#). I will send a separate ParentMail to share as many clubs and opportunities for families over Easter as I can find.

No Clubs next week - new clubs via ParentMail: Speaking of clubs, our own afterschool clubs for Spring finish this week. If you have applied for a space at a Summer Club and you are successful, you will receive a ParentMail confirmation shortly. One change that we are going to make - if a child doesn't attend for two weeks without their family informing, then we will offer their space to the next child on a waiting list. This is so more children get to access the opportunities.

School Uniform Fair: I've sent out a flyer with this newsletter for a school uniform available at SinglePoint in Oldbury. Next Thursday, Ms Hussain will also lay out any unclaimed and donated uniform for families to take, outside of the main office.



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Year 5 Sports: Pupils from Year 5 enjoyed a visit to the West Bromwich Albion Academy last week to take part in some of their staff PE training. From next week it is the turn of 5MA to visit the Sandwell Aquatics Centre to begin their swimming lessons.

Reception Afternoon, Year 2 Workshop, 1TG INSPIRE: Another busy week; Reception and Nursery invited families into the hall to celebrate their Spring Party, 1TG welcomed parents for their INSPIRE afternoon and all of Year 2 enjoyed their Amelia Earhart workshop.

Attendance Improvements - Ready to Learn 2025: Some cause for recognition and celebration as we look at our Spring Attendance data. Whole School attendance has increased to 92.8%. More impressive is the fall in persistent absence, down from 23.5% of pupils to 17.5%. Our severely absent pupil number has also more than halved. We're grateful for the support of families to achieve these gains and hope to improve further throughout the Summer.

Healthy Eating and School Dinners: Next week our ChangeMaker School Council Group are meeting with Chef Norman and the team at Miquill to taste test and feedback on potential new lunch items. All of these meals are nutritionally balanced to meet Government guidelines. One thing we have noticed as a school is the varied nutrition across some packed lunches. The impact of high sugar diets on learning and concentration is [clear](#). Across Summer we will work with some families directly and review our school guidelines so that we return to healthy school lunches from September 2025.

Cost of Trips - contributions from next year: Another change across 25-26 likely to impact families is the cost of visitors and school trips. Currently we cap all visits at £5 and do not ask for contributions for any in-school paid workshops. Our budget for next year does not allow us to do this. Instead, we will need to ask for a contribution towards all trips and experiences of £10 per term. We will explore how to manage this over ParentMail so that families can stagger payments if necessary. We are also working hard with our Trust to attract external sponsorship so that we can continue to provide brilliant experiences for all of our children, like the annual trip to the beach, the farm, museums, music concerts, and many more.



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Safeguarding focus:

Adult First Aid Courses: (From Miss Howell):

I have got a first aid course for parents booked in on Monday the 12th of May at 9:00am - 11:15am. There are only 4 spaces left. If you would like a space please can you let Miss Howell or the office know.

You will need to bring ID with you (bank card, birth certificate, passport, bill etc). It will be held in the lunch hall so if you want to drop off your children first then come and have a cup of coffee with me before it starts, you are more than welcome too.

Safeguarding and Health Visitors: Lots of external Safeguarding visitors have been arranged by Mrs Mahal for next week; Year 2 have the NSPCC [PANTS Rule](#), a brilliant and age appropriate approach to protecting our youngest children from sexual abuse. Years 3 and 4 will experience the Healthy Eating Road Show, whilst Year 5 will hear from the NHS allocated school nurse to support their understanding of puberty and change.

Parent awareness - understanding Social Media: Finally, I'm sure many of you would have seen the 4-part drama Adolescence on Netflix recently. It's received lots of media and government attention and comes at a time when us at VPA have also seen a spike in online and social media risks. I've attached a document that Mrs Mahal shared with staff to help families navigate some of the codes and emojis used by children and young people so that you can help to spot potential risky behaviour for yourself.

As always, if you do have any safeguarding concerns you can always contact Mrs Mahal as our Designated Safeguarding Lead via the office or my email.

With best wishes for a safe and happy end of term and Spring Holiday.

Mr Reed