



Westmeads Community Infant School



Happy to Learn

Welcome to Westmeads Community Infant School



Our Aims and Values at Westmeads

- A school where everyone has high expectations of each other and shares responsibility for their behaviour and attitude to learning. Independence, perseverance and resilience are actively encouraged.
- An environment that promotes good communication, where everyone is heard and their opinions are understood, valued and respected.
- A healthy school community which nurtures honesty and kindness, where children feel secure and understand how to keep themselves safe.
- A rich and relevant curriculum that encourages curiosity building on the strengths of individuals within the school, offering strong links with the community and a wide range of creative and sporting opportunities.
- A focus on children's learning and high standards are at the core of all aspects of school life.

Foreword: Headteacher Mrs Helen Lambirth

I am proud to welcome you to our wonderful infant school. Westmeads sits in the heart of the community in Whitstable and is a creative and dynamic school providing an exciting and well-balanced curriculum. We have a very welcoming and happy atmosphere and our emphasis is on excellence and enjoyment for all.

Our Aims and Values

The children being happy to learn is at the heart of everything we do. We see it as our responsibility to equip the children for the challenges of the 21st Century. We have six core values that are woven into everything that we do – Love and Kindness; Independence, Honesty; Curiosity; Perseverance and Respect. Our assemblies focus on one of these values each term.

High Expectations

We treat every child as an individual. We have high expectations that all of our children will excel and achieve their very best in all areas of their development. We encourage them to become well-rounded individuals with a thirst for learning. We are proud of our excellent achievements and the outstanding progress our children make.

Igniting an interest in the world

Our curriculum is tailored to the needs and interests of the children and takes advantage of our local community. Stimulating and creative teaching encourages our children to become lifelong learners. We want to ignite an interest in the world around them and for that interest to lead to fulfilling and imaginative lives. Learning should be fun!

Learning environment

We have worked hard to create a colourful and inspiring environment, both indoors and outdoors. The children utilise it to enhance and support their learning and are able to access resources easily to develop their independence. We have different learning areas to encourage a range of learning opportunities, such as an outdoor woodland classroom, a pond and an AstroTurf zone.

Pastoral care

Whilst academic achievements are an important part of life at our school, all our children also have the opportunity to enjoy a wide variety of sporting and musical opportunities, as well as regular trips. Our pastoral care is exceptional, ensuring all children are kept safe and are supported both inside and outside school.

Working in Partnership

We have a skilled and dedicated staff team who ensure that all of our children are well supported both emotionally and academically. We encourage our parents to be fully involved in their child's education. Our philosophy is one of partnership where parents and the school work closely together for the benefit of the child. We hope that your association with us will bring both happiness and success for your child.

Get in touch

We welcome your interest in our school and ask that you come and see us for a visit while our children are present; when you can see us as we really are. Please email officemanager@westmeads.kent.sch.uk, or call us on 01227 272995 to make an appointment.

School day: settling in



School hours

The school day starts promptly at 9.00am but parents are welcome to bring their children to school from 8.45am. Our school day ends at 3.00pm.for all children.

Extended and Wraparound care

The school’s extended services include wraparound care with a breakfast and after school club; a 3+ club for prospective pupils; information and support from our Special Needs and Inclusion Leader and our Rainbow Team for wellbeing; opportunities for family learning as well as a wide variety of after-school clubs run by school staff and external providers!

Breakfast Club

Our Breakfast Club runs from 7.30am-8.45amam with a range of fun activities and costs £4.50. Breakfast is served from 7.30am-8.15am.

After-School Club

Our After-School Club runs from 3.00pm - 6.00pm and costs £8.50. Tea is served between 3.30pm -4.00pm.

School meals and snacks

Free school meals

The school provides a free nutritious, freshly cooked meal as part of a government initiative. Menus are available to view on the school website and children need to make a choice each day of whether they are taking the meat or vegetarian option. There is fresh bread baked daily and a range of salads and vegetables available to accompany your child’s meal. A dedicated lunchtime lady accompanies each class and is on hand to support and encourage the children over the lunch break.

Break Time and drinks

All children are given their own named water bottle, have access to filtered water during the day and are encouraged to drink regularly. All classes are provided with free fresh fruit daily and children can subscribe to having a carton of milk if they wish.

Uniform

We believe that a school uniform helps to achieve a sense of belonging and identity. Our uniform is kept as simple and practical as possible to ensure children are comfortable and to enable independence. As well as the uniform, we ask that all children have a book bag and P.E. kit to help organise themselves for school.

Our fantastic facilities



Supporting the school experience

We are very fortunate to have some excellent facilities to benefit the children, and further support their learning and school experience:

- The classrooms are well resourced with the latest technology to support teaching and learning. Each classroom has access to its own specially designed outdoor area
- Facilities also include a large hall, library area with individual learning pods and a dining hall.
- Our exciting playground boasts space to run around and play with outdoor equipment as well as a volcano for climbing; a sandpit; a designated area for bikes, trikes and scooters; AstroTurf for ball games and a trim trail.
- An outdoor woodland classroom with gated access to a pond area.
- We have an additional teaching room equipped for cooking, music lessons and ceramics.
- Our kiln is used to fire the ceramics that the children make.
- A sensory room is used for play therapy and is accessible at playtimes.
- We visit the beach at the end of the road regularly as an extension of our classrooms.
- Our new minibus enables us to take advantage of the wider learning opportunities within our community and beyond

Curriculum: creative and inspiring



Creative problem solving

Westmeads follows the statutory National Curriculum, and also runs a ‘creative problem solving’ approach. Connections are made between the different areas of teaching and learning to ensure children are encouraged to ‘think about’, ‘question’ and ‘make links’ for themselves, to develop their individual learning paths.

Personalised

Our curriculum approach assumes that all children have their own talents. Teaching and learning will be approached in an inclusive manner allowing all children to learn at a personalised level.



The curriculum is divided into two stages

- 1. **Early Years Foundation Stage: from ages 0-5**
- 2. **Key Stage 1: from ages 5-7**

Reception

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum is based on seven areas of learning:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development.
- Communication and Language.
- Physical Development.
- Literacy.
- Mathematics.
- Understanding the World.
- Expressive Arts and Design.

Key Stage 1

In Years 1 and 2, subject areas covered by the curriculum policy are:

- English (Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening and Phonics).
- Maths (Number and Calculation, Shape, Space and Measures, Data Handling).
- Computing (including e-safety).
- The Creative Arts (Design and Technology, Art and Design, Music, Physical Education).
- PSHE including well-being.
- Foundation subjects (Science, Environmental Study, Religious Education, History and Geography).



Additional learning

During their time at Westmeads, our children will also participate in swimming lessons at the local pool; learn some basic French and Spanish; have the opportunity to cook; learn to play the recorder as well access music lessons taught by our peripatetic music teacher; use our school kiln; learn yoga, gentle touch and the importance of mindfulness as well as many other exciting things.

They also take part in regular class drama sessions and each year group gives a performance on stage each year.

Beach curriculum

We have also developed a curriculum that links learning from different areas of the curriculum directly to the local community and most especially the coast. The children visit our adopted area of the beach each week in terms 2, 4 and 6 to explore different subjects such as drama, art and photography, scientific opportunities, weather and the changing environment.

School Council and Eco Council

We have active councils with class representatives who are encouraged to discuss and make decisions about a variety of issues to do with school. The children help to develop the ethos of the school, school policies and practice





Clubs

We arrange a wide variety of clubs according to the time of year and the interests of the children. Examples of our clubs include:

- Outdoor Maths.
- Street Dance.
- Yoga.
- Ukulele.
- School Magazine.
- Drama Fun Club.
- Cooking.
- Violin.
- Archery.
- Football.
- Arts and Crafts.

Trips

The school community is committed to celebrating and understanding the unique nature of Whitstable, its people and the environment. The school prides itself on the number of school trips and visitors to school that are organised throughout the year. Many of these are to our local community and surrounding areas. Examples include:

- The City of Canterbury.
- Whitstable Museum.
- Duncan Downs.
- Faversham Gym.
- Lorenden Forest School.
- Wildwood (Wildlife Park).

Visitors

Visitors into our school include:

- National and International Sports Professionals
- Well-known authors and poets
- Quantum Theatre
- Astrodome
- Dinosaur Workshop

All these trips and visitors provide our learners with real life experiences that can help them relate what they learn at school to the world around them and develop their confidence.

Rosa, the school dog

Rosa is a one year old Hungarian Wirehaired Vizsla who has been visiting the school every Friday since she was 10 weeks. She comes to our Celebration Assembly and is learning how to interact with the children. She is currently in training to be a Reading Dog and to support children with their well-being.



Valued and respected

It is the main aim of Westmeads Community Infant School that every member of the school community feels valued and respected, and that each person is treated fairly and well. The school’s behaviour policy promotes an environment in which everyone is entitled to be nurtured and where everyone can feel happy, safe and secure. We encourage children to have a caring attitude towards each other. It is made clear that it is not acceptable for any children to be upset by the words or actions of others.

Rewards and responsibilities

We praise and reward children for good behaviour in a large variety of ways:

- Teachers congratulate children and may give them the ‘Ask me what I did today?’ badge to wear.
- Adults give individual children hand stampers and stickers for good work and achievements. Each week children who have achieved successfully are awarded a certificate in our Celebration Assembly
- Classes work collectively for good work and behaviour and are rewarded with a treat at the end of each term.

- The head teacher and deputy head teacher give stickers and certificates for good work and achievements.
- Significant achievements, both in and out of school, are mentioned regularly in the school newsletters or on the Achievement Board.
- One child per class per term is sent a ‘Well Done’ postcard to their home.

Home School Agreement

Each year all parents are asked to read, agree and sign a Home School Agreement to ensure effective partnership and trust between home and school.

School rules

- We do what the grown-ups ask us the first time.
- We keep our hands and our feet to ourselves.
- We do not cross the yellow line (without asking a grown up).
- We look after the things that belong to us and to others.
- We are polite and respect everyone.

Inclusion: a school for everyone



Equality

We work hard to ensure equality for our children, staff and other members of the school community. All children are special... they develop skills at different speeds for a variety of reasons and, like us, have strengths and weaknesses. Some children may need the opportunity to extend their learning while others may need support in certain areas. We believe it is very important that all children are given the opportunity to succeed and that any problems are identified quickly so that appropriate help can be given.

Special Needs

Through working with parents as partners and by continually tracking progress, we are able to adjust support to meet the child's needs at all times. We also hope that parents will feel able to take an active part in helping their children at home. When appropriate, we also involve outside agencies for their expertise.

Children working at a greater depth

We recognise that all children have their own gifts and talents. With that in mind, our lessons are stimulating and we provide regular opportunities for children to extend their learning and develop their special skills.



Your child's achievements



How is my child doing?

A record of academic and social achievements is begun as children join Westmeads Community Infant School. These records begin in Reception and are added to throughout the children's time at Westmeads. The record is a three-way communication where the child, home and school comment and share special achievements. Added to this the teachers write a more detailed annual report covering all areas of the curriculum.

We also offer Parent Conversations three times a year where parents/carers can come and talk to the class teacher and discuss their child's progress. Throughout the year we invite parents to informally come into class to Family

Feedback Fridays (on alternate Fridays) and for Parent/Child Work Share where children can share their learning with them.

National Assessments

In Year 1 children will take part in a national phonics screening check. The children are shown a number of real and made up words that draw upon their phonic (ability to hear, recall and use sounds) knowledge. Parents/carers will be informed whether their child has met the required standard on their annual report.

In Year 2 during the month of May, children will participate in Standard Assessment Tests (SATs) in reading, writing and maths. The results from these are used to support the end of Key Stage 1 teacher assessments. More information is given to parents regarding the SATs during the summer term in Year 2. Please be reassured that these are carried out in a sensitive manner suitable to the age of the children and should not give children or parents any concerns. If you have any questions regarding assessment, please talk to your child's teacher or Mrs Gowing or Mrs Lambirth.



Sport and music

Invitations: come and see what we do!



Sport

We give the children the opportunity to experience a wide range of curriculum P.E. beginning with our ‘Wake up, shake up!’ routines every morning at 9 o’clock and our daily gentle touch/yoga/mindfulness sessions after lunch. In P.E. lessons, the children experience tri-golf, dodgeball, indoor curling, volleyball and kwik cricket in addition to more traditional sports like tag rugby, football and hockey. Our playground trim trail area encourages the children to balance, climb and co-ordinate their bodies.

Sports Clubs

In addition to the sports clubs run by staff, we offer children the opportunity to attend clubs run by specialist sports coaches. We currently have links with Appeti tennis, Football Futures, Street Dance and Premier Sport who offer fencing, archery and a range of other sports.



Music

Music is an important part of school life. We often find it easier to learn through songs, sounds and rhythms and music forms an integral part of school assemblies.

We are lucky that all children have the chance to work with our peripatetic music teacher to learn about rhythm, pitch and musical composition and appreciation. In Year 2, everyone learns to play the recorder, performing a concert to parents at Eastertime. In addition, we are able to offer private music lessons in ukulele and violin.

Westmeads also has a small but dynamic children’s choir who meet each week and perform on special occasions.



We love to invite parents/carers to come into school to experience some of the things we offer:

- Class Assemblies
- Relatives Afternoon
- Activity Weeks
- Book Week
- Great Get Together picnic
- Enterprise Week Sales
- Music Concerts
- Performances
- Join your child for lunch



Admission into Reception

The majority of children are admitted to our school in September of the academic year in which they are going to be aged five. This will be birthdays between 1st September and 31st August. We currently admit 60 children per year into our school. All admissions, including mid-year pupil moves, are dealt with by a common application form submitted to the local authority.

Can I visit the school before I apply?

Yes, we want to meet you and your child/ children! Around October each year we organise tours for you to come and see the school, meet the Headteacher, staff and children. Tour dates are displayed on our website but please call us to book a place as we want you to have lots of time and opportunity to make the most of your visit so we limit places on each tour.

To visit the school please: telephone 01227 272995 or email: officemanager@westmeads.kent.sch.uk.

3+ Club

You can come along to our 3+ Club if you have a child aged 3 and over (younger siblings are also welcome). The club runs on Wednesdays from 1.45-2.45pm from Term 3 (January). You will be given the opportunity to meet staff at the school who are on hand to answer questions regarding starting school. A member of our well-being team reads to your children in the Family Room to give you an opportunity to meet other parents and carers over a cup of tea or coffee.

Transition

Our successful transition programme of introductory talks and visits starts from June allowing both child and carer to build up trusting relationships with our staff. This ensures that children and parents/carers look forward to their first day at Westmeads Community Infant School.

New parents/carers meeting

In June, once all school places are confirmed, we hold an evening new parents/carers meeting* when we introduce ourselves and the organisation for your child starting school. During June and July we invite the children to spend some afternoons in their new classroom. Once they are settled, we invite parents/carers to stay for a cup of tea and a chat.

Starting Westmeads at other times during the year

Before children can be admitted mid-year, parents/carers and their children are encouraged to visit the school. An “In-year Casual Application Form” is given along with advice on how to complete it. Once completed it needs to be returned to school who will respond within ten school days. Should a place not be available, you will be offered a place for your child on our waiting list.

Applications

Kent County Council Admissions Team processes all school applications:

- Kent residents should apply online using the link at www.kent.gov.uk/schooladmissions.
- If you are unable to make an online application, paper forms are available on special request from the Admissions Team.
- The closing date for September applications is in mid January of that year.
- You will be notified of your child’s placement the following April.

- Our school has no say in how places are allocated. However there is an appeals process which parents can access.

Contact the Kent County Council School Admissions Team

- Email: kentonlineadmissions@kent.gov.uk.
- Tel: 03000 41 21 21.
- Address: Kent Coordinated Admissions, Room 2.20, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone, ME14 1XQ.
- Website: www.kent.gov.uk/schooladmissions.



Voluntary helpers

We always welcome volunteers from our school and wider community to help with activities such as Beach Visits, changing library books or supporting children in class. If you are interested in volunteering at the school, please read the Volunteer Handbook on our website (within the ‘Parents’ section) and then speak to your child’s class teacher or the School Office for more information.

Friends of Westmeads (FOW)

All parents and carers automatically become members of our Friends association when their child joins the school. The Friends meet regularly to plan and organise exciting school events such as the Christmas and Summer Fairs and cake sales. The funds raised support school resources and facilities whilst providing wonderful social opportunities for the whole school community.

Recently, the FoW fundraising has been used to refurbish the Family Room and for a shade/shelter for the playground. They also pay for Easter eggs for our Easter Egg Hunt, an extra swimming teacher and a pantomime for the whole school. They are currently helping to raise funds towards an outdoor classroom.

Our School Governors

The school has a full and active Governing Body, which includes Parent Governors as well as representatives from staff, the local authority and the local community. Governors monitor all aspects of the school’s everyday business, from classroom teaching to agreeing policies. They are always here to offer advice or explanations, or even to hear of any worries you have about the school and can be contacted through the School Office.

It is wonderful to have parents/carers, with their many varied skills and viewpoints on the Governing Body. There are so many helpful ways you can become involved with this school; being a governor is just another one of them. Vacancies for Parent Governors are advertised as they arise.



What our parents say about our school!

- “Our child is so happy at Westmeads and we feel very lucky to have him there and will miss the school when he leaves in the summer.”
- “We’re really happy with Westmeads. It has a lovely atmosphere and we’re really pleased our children get to start their education there - thank you!”
- “I think we’re really lucky to have such a warm, community-minded school.”
- “We all love Westmeads! Well done and keep up the good work everyone!”
- “I do feel that the most important thing for our son right now is that he enjoys going to school and is engaged in learning and he is both of these. He loves his teachers and is very happy to go to school.”
- “This is an amazing school and my child has been very happy here.”
- “I think you’re doing a marvellous job!”
- “We love Westmeads and would highly recommend to anyone. My daughter is excited about school and enthusiastic to learn.”



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