



A Message from Mrs Kee

Can you believe that it is half term already? I am so proud of all our Violet Way children and what they have achieved this half term. The children in Key Stage 1 have settled into their new classes well and the children in EYFS have had an excellent start to their school life here at Violet Way.

There have been lots of lovely learning activities across the school. I have been excited to see the children creating lovely meals as part of their Design and Technology curriculum. In Year 1 the children explored different salads and then designed and created their very own. Year 2 have been using bridge and claw cutting grips to prepare the ingredients for making sushi (for pictures, please see the next page). During their continuous provision time, children in Reception have been developing confidence, building relationships and demonstrating their learning independently.

Many thanks to parents and pupils for donating food for the Food bank. Mr. Bill packed it all into the minibus and delivered it to the YMCA, who were extremely grateful and wanted us to extend their gratitude to our whole school community. You have made a difference – thank you.



We had a very successful parents' evening this week and some parents commented that the virtual meetings were more convenient for them. We will be considering whether a hybrid offer of a choice of meeting in person or virtually via Teams is something that would benefit parents. This week's newsletter includes the comments from our Parent Voice Survey. There are quite a few pages, but we thought it was important to address any concerns raised.

Finally, I would like to say thank you to our wonderful Violet Way school community for making my first half term such a pleasure. I wish you all a lovely half term break, *Mrs Kee*





Attendance

Whole School (this week)	93.82%
Reception	92.36%
Year 1	95.25%
Year 2	93.89%

Congratulations to **Ladybirds**

for being the class with the highest attendance this week! Well done on your fantastic attendance this week.

Make sure your child attends school every day so that they get the most from their education.

Learning Celebrated

As there were no Merit Award this week, we have included some pictures of children learning in school.





Farewell

Today we said farewell to Mrs Paynter in Reception after she has successfully secured a new job working with secondary school pupils with additional needs after the half term. Although we will miss her, we wish her all the best in her future endeavours. We thank her for her commitment to Violet Way pupils and for supporting their learning and development.

We have interviewed today and successfully appointed a teaching assistant for Reception.

Clocks go back! Keep safe in the dark

We'll soon be setting the clocks back an hour and it will be important to remind children about road safety and keeping safe in the dark. There are some useful resources parents can access online to help develop children's awareness of keeping safe:

[Dark Nights - Keep Safe](#)

[Be Bright Be Seen](#)

[Keeping Children Safe in the Dark](#)

[Teaching Road Safety: A Guide for Parents](#)



Remember Clocks go back on 31st October

Keeping Safe on the Way to School

Please can all parents and carers be mindful of all our pupils' safety when coming to school. Parents often drop off their child at school and walk home with other parents, chatting away and enjoying the walk back home or to their car together. However, I have been made aware that sometimes when parents are talking to each other, they haven't noticed children that are walking to school, and this has meant children have had to step into the road to walk around the parents. I am sure that this is completely unintentional, but I ask that parents be mindful of this so that children can walk on the pavements rather than having to step into the road, especially during such a busy time of day. Thank you.

PTA Request

I know it is a little early to thinking about Christmas, but our PTA has asked for any donations of Christmas wrapping paper and tape. If you have any spare that you can donate, please bring it to the office after half term. Thank you for your help.





Parent Survey

What you said – Strengths

This section is a record of all the strengths, from a parent perspective. Thank you for sharing these comments with us. As a snapshot, key areas of strength identified: COMMUNICATION, CARING AND SUPPORTIVE STAFF, INCLUSION, ENHANCED CURRICULUM OFFER, BEHAVIOUR, CLUBS, LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The following three pages include comments from a parent perspective on the strengths of the school and then these are followed by the Areas for development.

Supportive and always thinking of ways children can learn to the best of their knowledge

- * Communication on cancelled events
- * Range of activities for the children
- * Alternatives to learning when Covid measures have been put in place

Mrs Magill has been amazing so far. I've had some concerns and she has really taken the time to support and correspond. Miss Wagg at the end of last year took so much time to create some wonderful photo books for the children and buy them gifts. The memories Miss Wagg gave us are really special. I feel when I have had any concerns they have been dealt with.

I can see that mental health in children is being focused on which is brilliant, getting them outside and enjoying learning through play.

He does more things for him self without help and picking up learning really quickly

There is a caring atmosphere at VWA, all staff are approachable and kind. I really like the way the school allows its pupils to be children and makes them feel special and valued - putting on birthday parties for children who missed out due to lockdowns, organising special end of year trips to make up for those that were cancelled are examples of this.





Parent Survey

Friendly staff/environment
Woodlands
Activities and participation in events, festivities etc.

Variety of activities
swimming, forestry club

Friendly atmosphere.

(My child is) Becoming more confident

Communication is excellent. Love the MarvellousMe app. Think it's great we can order our child's dinners, so we know he's being introduced to a good variety of foods each week.

Great school, love the new digital offer to parents and getting involved with the homework activities. School dinners sound amazing and my child always comes home saying she loves school which is a great sign.

She is more confident in English (I can see improvements). She behaves correctly. She began to be less sensitive (she's not getting upset with no reason, like before)

A good team of teachers. Child made good progress since starting.

We are very happy with this school

Inclusion

Very good staff they are all exceptional

Friendly and welcoming environment.

Very good with the behaviors, and the learning is great

Friendly atmosphere from staff always welcoming go out way to make everyone happy and caring





Parent Survey

Access to their own forestry area. Wide range of outside activities. Achievable tasks set for homework which are fun and not too time consuming. Friendly faces every morning on drop off. My daughter always talking about Miss Cullumbine and Miss Gower from when she was in Reception.

Working hard to support all children including SEND.

I like that Mrs Kee greets the children at the gate. My child didn't really need the transition as was at nursery there, but I can see that others would. My child tells me that children who don't behave go on the rain drop/cloud.

All the staff are kind and approachable. Teachers really encourage the children to do well in a kind and friendly manner. The children love going to school.

Both my children are wonderfully happy and learning at the same time. I'm kept in the loop and it's all I would want.

Happy & safe learning environment. Fantastic teachers & staff

Very interactive with different 'out of classroom activities' that my child really enjoys-forest school and music lessons.

Connection through tapestry to show my child's work at home.

I don't see any areas for development. Everything is ok. If something bothers me, I talk about it and it is solved quickly.

Making learning fun! Dealing with any issues straight away

Now we have MarvellousMe communication is a lot better





Parent Survey

What you said – Areas for Development

This section is a record of all the areas for development from a parent perspective. Thank you for sharing these comments with us, we have added them to the table below, with our responses. Thank you for taking the time to complete the survey.

What you said	What we did/Response
<p>Communication with parents has been a little patchy for a while - however, the newsletters that are now sent weekly from Mrs Kee are great. It will be great to get into school more once restrictions are eased!</p>	<p>We are pleased that the Newsletters have helped to improve communication. We agree with you about the restrictions! We will be reviewing our Covid measures after the holiday and hope that we can invite parent back into school very soon.</p>
<p>Too much communication! Letters, emails, texts, messages on Marvellous Me, newsletters multiple times per day/week can feel overwhelming, particularly as we both work full time and have 3 children between us. I think that one clear concise message at the start of term with perhaps one update per week. We teach children to take responsibility for themselves, parents should too instead of needing reminders that it is PE, Forest School etc. as then there are so many messages, it's hard to process them all!</p>	<p>Mrs Kee sends a Newsletter once per week . We switched to Marvellous Me as previously we had had Class Dojo and Teachers to Parents and parents had informed the school that this was too much. Class Dojo does not meet GDPR requirements, and we switched to Marvellous Me, which is GDPR compliant and is one app for praise and communication rather than having two.</p> <p>It is difficult getting the balance of ensuring parents have the information they need with over-communicating and we will continue to review our practices and gain feedback from parents.</p>
<p>Maybe just a tiny bit more communication from the child's teacher within the first couple of weeks of starting school to confirm whether or not they have settled in nicely to the classroom/made friends/if they're quiet or outgoing. Just a small email or message to put you at ease a bit more rather than having to wait for a parents evening or trying to get the information out of the child. I know it probably takes a while for the teachers to get to know the children themselves though and I'm really happy with how I think my child has settled in.</p>	<p>Usually we would have parent workshops and our library sessions where parents would be able to see there child in school and what they are doing in class. We will endeavour to plan these close to the start of term next academic year.</p>
<p>Communication could be better. Now we have the marvellous me app there is only one way communication with the teacher to parents. You can only high 5 back at the teacher or thumbs up.</p>	<p>We have had several parents identify Marvellous Me as a strength. Although we recognise that we will never be able to please everyone all of the time, we do feel Marvellous Me offers a single form of communication in relation to sharing messages with parents and praising pupils. It is still fairly new and we am sure everyone's confidence with using it will improve over the year. We have also added a feature where parents can use the link on the front page of the app to email their child's class teacher (click on 'Teacher Email').</p>





Parent Survey

What you said – Areas for Development

What you said	What we did/Response
<p>"I'm not sure about the marvellous me app .It's not as good as tapestry and we don't as parents get photos of learning like we used to and also we can't write back via marvellous me like we used to be able to do with tapestry "</p> <p>Huge lack of communication with parent who never collects. Had direct contact with teacher in reception through a school email address now there's nothing. Since using MarvellousMe there's no pictures of what they are doing throughout their learning. What are the thumbs up for on there? "</p> <p>It's also a shame you can't reply to messages on MarvellousMe. That was a good feature on Dojo. "</p>	<p>Tapestry is a specific app used in Reception. Reception are part of EYFS . OPOJ Nursery use Tapestry too as the EYFS curriculum runs from birth to 5 years old. Year 1 and Year 2 follow the Key Stage 1 Curriculum. The way the curriculum works in EYFS is different to KS1 and Tapestry is used to support this in Reception. Marvellous me allows us to share with parents what children have done well in school each week.</p> <p>Parents can now contact teacher via the email link on the Marvellous Me app (click on 'Teacher Email').</p>
<p>"Interaction with parents Anti bullying policies "</p>	<p>As a school we try to ensure good communication and positive interactions with parents, where this is not the case, please contact Mrs Kee via the school office.</p> <p>We have an Anti-bullying policy in place and, our 'Pupil Voice' earlier in the term in which the children said there was no bullying but if they had been upset it was sorted out quickly.</p>
<p>Awareness of child's stretch targets/tracking of things. My child is a very good reader yet has been given a book this year which he was given last year and easily read at that point in time. To be given the same book from a year ago wasn't great but when it's so far below his reading standard how's he supposed to maintain motivation to read what school provide?</p>	<p>We are sorry that this happened. Children are reassessed regularly and move reading groups where necessary in order to ensure that they continue to be stretched and challenged. If any parent has concerns about their child's reading, please speak to your child's class teacher in the first instance or one of our English leads: Mrs Williams or Mrs Ayling.</p>





Parent Survey

What you said – Areas for Development

What you said	What we did/Response
<p>Providing more individual personal updates for children on marvelous me, no pictures no examples of what they have learnt that day.</p>	<p>Marvellous Me is relatively new as we only introduced it at the start of this academic year. Every child should have at least one learning postcard shared per week. We will feedback to teachers that parents would like to have some photographs shared where possible.</p>
<p>Would love to know more about my child's learning goals and activities at school. When I ask her, she doesn't remember or doesn't know. Also, it says above that there are clubs and activities available via the school - can you share details on these? Finally, I love the marvelous me app updates, but they don't let me know how my child is getting on (i.e. behaving well, making friends, meeting expectations or any areas to develop), I assume that's what parents evening is for though?</p>	<p>When a club is available, Miss Evans shares the details with the year group. We use a MS Form for parents to sign up if their child is interested. We currently have Burton Albion delivering sessions for Reception, Year 1 and Year 2. Burton Albion run this club for children at VWA.</p> <p>We have a dance specialist delivering Movement and Physical fitness sessions during lunchtime and after school (each year group has one class per term).</p> <p>During parents' evening, your child's class teacher should provide you with information about their learning in school.</p>
<p>Extreme overreaction to Covid, but it's not just your school. Cancelling every event for half a year due to 2 cases in September is quite strange to me.</p>	<p>Although we understand the frustration that a trip was cancelled, we do have to follow the guidance from the Local Authority and they make decisions based on the number of cases in school. Due to changes in the way in which cases are reported and shared, we did not share the number of cases with parents. Our Covid Outbreak Plan explains the percentages of cases where a review of measures is required. We were in contact with the Local Authority on a daily basis, updating them and following their advice and guidance.</p>
<p>The football club: Adult to child ratio was concern. Potential safeguarding issue.</p> <p>Fortnightly updates on students social and academic achievements would also be nice. Although I understand the workload.</p>	<p>The football club is run by Burton Albion using our site to provide an after school club for VWA pupils. Their ratio information can be found on their website.</p> <p>Our focus in school is on children's learning and, although it would be lovely to provide fortnightly updates to every child's parents, this would certainly have an impact on teacher workload and would take staff away from the important work of planning to support children's learning and progress.</p>





Parent Survey

What you said – Areas for Development

What you said	What we did/Response
<p>Consistency in communication, sometimes we get 5 messages reminding us about one thing but then don't get any reminders for another.</p> <p>Sometimes communication can be an issue and not being informed of things.</p>	<p>Last year, too many forms of communication were being used and we hope this will improve this year.</p>
<p>More options for extra curricular activities</p>	<p>We currently have the Burton Albion football clubs and Movement and Fitness sessions. We are looking into starting a gymnastics club next term. Staff are currently running afterschool interventions for identified pupils. In addition, we are asking staff in school if they would like to run an after school club, however, we are also aware that this does take a lot of time and commitment from staff outside of school hours.</p>
<p>More of a varied food rota. Maybe every 4 weeks rather than 2 weeks.</p>	<p>We have passed this suggestion onto Linda Smith, the Fierte Catering Manager.</p>
<p>Tapestry is hard to use with a mobile phone and especially coming from nursery I have 2 accounts so it can be very difficult to access the correct information</p>	<p>We are sorry to hear this. If you email your child's class teacher to let them know you are having difficulty and they should be able to help you.</p>
<p>More actual contact with class teachers and other parents as a support network as after the initial meet and greet there hasn't been opportunity to talk one to one with teachers, but I understand this is difficult in the current climate.</p>	<p>We are pleased that the transition procedures including meeting your child's key person and play and stay sessions for Reception were useful. Mrs Kee is always on the gate to pass on any messages to teachers. It is really important that the staff are in class to greet the children and make sure they have a good start to the day. We would usually have parents in for library sessions and workshops too, but Covid restrictions have prevented this.</p>
<p>Needs to be consistency and parents need to be informed about their child's development</p>	<p>We are unsure what is being referred to in relation to consistency. If it is related to communication, we have reflected on this earlier on. In relation to children's development, there are three opportunities over the year for parents to meet with their child's class teacher and parents receive a report at the end of each academic year. If parents have any concerns about their child's learning, they can email their child's class teacher at any point.</p>





Dates for your diary

Staffordshire Term Dates 2021-22

Autumn Term 2021

Inset day: Wednesday 1 September

Term Starts: Thursday 2 September

Half Term: Monday 25 October – Friday 29 October

Term ends: Friday 17 December

Holiday: Monday 20 December – Monday 3 January

Spring Term 2022

Inset day: Tuesday 4 January

Term Starts: Wednesday 5 January

Half Term: Monday 21 February – Friday 25 February

Term ends: Thursday 7 April

Inset day: Friday 8 April

Holiday: Monday 11 April – Friday 22 April

Easter Sunday: Sunday 17 April

Summer Term 2022

Term starts: Monday 25 April

May Day: Monday 2 May

Half Term: Monday 30 May – Friday 3 June

Term ends: Wednesday 20 July

Holiday: Thursday 21 July – Friday 2 September

Violet Way Inset Days

Wednesday 1st September

Friday 22nd October

Tuesday 4th January

Friday 8th April

Monday 6th June (School closed for Queen's Jubilee)

Monday 20th June

What's Coming Up?

Anti-Bullying Week Theme: One Kind Word – week commencing Monday 15th November

Odd Socks day celebrating individuality and uniqueness – Monday 15th November

Children in Need - Friday 19th November – Wear yellow or spots or both! Pay £1.00 by Parent pay, which will be donated to Children in Need

Speak Out Stay Safe (NSPCC) – YR, Y1, Y2 – week commencing 22nd November

Flu immunisations – Wednesday 1st December

Christmas Jumper Day and Christmas Dinner Day - Friday 10th December – Wear your Christmas jumper (or a red, green, or sparkly jumper for example). Pay £1.00 via Parent pay, the proceeds will go to Save the Children

Christmas Carol Concert at St Peter's Church – week commencing 13th December **TBC**

