

If I could sum this week up in one word, it would probably be... hot!

And if I could choose a second word, it would probably be... adaptability!

Like so many schools across the country, we have spent much of this week carefully balancing all the wonderful end-of-year events with one overriding priority: keeping our children and staff safe during the second bout of exceptionally high temperatures.

School life certainly hasn't slowed down. We have welcomed new Reception families into school through our Ready for Reception Stay and Play sessions, continued our transition programme for pupils moving between year groups, welcomed prospective families into our Resource Provision and Hedgehogs, interviewed lots of new Teaching Assistants, hosted annual reviews, safeguarding meetings and the final governor meetings of the year, whilst Year 6 continued their Food Technology sessions at Whitby High School and Year 4 visited the World Museum in Liverpool to support their learning about Ancient Egypt.

Tuesday we welcomed the Cool Canvas team back to school for a 4th year to begin work on an outdoor area on the junior site, as well as to conduct some landscaping on the infant site over the holidays. I love their team and they definitely get my ideas and translate them into something amazing! Things never stand still here and we are constantly looking for ways to make the learning environment welcoming, calming, and conducive to excellent pupil progress and development.

Wednesday also saw our wonderful Year 2 End of Year Assembly, where children reflected on an incredible year of learning and growth. Thank you to everyone who came to support them - it is always lovely to see our hall full of proud families.

Behind the scenes, staff have been working incredibly hard preparing reports, planning transition, meeting with secondary colleagues, supporting children with additional needs and ensuring September is already beginning to take shape. This point in the school year is always one of the busiest, and I continue to be enormously grateful for the professionalism, commitment and care shown by every member of our team.

☀️ A Word About Sports Days...

I know some families have been disappointed that we had to cancel and reconfigure Sports Days this week.

Believe me when I say, nobody is more disappointed than the staff. Sports Day is one of our favourite events of the year. We love seeing parents cheering from the sidelines, children encouraging one another and everyone enjoying a real celebration of teamwork, determination and fun.

However, my responsibility as Headteacher is first and foremost the safety and wellbeing of over 600 children and over 100 staff.

This week, temperatures were forecast to reach around 30°C, but the reality inside schools is often considerably higher (32°C today). Unlike many workplaces, schools are full of large numbers of active young children, many of whom are still developing the ability to recognise when they are becoming dangerously overheated or dehydrated. Earlier this week, we had a number of children become unwell because of the heat, despite the temperatures being cooler than the end of the week and our best efforts with water, shade, reduced activity and regular cooling breaks.

When making decisions such as whether a Sports Day can safely go ahead, we undertake what is known as a dynamic risk assessment. This means considering not only the forecast temperature, but also humidity, direct sunlight, the availability of shade, the nature of the activity, the age of the children, medical conditions, staffing and how conditions are changing throughout the day. These are not decisions taken lightly or at the last minute - they are decisions taken because, if something were to happen to a child through heat illness, quite rightly people would ask why we carried on regardless.

I have also seen some comparisons made between our Sports Days and the fantastic PTA and Upper Key Stage 2 Summer Fair (which raised a whopping total profit of £1711.08 – not all of it for sponge target practice on the Headteacher!). Whilst I completely understand why people have drawn that comparison, they are actually very

different situations. The Summer Fair was a wonderful voluntary community event, organised by our incredible PTA, where families could choose whether or not to attend and parents remained responsible for supervising their own children throughout, making decisions about their child's health and wellbeing as parents – not as I do, as a professional in 'loco parentis', with all of the additional considerations this brings.

As such, a school Sports Day is different. During the school day, every child in our care is our responsibility. We cannot ask children to opt out, nor can we ask parents to supervise them. We therefore have both a legal and moral duty to ensure that activities are safe for every child participating.

I know not everyone will agree with every decision I make, and that's absolutely okay. But I hope families understand that every decision is made with one simple question in mind: "What is safest for the children?" Nothing else comes before that.

Please Help Us Be Good Neighbours

Finally, I do need to revisit something that I have written about many times before.

Unfortunately, we continue to receive complaints from our neighbours about parents blocking driveways, double parking and causing obstruction during drop-off and collection times.

I know the vast majority of our families park considerately, but it only takes a handful of vehicles to create significant problems for those who live around the school. Blocking someone's driveway, even "just for a minute", or double parking on residential roads is not only inconsiderate - it can prevent residents from leaving or accessing their homes and creates unnecessary risks for children crossing the road, not to mention ambulances have been prevented from using the roads that our parents choose to block. We try to teach children to be good citizens and I wonder if that message could usefully be conveyed by parents also, by simply parking in a less antisocial and dangerous way?

Please help us maintain the positive relationships we have with our local community by parking legally, safely and respectfully. A few extra minutes walking is a very small price to pay for keeping everyone safe and showing consideration for those who live near the school.

Looking Ahead

With just over a week remaining, there is still so much to look forward to - celebration events, transition activities, reports, performances and saying goodbye (for the summer and also for pastures new!) to our wonderful children.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support, kindness and understanding. It is very much appreciated.

Have a lovely weekend - and hopefully enjoy the sunshine safely.