

Whitchurch Weekly



Message from the Headteacher

20th Dec
2024
Issue 15



Dear Whitchurch Families,

At the end of my first term at the school it has been a pleasure to spend some time reflecting on my own and the children's experiences.



There has been a plethora of visits and workshops which have widened our children's view of how the past has shaped the present day and broadened their understanding on what it is to be a citizen of our world today. These have included Hampton Court and Ragged School Museum visits for Years 4 and 5 as well as Africa Day and Stone Age Day workshops for Years 2 and 3. Year 6 had a visit from a Magistrate to explore their understanding of the law.

I am extremely proud of the community events that have taken place so far this year:-

- A huge thank you to Friends of Whitchurch who continue to volunteer their own time to raise invaluable funds for the school. They have already raised nearly £5000 since the beginning of the year. They could not do that without the amazing support from community in supporting their events. The Bake a Heart competition will be coming up in the Spring term.
- Music continues to bring us together at Whitchurch. The Winter concert and carol concerts have showcased our pupils' talents and have lifted all our spirits! This would not be possible without Mrs Leutfeld's continued dedication to music at Whitchurch.
- We have hosted a Robotics competition, run by RoboThink, at Whitchurch last Saturday, schools from both the public and private sector took part. They spent the morning building and testing their own robot. They then had to steer it through a maze in the quickest time possible. I am proud to say we won second place for KS1 and first place KS2. You can see the 'huge' trophy in our cabinet in the foyer.



The Whitchurch Woodland area is already coming back to life. Thank you to all those that have donated materials, time (or both) to help us work towards our vision to be able to have our own Forest School on site. It is not too late to support us. Look out for an update in the new year of what has happened so far and the next stage of the plan. Mrs Portou is driving forward this project passionately, so please reach out to her if you think you can help.

I have held two coffee sessions with parents and have welcomed your thoughts and ideas for the school. I will have another session early next term to share our School Development. I look forward to seeing you there.

Christmas activities have been brightening the school over the last few weeks, from decoration making, Christmas lunch, carols and class parties. We also had a special visit from Father Christmas to distribute presents for each class - special thanks to Stagecoach Stanmore for organising his arrival!



I wish to thank you for all of the thoughtful Christmas cards and gifts I have received and for the kindness you have shown me in my first term. I am proud to be part of a school that has such a strong community spirit. However you are spending the next two weeks, I hope you can spend quality time with your family and have a restful break.



Finally... I am excited to say that Radio Whitchurch is up and running. We broadcast our first show on Thursday and plan to make regular features. The pupils were very professional in all their roles. Please listen to this via the news posts on our website.

Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a relaxing break.

Ms Rachel Inniss
Headteacher

Listen to
our first
radio show
here

Spotlight on Music



Carol Concerts

This week has been filled with joy and music as the entire school came together for a series of Christmas concerts. From Reception to Year 6, the children showcased their hard work and musical skills, performing a beautiful combination of traditional carols and festive songs. The concerts were met with a large audience, with many parents attending and sharing in the magic of the performances. Seeing so many smiles reminded us of the strong support and appreciation we have from our school community. Your encouragement helps us in our mission to nurture confident, well-rounded, and accomplished young people. Thank you for sharing in the festive spirit with us!

Mrs Leutfeld, Director of Music



General Notices and Highlights



SMSA Vacancy

We have a vacancy for a SMSA/Midday Assistant on a casual contract basis. Please see the Vacancies page of our website for more information and an application pack.

Apply
here

Spring Lunch Menu

A reminder that the Spring lunch menu (and allergens) can be viewed on the School Meals page of our website. Please remember to book your child's lunches via ParentPay by **Sunday 5th January**.

View
Spring lunch
menu here



LAMDA Bookings for Spring Term

There are still a few LAMDA places available for the Spring term. To apply for a place for your child (up to Year 5), please complete the survey/form on School Spider.



Homework Queries

If you have any queries about homework, please email office@whitchurchps.co.uk where the query can be forwarded to the relevant teacher. Please do not use the homework portal of School Spider as this is not monitored.

Penalty Notice Fines for Unauthorised Absences

Please refer to the 2024 penalty notice fines for unauthorised absences attached to this newsletter.

Spring term
begins on
Monday 6th
January (gates
open 8.40am)



Follow us on
Instagram:
WhitchurchPS



Spotlight on Year 5

Year 5
have been
developing their
drawing and
printing skills
in Art



Drawing and Monoprinting

In Year 5, pupils have been working hard to improve their drawing skills. We have been studying the detailed landscape drawings of Stephen Wiltshire, who is known for his ability to capture depth and perspective. Over this half term, we have been honing our skills by sketching from various sources - focusing on proportions, then adding detail and tone to our drawings. Although challenging, we learned the importance of regularly referring back to our source material to stay accurate. We practiced drawing objects from different angles, paying close attention to how light affects them and how to create shading and tone.

We then applied these skills to draw Buckingham Palace and prepare for monoprinting. It was crucial to include as much detail as possible, as there is only one chance to create our artwork using this creative process. We used a thin layer of printing ink, over which the we placed our drawings and sketched on top. We quickly learned that applying pressure is key to transferring the ink onto our images. It was wonderful to see the impressive results from each class. Afterwards, we reflected on what went well and what we could improve next time, noting that we needed to be careful not to rest our hands on the work whilst drawing!

Miss Chauhan-D'Souza (Year 5 class teacher)



Spotlight on Year 5

Year 5
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in Art



Year 5 Views

"We made prints of Buckingham Palace using ink paints, palettes and rollers. I enjoyed paying attention to detail!"
Paulo (5SC)

"I loved focusing on British culture."
Yusuf (5SC)



"In art we have been monoprinting and it was fun because we got to draw Buckingham Palace and we dipped it into paint. I used my pencil carefully to trace the picture, which created a beautiful piece." Amiya (5RC)

"In art, I like that we can be creative with our projects and how we make them. I also like learning about different artists like Stephen Wiltshire." Ocean (5RC)

"I had lots of fun doing the monoprinting but it was quite hard to make it visible."
Krisha (5SK)

"Personally thinking about monoprinting, I quite enjoyed it. You had to use ink to print, generally black and blue. It's quite easy: draw a sketch, put it on a tray with a thin layer of ink and trace the drawing on the ink and it is done! I highly recommend this." Ankush (5SK)

"I really loved the monoprinting because of the way the ink transferred onto the card. I didn't think it was going to work but when I finished it actually looked amazing!" Veer (5TG)



Dates for your Diary

Spring 1st



Wednesday 8th January	Year 2 visit to Belmont Synagogue (AM)
Tuesday 14th January	3SH visit to Pizza Express Stanmore
15th and 16th January	Year 4 African Art Workshop
Wednesday 22nd January	6ET visit to the Natural History Museum
Thursday 23rd January	6HH visit to the Natural History Museum Year 4 Tropical Animal Workshop
Friday 24th January	6HA visit to the Natural History Museum
Monday 27th January	1RA and 1PD visit to Windsor Castle
Tuesday 28th January	6CM visit to the Natural History Museum
Friday 31st January	1SM and 1IN visit to Windsor Castle
Monday 3rd February	5SC and 5TG visit to The Science Museum
Wednesday 5th February	6CM and 6HH visit to Harrow Central Mosque
Thursday 6th February	6ET and 6HA visit to Harrow Central Mosque
Friday 7th February	5RC and 5SK visit to The Science Museum
Tuesday 11th February	Year 5 visit to Bentley Wood (Oliver!)
Wednesday 12th February	FoW Bake A Heart Sale (3.20pm)

Spring Class Assemblies

Tuesdays Reception to Year 3 (9.05am to 9.45am)

Tues 14th Jan	3SM
Tues 28th Jan	2SA
Tues 25th Feb	3SH
Tues 11th Mar	2KK
Tues 25th Mar	1IN

Thurs 16th Jan	6ET
Thurs 30th Jan	4PC
Thurs 13th Feb	6HA
Thurs 6th Mar	5TG
Thurs 20th Mar	4XL
Thurs 1st May	1PD

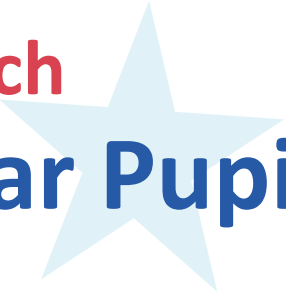
Thursdays Years 4 to 6 (9.05am to 9.45am)

Please note change of date for 1PD →

Whitchurch



Star Pupils



Well done to our stars of the week, who have been selected for excellent work and demonstrating our school values



1RA Saboor
1SM Hassan
1PD Whole Class
1IN Wayame

2ST Whole Class
2KK Filip
2DN Khadijah
2SA Safa

3NL Riyan
3SH Anass
3LA Neil
3SM Zai

Respect
Responsibility
Resilience
Honesty
Generosity
Aspiration

4BS Maya
4XL Mikhail
4PC Jasmine
4ND Ayub and Rafay

5SK Natalia
5SC Alessia
5TG Veer
5RC Rayan

6HH Adam
6ET Ema
6HA Ianis
6CM Stefania

Attendance Stars



This week's
attendance
stars are
1IN (96.4%)

Whole
School
94.3%

Did you know?

Good attendance at school helps to give children the best chance of success in life.

Support for Families



Safety on Social Media

Social media apps such as TikTok and Instagram are immensely popular among children and young people: Ofcom found that 96% of children have their own profile on at least one of these platforms by the age of 17. These apps feature short-form, algorithmically tailored content ensuring that their users spend as long as possible viewing posts and videos.

It is vital for us to safeguard the children in our care for if and - more likely, when - they use social media.

Please refer to the poster attached to this newsletter for expert advice on what we can do to keep children and young people safe as they navigate the digital landscape.



Family Learning Hub Parenting Programme
10 week course starting Tuesday 21st January
(online) or Wednesday 22nd January (in person)
9am to 11.30am



This course supports parents and carers with useful strategies for positive discipline, stress management and improving family dynamics.

www.thefamilylearninghub.com



Support for Families



How to listen so your child will talk

Parents often ask what they can say to get their child to talk. The secret isn't about what you say: it's about how you listen. The most important skill in talking with anyone is not lecturing, offering solutions, answering, or teaching. What children need from you is your full attention and empathy: that is what deep listening is.

Even children who do not say much want to connect with you, so try to accept it on their terms. Connection does not always look like a deep meaningful conversation: it can be a hug, a high five or look into each other's eyes. Children may also feel more comfortable talking while walking down the street or washing the dishes. It is OK for them not to hold eye contact as this may be their way of staying regulated while talking about something that feels difficult for them.

When children express feelings about something, they need you to listen and acknowledge, rather than jumping in with solutions. This means you may have to manage your own anxiety about the issue, which will allow them to find their own solutions to problems. Most importantly, pay full attention: put your phone down and be present. It will be a gift to both of you.



Reach Out - Schools Counselling Partnership

Sometimes we could all do with someone to talk to. If you would like to meet Tom for a confidential and non-judgemental chat about you, your child, or any other worries, he is available on **Wednesdays at 9-10am**.

You can call/text Tom on **07799 028 461** or email him at **tom@schoolsounsellingpartnership.co.uk**

Support for Families



Damp and Mould

This time of year often sees condensation creeping in and putting our homes at risk of damp and mould.

View leaflet here

For information and advice to help prevent damp and mould please refer to the leaflet on the Support for Families page on our website.

HAF in Harrow (until Sunday 5th January)

The Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme provides FREE nutritious meals and engaging activities (sports, arts and specialist SEND support) for primary school children eligible for Free School Meals, benefits-related.

View HAF programme here

All activities can be booked at www.youngharrowfoundation.org

Cricket at Middlesex Indoor Cricket School

Middlesex in the Community have an exciting new year cricket opportunity for children around the city! They will be running sessions at the Middlesex Indoor Cricket School on Friday 3rd January across different age groups throughout the day.

View leaflet here



For more information please see the leaflet on the Support for Families page of our website.



Penalty Notices for Unauthorised Absences

2024
updates:
what you
need to
know

With the introduction of the new National Framework for Penalty Notices, the following changes will come into force for unauthorised absences that occur after 19th August 2024.

5 consecutive days of Term Time Leave

Fines
will be
issued
for:

Penalty Notice fines will be issued for term time leave of 5 or more consecutive days *(or for fewer days where this has happened before)*.

10 sessions of Unauthorised Absence in a 10 week period

Penalty Notice fines will be considered where there have been 10 sessions of absence in a 10 week period.

Fines
will be
issued
to:

Each parent/carer - for each child

Penalty Notice fines will be issued to each parent/carer, for each child who was absent.

For example: 3 siblings absent for term time leave will result in each parent/carer receiving 3 separate fines.



First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or irregular attendance the amount will be:

**£160 per parent/carer,
per child when paid
within 28 days.**

***(reduced to £80 per
parent/carer, per child
if paid within 21 days)***

Second Offence (within 3 years)

The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or irregular attendance the amount will be:

**£160 per parent/carer,
per child when paid
within 28 days.**

***(no option to pay
at £80 level)***

Third Offence (and any further offences within 3 years)

The third time an offence is committed for Term Time Leave or irregular attendance a Penalty Notice will not be issued. the case will proceed to the Magistrates' court.

***Magistrate's fines can
be up to £2,500 per
parent/carer, per child.***

Please refer to our **Attendance and Punctuality Policy** and speak with the school if you are thinking of taking your child out of school during term time. You will need to make a written request to take your child out of school and any leave of absence will need to be agreed by the Headteacher before it is given.

At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

SAFETY ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Currently, children are growing up in an immediate and throwaway culture when it comes to content that's consumed online. So much material is now deliberately created to be shorter in nature – and may often contain hidden elements such as advertising, or extreme political and cultural views. With complex algorithms built to keep people on their phones and engaging with social media content, it's becoming increasingly difficult to reduce time spent on these platforms.

1 REDUCE DOOMSCROLLING

It's concerning how common for young people to spend hours 'doomscrolling': trawling through social media and aimlessly viewing every post they see, many of which might make them feel sad or anxious. Social media can be useful for keeping in touch with friends and family, as well as staying up to date on current events. However, it's important to use it with a clear purpose, instead of endlessly scrolling through content, which could lead to young people accidentally discovering harmful material.

2 TALK ABOUT THE CONTENT

It's important to keep apprised of the kind of content that a young person is being exposed to. Discussing what they're watching online can help you understand why they're using social media in the first place. Furthermore, ensure that children are aware of hidden content, such as advertising of a product – and that they know how to spot that the creator is being paid to talk about it.

3 FIND POSITIVE ASPECTS

Despite all the concerns, there's plenty of wholesome content on social media. It's worth spending time with children to help them find something suitable and enjoyable. Perhaps you'll even discover a joint interest, and you can enjoy the content alongside the child. As part of this, you should also point out why certain things shouldn't be given attention, explaining why it isn't suitable and why it's been created in the first place.

4 REDUCE SCREENTIME

Young people can sometimes be unaware of the exact amount of time they spend looking at social media. Smart phones don't just have the capacity to monitor screentime; they also record how much time is spent on each app. Consider setting targets to reduce this and support children to meet these goals, gradually reducing the amount of time spent on different apps.

5 FILL THE VOID

Monitoring and reducing screentime can create a lot of free time to fill, and young people can even face withdrawal symptoms when made to step away from their phones. To mitigate this, consider what offline activities you could introduce the child to, and what they would enjoy. This can ensure that young users will permanently cut down on their screentime, rather than temporarily doing so while they know it's being monitored.

6 REDUCE NOTIFICATIONS

One way in which social media platforms keep people coming back is through notifications. The algorithms behind these apps track people's daily habits, including the times of the day where they're most likely to engage with the platform. This data is then used to deliver specifically timed notifications to draw them back in. To avoid young users being exposed to this tactic, simply turn off notifications for the app in their phone's settings.

7 LIVE IN THE REAL WORLD

Overexposure to social media can distort someone's perception of the real world – from body norms to social conventions. This filtered environment can make it hard for young people to distinguish reality from online content, which is now becoming even more difficult with the rise of AI. To mitigate this concern, take time to teach young people how to discern truth from fiction, both on and off social media.

8 DIGITAL DETOX

Encouraging young people to take a 'digital detox', from even just a couple of the apps that they use, can result in an overall reduction of screentime and less exposure to potentially harmful content. Alternatively, rather than avoiding the app entirely, encourage children to take a 'digital detox' from content creators and influencers, and instead, keep in touch with friends and family – which is generally a far healthier use of these platforms.

9 MODEL GOOD BEHAVIOUR

Consider the habits that you're demonstrating to your children. How much time do you spend on your phone? How much do you 'doomscroll'? Comparing your own usage with the child's could put things into perspective for them – or if it turns out that you're also overusing social media, it can turn screentime reduction into a joint mission, which you and the child can work on together.

10 BE CLEAR ON THE "WHY"

Research shows that young people can become addicted to social media. There are many schools that are moving towards being 'phone free' due to the negative impacts of using social media and phones continuously. It's important to explain to young people why managing screentime is important. Set out the benefits and ensure they have all the relevant information, so it's not just seen as a punishment.

Meet Our Expert

John Insley is a senior leader in a Birmingham secondary school and has vast experience in leading schools over the past 15 years – including the development of computing curriculums across primary and secondary schools, writing e-safety policies and supporting schools with computing and e-safety advice.



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Source: See full reference list on guide page at <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/top-tips-for-safety-on-social-media>



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