

# Whitchurch Weekly

17th Jan  
2025  
Issue 17



## Year 4 African Art Workshop

This week Year 4 welcomed artist James Gakonga to Whitchurch for a day long workshop linked to their topic 'Journeys and Migration', with a focus on Africa. James shared some African music with the children and helped them to create some amazing African inspired art. They explored creative techniques including painting and stencilling onto calico to create impressive art - the workshop was thoroughly enjoyed by children and staff alike!



# Spotlight on Enrichment



Music

## Mini Choir (Year 1 and 2)

It is with great pleasure to inform you that we have now formed a new choir for Year 1 and 2 children - the Mini Choir - led by our classically trained Harrow Music Service teacher, Miss Birch. As this young choir is still in the early stages of their training, we had a selection process to ensure the group size remains manageable. We hope to accommodate a few more children next year.

Rest assured that all children across different year groups at Whitchurch benefit from regular singing activities. Every child participates in weekly singing assemblies and children in Years 1 to 3 also enjoy singing as part of their weekly whole class music lessons.

*Mrs Leutfeld, Director of Music*



## Harrow Borough Cross Country Championships

Sport

A few Year 5 and 6 children took part in yesterday's Harrow Borough Cross Country Championships at Harrow School. They ran 2.5km and challenged themselves against other primary and high schools in Harrow, displaying great school values. One of our pupils came 8th in their race, which was a great achievement. Well done to all of them!



*Miss Wong and Miss Byrne*

# General Notices and Highlights



## End of School Day

Please ensure that you and your child leave the school site promptly at the end of the school day. They should not be going to play in the MUGA or playground once they have been dismissed. Thank you for your support.

## HLTA Vacancy

We have a vacancy for a HLTA (Higher Level Teaching Assistant). For information and an application pack please see the Vacancies page of our website.

Apply  
here

## Next Coffee Morning

A reminder that the next coffee morning will be on **Thursday 6th February at 9.15am**, where we will be sharing our school development plan.



## Flu Vaccination Catch Up Clinics

Harrow Immunisation Team are holding catch up clinics for your child to receive their flu vaccination if they have not already done so. You can book an appointment for your child via the booking link.

**Saturday 18th and Saturday 25th January, 9.45am-12pm**  
**Kenmore Park Community Clinic (HA3 9HZ)**

Book  
here

## 3SH Class Assembly Reschedule

3SH's class assembly has been rescheduled to take place on **Tuesday 18th March at 9.05am**. Thank you for your continued support.

View  
Spring lunch  
menu here

## Vision Screening and Measurement Programme

The annual vision screening and national child measurement programme sessions will take place as follows:

**Reception Vision Screening: Tuesday 4th and Wednesday 5th February**

**Reception and Year 6 National Child Measurement Programme:  
Thursday 6th and Friday 7th February**

## Penalty Notice Fines for Unauthorised Absences

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

Follow us on  
Instagram:  
WhitchurchPS





# Spotlight on Year 1

Year 1 are  
learning about  
the structure  
of materials  
in DT



## Structures

This half term in Design Technology, Year 1 are learning about Structures linked to our story Goldilocks and the Three Bears. We are looking at the features needed to make a chair stable such as how many legs required, which material they should be made of and which shapes are more stable than others).

Over the next few weeks we will be working on a project to build a chair for Baby Bear as Goldilocks accidentally broke it! We will work on our designs and adapt these as we go along, exploring stability and ways to strengthen them.

So far we have enjoyed making our own simple structures using paper and masking tape and testing their strength. We are developing our problem solving skills and making links to our learning of everyday materials in Science.

*Mrs Ahmed (Year 1 leader)*

## Year 1 views

“We cut the paper and put some tape around it.”

“We made the paper stand by rolling it.”

“The bended one was the strongest!”

“When we didn’t bend it, it didn’t work at all!”



# Dates for your Diary

Spring 1st



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
Wednesday 29th January	HMS Guitar Festival
Thursday 30th January	Year 2 Fire Brigade visit 3SH and 3SM visit to Rock Up, Watford
Friday 31st January	1SM and 1IN visit to Windsor Castle 3LA and 3NL visit to Rock Up, Watford
Monday 3rd February	5SC and 5TG visit to The Science Museum
Wednesday 5th February	6CM and 6HH visit to London Central Mosque
Thursday 6th February	6ET and 6HA visit to London 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

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

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

Tues 28th Jan	2SA
Tues 11th Mar	2KK
Tues 18th Mar	3SH*
Tues 25th Mar	1IN
*rescheduled	

Thurs 30th Jan	4PC
Thurs 13th Feb	6HA
Thurs 6th Mar	5TG
Thurs 20th Mar	4XL
Thurs 1st May	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 Luca  
1SM Ariyan  
1PD Esha  
1IN Evelina

2ST Yasmine  
2KK Yousef  
2SA Georgia  
2DN Jeremy

3NL Yousuf  
3SH Abdur Rahmaan  
3LA Nivai  
3SM Eloise

Respect  
Responsibility  
Resilience  
Honesty  
Generosity  
Aspiration

4BS Akshyan  
4XL Sana  
4PC Jenny  
4ND Hussain

5SK Manan  
5SC Nora  
5RC Dayan  
5TG Kimia and Dawud

6HH Adam  
6ET Noreen  
6HA Meera  
6CM Ellias

## Attendance Stars



This week's  
attendance  
stars are  
6ET (99.31%)

Whole  
School  
95.7%

### Top Tip

Aim to arrange routine appointments for your child outside of school hours.

# Staff

## Snapshot

**Name:** Dan Leigh  
**Role:** IT Support (WiBird)



### All about me

Hi, I'm Dan - known to many as Dan the IT man! I work in a range of schools and provide IT support to Whitchurch. I have been supporting Whitchurch regularly for 4 years now but have had involvement behind the scenes for a lot longer. When I am not supporting with IT, I teach robotics and have a real passion for technology.

### Hobbies and interests

I like my music! I have a home studio where I programme drum machines and synthesisers. In my own time I like to create new tools that can help to automate processes and give people back time using AI (artificial intelligence). I also enjoy cooking and preparing meals - in fact my first job was as a chef so I'm not too bad in the kitchen!

When time permits I love travelling and going on adventurous holidays. Last year I visited Guatemala to see my best friend - it's a beautiful place. On this adventure I got stung by a scorpion and shared my accommodation with black widow spiders! Despite this, I like wildlife and all animals.



### Best thing about my role

I love my job! It's great to be able to work with a wide range of staff and children at Whitchurch, helping them with their IT issues and showing how to use different technology. Every day is different as there is often a challenge that needs to be addressed - I am a natural problem solver so I thrive on fixing problems and enjoy helping people. The children are also friendly and enthusiastic and so coming to Whitchurch is a pleasure!

# Support for Families

Online Safety



## TikTok

Among children - and especially teenagers - TikTok boasts approximately 220 million users, providing a near-endless reel of short clips intended to entertain, educate and more. However, along with its enormous userbase comes a significant number of possible risks: Ofcom have dubbed it the most likely app on which teen users would potentially suffer harm.

With the platform reaching astronomical levels of success among the younger generation, it's vitally important to understand the risks it poses.

**Please refer to the poster attached to this newsletter for the most prominent potential dangers associated with TikTok and advice on how to safeguard youngsters who are navigating the site.**



### Hope Harrow Online Workshop: Gaining Family Co-operation (for parents/carers with children aged 3-18)

Monday 10th February, 7pm-9pm (online via Zoom)  
£14 per parent/carer - £5 concession with proof

Register  
here

- Tips and tools on how to gain co-operation
- Finding different ways to communicate effectively
- Understanding where everyone fits in
- Getting to grips with the needs of siblings
- How to enjoy positive family times and less time nagging



# Support for Families



Schools  
Counselling  
Partnership




## Choose Your Battles

All humans resist feeling controlled by someone else, and children are no different. The more they feel “pushed around” the more they rebel. That’s a good thing! Training a child to be obedient means you’ll always have to be there to give orders, and as they grow up they may find it more difficult to stand up for themselves. Instead, teaching a child self-discipline raises a child who can think for themselves, stand up for what’s right, and isn’t likely to be taken advantage of.

Choose your battles. Make sure your child knows you’re on their side and that they have some choices. When you feel you are entering a power struggle, offer them two choices that you feel OK with. This will allow them to feel they have some control, while you also continue to hold your boundaries. Coach your child rather than trying to control him or her.

***Choose your battles wisely. If you fight them all, you will be too tired to win the really important ones!***



Be selective with your battles. Sometimes peace is better than being right.

## 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**



# 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](https://nationalcollege.com).

## What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

# TIKTOK

### WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Adults tend to associate online videos with YouTube – but among teens, TikTok is king. The app provides a stream of short clips tailored to users' interests, based on what they've already watched. Around half of British children use TikTok, and while much of the content is benign, Ofcom considers it the app where youngsters "were most likely to encounter a potential harm".



### AGE-INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

While TikTok's Following feed only displays videos from familiar creators, For You is a collection based on a user's previously watched clips. Most of these videos will probably be inoffensive, but the app *could* potentially show something unsuitable. If children then engage with this content, more like it will follow. TikTok's guidelines prohibit the sharing of illegal or inappropriate content, but the huge number of uploads means that a small amount inevitably slips through.



### CONTACT WITH STRANGERS

With more than 1.5 billion users globally, the potential for contact from strangers on TikTok is high – especially as accounts created by over-16s (or young people using a fake date of birth) are set to public by default. This means that not only is someone's profile visible to everyone else on the app, it also suggests their videos to others and enables anyone to download or comment on them.



### BODY IMAGE AND DANGEROUS CHALLENGES

According to Ofcom, most online harms for teens are body image related for girls (promoting unhealthy eating, body shaming and so on) and dangerous stunts for boys. Both are prevalent on TikTok. One extreme example of the latter was the 'blackout' trend, which encouraged users to hold their breath until they passed out from a lack of oxygen. This led to two families filing lawsuits against TikTok over the tragic deaths of their children.



### MISINFORMATION AND RADICALISATION

Although the short videos on TikTok tend to be more frivolous than the longer ones on YouTube, clips can still influence impressionable minds in a negative way. Not only is there plenty of dangerous misinformation on TikTok, but Ofcom reports that nearly a third of 12 to 15-year-olds use TikTok as a news source – so you should be wary of misogynistic, racist or conspiracy-themed material shaping how they see the world.

### ADDICTIVE DESIGN

With its constant stream of eye-catching videos, TikTok can be addictive to young brains. In 2024, UK children spent an average of 127 minutes per day on the app; that's twice as much as in 2020. Excessive use can interfere with young people's sleep patterns – often leading to irritability – and distract them from other, healthier activities. The instantly skippable nature of bite-size videos may also impact children's ability to maintain focus.

### IN-APP SPENDING

TikTok is free, but users have the option to buy TikTok coins, which can be used to purchase gifts for content creators. Coin bundles range from £9.99 to an eye-watering £99; while that may not sound appealing, the app still generated £7.9 billion in user spending in 2023. TikTok's policy is that under-18s can't make in-app purchases, but it's possible to bypass this with a fake birth date.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### ENABLE FAMILY PAIRING

Family Pairing allows parents to link their TikTok account to their child's, and control settings remotely. Parents can then turn on Restricted Mode (reducing the chances of a child seeing inappropriate content), set screen-time limits, make accounts private and manage whether their child can send messages – and if they can, to whom. Children can't alter these settings without parental approval.



### BLOCK IN-APP SPENDING

If a child is using an iPhone or Android device to access TikTok, you can alter their settings to prevent them from making in-app purchases. We'd recommend enabling this feature, as it can be quite easy for a young person to spend a significant amount of real money buying TikTok coins to unlock more features of the app – sometimes without even realising.



### DISCUSS THE DANGERS

If a child wants to use TikTok and you're happy for them to do so, it's good practice to discuss the potential risks. Ensure that they don't share any identifying personal information, and that they know to talk to a trusted adult if they're worried by interactions on the app. With more teens using TikTok for news, it's also worth talking about misinformation and propaganda, and how to identify it.



### READ THE SIGNS

If you're concerned that a child is spending too much time on TikTok, or that they've been emotionally affected by something they've seen, it's important to know how to spot the signs: increased irritability and a lack of concentration are potential red flags, as is failing to complete homework or skipping meals. Remember, the parental controls are there for a reason, and it's never too late to introduce limits.



### Meet Our Expert

Alan Martin is an experienced technology journalist who has written for the likes of Wired, TechRadar, Tom's Guide, The Evening Standard and The New Statesman.



Source: See full reference list on guide page at <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/tiktok-2025>



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