

Whitchurch Weekly

24th Jan
2025
Issue 18



Year 6 visit to the Natural History Museum

This week, Year 6 visited The Natural History Museum in London as enrichment for their learning about Evolution and Inheritance in Science. The children have been learning that fossils provide information about living things that inhabited the Earth millions of years ago and have since changed. They explored exhibitions and workshops related to this theme, investigating the work of fossil collector and paleontologist Mary Anning, whilst exploring many fossils and taxidermic animals.



Spotlight on Enrichment



Workshop

Year 4 Tropical Animals Workshop

Year 4 welcomed Mr Khan and a selection of tropical animals. The children thoroughly enjoyed this experience and handled the creatures with care. **“We experienced a snake slithering on us and a tiny, cute leopard crawling on our hands and the tables. We were all fascinated with it!”**



School Council Radio Show 2 - ‘Fun Facts’

School Council

School Council have put together their second show is all about fun facts (including animals and nature) which have been selected by our School Council class representatives. The show also includes music performed by two of our musicians! Many thanks to Mr Leigh, Ms Liu and Mrs Leutfeld for their support. **We look forward to sharing this show with you next week!**



Spotlight on Attendance



View the Attendance page of our website here

Good Attendance

At Whitchurch we actively promote good attendance for all children. It is so important that children come to school every day, on time and ready to learn so that they can access a high quality education and reach their full potential - every day counts!

Holidays during term time are NOT permitted

Absence due to illness

If your child is absent due to illness please email absence@whitchurchps.co.uk or telephone the school office on **020 8951 5380** by 9.30am and state the reason for absence. If you have not contacted the school, a member of staff will telephone you to find out where your child is and how long they will be absent for.

Exceptional Leave

It is at the school's discretion to decide which circumstances are 'exceptional'. As a general guideline, exceptional absence circumstances usually apply only to immediate family. Requests for leave related to extended family and friends are likely to be refused. Term time holidays are not authorised.

Persistent Low Attendance

At Whitchurch we carefully monitor the attendance of all children and if your child has low attendance (below 90%) you will be expected to attend a meeting with the Year Leader, followed by a meeting with the Assistant Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher if this absence is persistent.

Penalty Notice Fines for Unauthorised Absences

Penalty Notice fines for unauthorised absence will be issued for 5 consecutive days of term time leave or 10 sessions in a 10 week period. **For more information please refer to the poster attached to this newsletter.**

General Notices and Highlights



Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check Virtual Workshop

There will be a MTC virtual workshop for Year 4 parents and carers on **Friday 7th February from 8.30am-9.30am**. The meeting link will be shared with Year 4 parents and carers via School Spider.



Children's Mental Health Week - Monday 3rd to Friday 7th February

Children's Mental Health week will take place on the week beginning Monday 3rd February, with a **non-uniform day on Friday 7th February**. This year's theme is 'Know Yourself, Grow Yourself' and is about developing self-awareness and resilience. Children are welcome to donate £1 for Children's Mental Health Week on the non-uniform day. For more information please see **page 10**.

PINS Project Survey

We would be grateful if you could complete the second PINS survey (Partnership for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools) to help us to shape our SEND provision and strengthen our partnership with parents/carers.

Complete
PINS Project
survey
here

Headteacher's Coffee Morning Thursday 6th February at 9.15am

At our next coffee morning on **Thursday 6th February**, Ms Inniss will be sharing our School Development Plan.

If you are able to attend, please look out for the School Spider form and respond to help us with setting up.



2SA and
4PC class
assemblies
next week

Staff Training Day - Monday 24th February

Monday 24th February is a staff training day (no children in school).

The Elms Tennis Camp - Monday 24th February

The Elms will be running a tennis camp on our staff training day. Please see **page 9** for more information.

Follow us on
Instagram:
WhitchurchPS



Spotlight on Year 5

Year 5
are learning
all about
structures
in DT



Building Bridges

This half term in Design Technology, Year 5 are learning about structures - specifically bridges. We have been exploring different types of bridge including beam, truss and arch. In teams we have created a model of a truss bridge using dried spaghetti. We are now marking, sawing and assembling wood to create a wooden truss bridge.

Mrs Cumming (Year 5 Class teacher)



Year 5 views

“To build a spaghetti truss bridge, we need to have a lot of patience and time to build it.” Krisha

“It is a fun activity because we get to work in a group to build our truss bridge.” Rose

“I enjoyed working as a team. Our bridge worked really well even if it wasn’t completely done.” Yusuf

“Making the bridge was kind of hard because the spaghetti was delicate. After a while it got easier to build.” Alessia

“Instead of using thin layers of macaroni we used thick layers so it was more stable.” Paulo

“I was really excited to learn about bridges and now I’m an expert!” Robert



Dates for your Diary

Spring 1st



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	Children's Mental Health Week 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	Year 4 MTC Virtual Workshop (8.30am-9.30am) 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)

Non Uniform Day
Friday 7th February

Spring Class Assemblies

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

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

Whitchurch



Star Pupils



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



1RA Nyle
1SM Evania
1PD Manolis
1IN Dhilan

2ST Bela
2KK Veer
2DN Ilyas
2SA Diyan

3NL Darius
3SH Kevin
3LA Aiman
3SM Maariyah

Respect
Responsibility
Resilience
Honesty
Generosity
Aspiration

4BS Kerima
4XL Riyaan
4PC Yusuf
4ND Khadija

5SK Alex
5SC Paolo
5TG Karishma
5RC Dev

6HH Vanisha
6ET Aran
6HA Shay
6CM Mila

Attendance Stars



This week's
attendance
stars are
4BS (100%)

Whole
School
94.64%

Did you know

15 minutes late each day equals
two full weeks of school missed
every year!

Staff

Snapshot

Name: Sabeen Akhund
Role: Year 2 Class Teacher



All about me

I'm currently in my third year of teaching at Whitchurch. I embarked on my teaching journey a bit later in life, once my two sons were 5 and 7 years old. However, my passion for working with children has always been present. Within my teaching career, I've had the opportunity to work in different areas of East London and even spent two years teaching in the UAE.

Hobbies and interests

When I'm not busy with teaching, I love exploring new recipes, particularly from Southeast Asian cuisines, and cooking for my family and friends. The results are often a hit (but sometimes a miss!) Over a year ago, I took up Taekwondo, which has been a fantastic way for me to unwind after a hectic week and has greatly benefitted my physical and mental health. During the holidays, I enjoy taking trips around the UK with my family and embracing the great outdoors. Recently, we visited Conwy, North Wales, and I highly recommend trying the fish and chips there if you ever get the chance!



Best part of my role

One of the best aspects of my role as a teacher is the joy I feel coming into school each day, knowing that I can make a meaningful impact on my pupils during an important year in their lives. This motivates me to ensure that they enjoy their learning experiences and look forward to coming to school. I take pride in creating a safe environment where children feel comfortable sharing their thoughts and feelings, helping them grow into individuals who understand themselves better and learn to navigate the complexities of the world around them.

Support for Families

Online Safety



Health and Fitness Apps

A study entitled The Digital Health Generation has highlighted that more than 70% of young people in the UK, some aged just 8, are using apps and other digital online technologies to track and manage their health

For those of us who might struggle with sticking to a routine or even knowing where to start, physical wellbeing and fitness apps promise to do the heavy lifting for you providing meal plans, exercise routines and more.

However, some of these apps aren't always as safe as they might first appear, and they tend to present a few risks to their users - especially for their underage demographic.

Please refer to the poster attached to this newsletter for safety concerns around physical wellbeing apps, to provide you with expert advice on how to mitigate these risks for young people.



The Elms INSET Day Tennis Camp
Monday 24th February, 9am-3pm
£30 per child



The Elms Tennis Club in Stanmore will be hosting an all day tennis camp on **Monday 24th February**, featuring tennis drills and skills in the morning and games/match play in the afternoon.

For more information please see the leaflet on our website.
Booking via The Elms website: www.theelms.co.uk

Staff
Training Day
Monday 24th
February (no
children)

View
leaflet
here

Support for Families



Schools
Counselling
Partnership



Children's Mental Health Week: 3rd to 7th February 'Know Yourself, Grow Yourself'

For Children's Mental Health Week 2025, the focus will be **Know Yourself, Grow Yourself** to equip and empower children, young people and the adults who surround them to embrace self-awareness and explore what it means to them.

This will explore the importance of self-awareness and expressing emotions. Through the characters of Pixar's Inside Out and Inside Out 2, the resources encourage children and young people to know how getting to know who they are can help them build resilience, grow and develop.



There will be a themed assembly and classroom activities in school, getting children to reflect on knowing themselves. All of these activities will be co-ordinated by the Schools Counselling Partnership who provide much needed therapeutic support to our most vulnerable children, young people, parents, carers and staff. We would like to use this week to help raise funds to keep this vital service in our school.

We will be selling bookmarks themed from the movie Inside Out 2. These will be available for a donation of £1 and can be used at school and at home. Bookmarks are sold in packs of 5, so each £1 donation receives a random pack of 5 themed bookmarks.

Children are encouraged to donate £1 on non-uniform day (Friday 7th Feb) for Children's Mental Health Week

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.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about HEALTH & FITNESS APPS

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Physical wellbeing apps are useful tools for monitoring and improving our health. They allow us to balance nutrition, set goals, track our activities and sleep patterns, and motivate us to exercise. Nonetheless, there have been some reported drawbacks; this guide outlines some of these concerns and explains how to use fitness apps safely.

LACK OF PERSONALISATION

Many apps take a one-size-fits-all approach, failing to account for the varying ages and abilities of children; a 16-year-old, for example, will have different physical needs to a child of 10. This can create unrealistic expectations and set exercises which may be too advanced for younger children or too simple for older ones.

NOT DEVELOPED BY EXPERTS

Some fitness and wellbeing apps are developed by experts in the field – but a concerning number of them *aren't*. As such, these platforms may contain inaccurate information. They may present safety concerns by giving incorrect advice regarding physical activities or might include age-inappropriate content which would clearly cause more harm than good.

REDUCED INTERACTION WITH OTHERS

Physical wellbeing apps can remove the social and interactive elements which physical exercise can offer – for instance, meeting people at fitness classes, at the gym or during any other such activities. Research has found that young people generally dislike this aspect of fitness apps, suggesting that they would rather exercise in the company of friends or other like-minded individuals.

DATA AND PRIVACY CONCERNS

Fitness and wellbeing apps tend to collect a lot of personal information from their users, including name, location, date of birth, details of their physical health and more. It's worth keeping in mind that some of these apps may sell this data to third parties. We'd advise that any apps young people download should have the correct legislation in place to protect their safety and privacy while using the service.

ADDITIONAL COSTS

While many fitness apps are free to download, the initial content is quite basic. Users will only receive more helpful content (such as new workouts, nutrition advice or a personalised plan) by signing up to a subscription or paying for extra features. This can incentivise users to spend money on the service – a cost which can quickly mount up.

DEPENDENCY ON THE APP

While physical wellbeing apps can help motivate young users to manage their fitness, there's a possibility that – without being sent frequent rewards and reminders – children could start to lose their natural drive to be active. Young people may also become obsessed with tracking their exercise, health and eating habits: this can have negative effects on their mental and emotional wellbeing.

Advice for Parents & Educators

EXERCISE AND SOCIALISE

Highlight the importance of children enjoying fitness activities with family and friends, rather than always exercising alone. Emphasise the fun they can have by interacting with others rather than solely relying on an app to maintain their regime. Remind them of the importance of staying active, as well as the benefits of doing so with company.

PROMOTE POSITIVE BODY IMAGE

While we want children to be active and healthy, we must also ensure they don't become fixated on how they look and begin take things too far. During childhood and adolescence, the body is still growing and changing. It's vitally important for young people's wellbeing that we promote a positive body image and a healthy relationship with food, empowering them to make informed decisions about their diet and lifestyle.

REVIEW THE APP FIRST

Before allowing someone under 18 to install a fitness and wellbeing app, check its age rating, read its reviews and scroll through its data policy, to ensure its suitability for younger users. You could also try it yourself, to see if it's appropriate for the child's particular needs and decide if you're comfortable with them using it. Ensure that any privacy-compromising features – such as location tracking – are disabled.

USE PARENTAL CONTROLS

As with all apps, it's important for parents to familiarise themselves with any controls on the app and to use these on a child's account. The specific settings vary between platforms but – most commonly – these will relate to screen-time limits, disabling or capping in-app purchases, and managing social aspects or features which aren't age appropriate. By utilising these controls, you can help to ensure a child is getting a safe experience.

Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian Government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College®

Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/wellbeing-fitness-apps>



@wake_up_weds



/www.thenationalcollege



@wake.up.wednesday



@wake.up.weds

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 22.01.2025