

Whitchurch Weekly

31st Jan
2025
Issue 19



Year 1 visit to Windsor Castle

This week Year 1 visited Windsor Castle to enrich their learning about Kings and Queens in History. The children have been describing the history of Windsor Castle, key events and its role in British history, as well as features of medieval castles and royal palaces. During the visit they explored the castle grounds as well as exhibits and artefacts. The highlight of the visit was seeing Queen Mary's Dolls' House, which is the largest and most famous dolls' house in the world!



Enrichment Highlights

Follow us on Instagram:
WhitchurchPS



Music

HMS Guitar Festival

The Harrow Music Service Guitar Festival has been the musical highlight of this week. Sixteen of our guitarists were selected to participate in the festival, showcasing their musical skills and dedication. Well done to:

Year 6: Reyansh, Yashvir, Anaiya, Param, Saavir, Hriday, Kian

Year 5: Alex, Veer, Kian, Dylan, Mia, Elliott

Year 4: Viha, Yashvi, Ziyen



Considering that our participation in HMS festivals began with only Year 6 pupils three years ago, we are delighted that our younger pupils are now reaching the required standard as early as Year 4. This progress enables them to join our school ensembles and participate in out of school events like this. Such opportunities not only allow them to showcase their musical talents but also provide invaluable learning experiences that will greatly enhance their musical development.

Congratulations once again to our young guitarists and thank you to all families for your ongoing support!

Mrs Leutfeld, Director of Music

Clubs



Chess Tournament

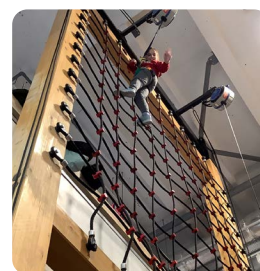
Great news - one of our chess teams of Year 5 and 6 children came in 3rd place in the under 11s National Primary Schools' Chess Championships at Haberdashers on Saturday. They are through to the next round. The children received medals for this fantastic achievement - congratulations to all involved.

Enrichment Highlights



Year 3 visit to Rock Up!

Year 3 had the opportunity to visit 'Rock Up!' in Watford this week to practise their wall climbing skills. All the children worked hard to test their boundaries and challenge themselves to reach new heights, literally! We also had a brave few pupils who even took on the high ropes challenge - crossing over rope bridges hanging above the shopping concourse!



London Fire Brigade visit Year 2

This week the London Fire Brigade in Stanmore paid a special visit to Year 2 as enrichment for their topic about Fire! The children enjoyed learning how to use the fire hose and all the different equipment within the fire engine. They were also lucky enough to sit inside the fire engine! Special thanks to the fire brigade.



Whitchurch Woodland

Project
update



Woodland News

- The pond area is now cordoned off until we can properly renovate the area and the safety grate.
- The playhouse is up and ready for imaginative play.
- The vegetable beds have been cleared.
- The Lottery funding application has been sent off - fingers crossed!

Special Thanks

Many thanks to: Reshma and family for the fantastic Ikea donations which have been shared between the Woodland and the Therapy Room (play dough, boxes, play tube, watering cans, kitchen utensils and so much more).

Donations

If anyone has an old tyre, wooden stumps or large branches/logs they can donate for the den building area, please let us know (see photo below). Many thanks for your support.

View our
Whitchurch
Woodland
Amazon wish
list here

Mrs Portou



General Notices and Highlights



Children's Mental Health Week - next week

A reminder that Children's Mental Health week will take place from 3rd to 7th February, with a **non-uniform day on Friday**. 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.

Non
Uniform Day
on Friday

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



Ms Inniss will be sharing our School Development Plan on **Thursday at 9.15am**. If you are able to attend, please respond to the School Spider form to help us with setting up.

Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check Virtual Workshop

The MTC virtual workshop for Year 4 parents and carers on **Friday 7th February** will now take place from **12pm-1pm**. The meeting link will be shared via School Spider.



Year 6 visit to London Central Mosque

Please note the change of class dates for the Year 6 visit to London Central Mosque: **Wednesday 5th February - 6ET and 6HA; Thursday 6th February - 6HH and 6CM**

New Parent Governor

I would like to welcome Patrick Sarpong as our new Parent Governor at Whitchurch. He has a wealth of experience within Secondary Education and I am confident his skill set will complement our existing Governing Body. I would like to thank both candidates for putting themselves forward to support the school and the community who took the time to read each candidate's statement and vote. - Ms Inniss

Whitchurch Woodland Community Project Donations

Please us to renovate our Whitchurch Woodland for outdoor learning by making a donation via our Amazon wishlist.

View our
Whitchurch
Woodland
Amazon wish
list here

Spotlight on Year 3

Year 3
are creating
their own
Roman Busts
in Art



Roman Busts

In Art, Year 3 have been exploring portrait techniques and creating Roman busts! We began by learning a range of shading techniques, including cross-hatching, stippling, scumbling and blending to add depth and detail to our drawings. We thoroughly enjoyed experimenting with these skills before applying them to our own self-portraits, carefully shading our sketches to bring our features to life. We are now using these portraits to sculpt our own clay Roman busts, developing our artistic skills while learning more about Roman history.



Miss Aid (Year 3 class teacher)



Year 3 views

“We drew ourselves as Roman busts but we had to do Roman hairstyles!” Kayleigh



“I enjoyed drawing a portrait of me using sketching pencils.” Sofia

“We looked at what Romans looked like and how they liked curly hair! I learnt that they make the busts without their arms up to their chests.” Daniel



“I have learnt how to shade, you can blend with your finger or do hatching or cross-hatching with lines across each other.” Isla



Dates for your Diary

Spring
1st



Monday 3rd February	Children's Mental Health Week 5SC and 5TG visit to The Science Museum
Wednesday 5th February	6ET and 6HA visit to London Central Mosque
Thursday 6th February	6HH and 6CM visit to London Central Mosque
Friday 7th February	Year 4 MTC Virtual Workshop (12pm-1pm) 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)
Thursday 13th February	Reception children invite a loved one to 'Come and Read' (8.40am-9.05am)



Half Term
Break
17th to 21st
February

Staff
Training Day
Monday 24th
February (no
children)

Spring Class Assemblies

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

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

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 Judith
1SM Maysa
1PD Aadhya
1IN Dhanush

2ST Akshara
2KK Amelia
2DN Moise
2SA Aavish

3NL Tatiana
3SH Uma
3LA Whole Class
3SM Ali Mehdi

Respect
Responsibility
Resilience
Honesty
Generosity
Aspiration

4BS Mohamad H
4XL Aarav
4PC Idris
4ND Anaya

5SK Armin
5SC Dominick
5TG Nada
5RC Areeba

6HH Mariam
6ET Whole Class
6HA Darius and Iqra
6CM Dhyani

Attendance Stars



This week's
attendance
stars are 5SC
(98.89%)

Whole
School
93.64%

Top Tip!

Book holidays outside of school dates - term time holidays will not be authorised!

A Day in the life

of our Receptionist



When I was asked to write this piece I wondered how I would fit a whole day in a relatively short piece! There are a lot of set things I have to do every day but there are also all the unexpected things that can happen throughout the day that ensure that no two days are ever the same!

The phones go on at 8.30am. The first few calls are usually parents reporting absences. The phones can be mad busy. Luckily if I'm already on a call or talking to a parent or visitor the calls divert to the main office so one of my colleagues can pick up. I'm very lucky - I work with a great team and everyone helps each other out where we can.

Next job, I get the day's lunch numbers ready for the kitchen.

Now I make a start on one of the most important parts of my job - absences. I need to go through all the absence emails and voicemails and get them recorded on the system. This needs to be done as soon as possible so we can see if there are any missing children. If there are and we don't have any contact from the parents it needs to be investigated straightaway. We start this process off with an urgent School Spider message, followed by phone calls if still necessary.

Whilst this is all going on the phone will be ringing and visitors will be ringing the door bell so it can be a bit of a challenge. I remember one day I kept a tally and counted 77 phone calls! Multi-tasking skills are definitely required in this job!

We have all sorts of visitors - a lot are people who are coming to see us from other educational establishments, some are guests who are coming to take an Assembly, run a workshop plus many other reasons. When we have visitors we have to take photo ID and see their DBS certificates. Anyone who turns up without their ID will not be able to enter the school unless they are accompanied at all times. We take the security of our children and staff extremely seriously.

On the subject of visitors - last week Mr Khan came with a selection of reptiles for Year 4 including snakes and chameleons. On a previous visit Mr Khan let me hold a bright green tropical frog with a warning that it might jump - that was quite nerve-wracking!

continued



There was also the day he came with a giant tropical moth - I confess I was backing away at speed despite Mr Khan's kind offer to put it on my hand. There was also the time the doorbell rang and it was someone dressed as a Neolithic caveman - he was here for a workshop!

Next if we're running to time, the kettle goes on! Well we've been given so many lovely biscuits by parents at Christmas it has to be done!

Soon it's lunchtime. I'll be in the staffroom with my nose in the latest forensic, psychological thriller that I'm reading - my escapism for an hour!

When I'm back we'll have a handover - there are always interesting lunch time issues. Like when a Year 6 boy was playing football in the playground - when he kicked the ball his shoe flew off and landed on the roof! That was fun telling the Site Manager!

So it's the afternoon now and there's only a couple of hours left of the school day. This time is used for completing any phone calls to parents if we've still not heard from them, put staff lunches on to ParentPay, preparing Home Office letters for parents, getting hi-vis jackets ready for school trips the next day, all sorts of things. This is also the time we ask parents to pop in if they're having trouble with their School Spider accounts - it's always very exciting when I manage to sort the issue out! There's never nothing to do!

The next really busy time will be at the end of the school day when the children are all being collected. The reception area becomes the Late Collection point. I'll be busy on the phone calling parents who are running late. Reception tends to be busy right up until I finish for the day. That's because of all the clubs we have running after school.

Then it's 4.30pm - the phones are turned off, the blinds come down and that's it for another day. All in all, a satisfying day!

Mrs Tucker
Receptionist

Support for Families



Developing Emotional Literacy

Anger at a toy being stolen. Sadness when losing a game. Frustration when struggling in class... All children will experience challenging feelings sooner or later. Emotions are a natural part of life, and while youngsters should be allowed to express themselves, it's important they also learn how to process these more difficult emotions in a mindful way.

Of course, many children may well be encountering these intense feelings for the first time, and it can be intimidating to skirt the line of helping them properly handle their emotions while also validating their experiences

Please refer to the poster attached to this newsletter for expert advice on how to support children to develop emotional literacy.



Junior Netball and KS1 Soccer School sessions available - [view here](#)

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



[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.

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

SUPPORTING CHILDREN TO DEVELOP EMOTIONAL LITERACY

Emotional literacy refers to the ability to recognise, understand and express our feelings effectively. It plays a crucial role in strengthening a child's wellbeing by enhancing their relationships and resilience. However, emotional literacy is not necessarily an innate talent, and its development may present challenges. This guide gives parents and educators practical tips on supporting children to cultivate this essential skill.

1 NAME THE EMOTION

Encourage children to identify and name their emotions. This helps them understand what they're feeling and why. Use simple language and relatable examples to make it easier for them to share their emotions. This builds a foundation for emotional understanding and open communication.



2 MODEL EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION

Demonstrate healthy emotional expression by sharing your feelings visibly. When children see adults properly displaying how they're doing and what they're thinking, they learn to do the same. Discuss how you handle emotions in different circumstances, providing a real-life framework for young ones to follow.



3 MINDFULNESS ACTIVITIES

Teach children mindfulness practices to help them stay present and manage their emotions during more challenging moments. Activities like deep breathing, meditation or yoga can reduce stress and enhance emotional regulation. Regular practice can improve focus and emotional stability, which can significantly help children both as they're growing up and throughout their adult life.



4 USE STORYTELLING

Incorporate storytelling to help children understand emotions. Stories can offer relevant scenarios illustrating how the characters experience and manage their feelings. Discuss the emotions depicted in stories and ask children how they might feel in similar situations.



5 PRACTISE EMPATHY

Teach children to consider others' views and emotions – and to explore why they might think or feel this way. Role-playing and discussing various scenarios can enhance their ability to empathise. Understanding others' emotions helps children to develop compassion and improves their social interactions.



6 ENCOURAGE JOURNALING

Suggest keeping a journal to make note of thoughts and emotions, as writing can provide an outlet for self-reflection and emotional processing. Encourage children to write about their daily experiences and feelings, helping them gain insight into their emotional world. Do this alongside them, so they can see and experience how to do it effectively.



7 TEACH PROBLEM-SOLVING

Do what you can to help children develop problem-solving skills to assist in managing emotional challenges. Discuss potential solutions to emotional conflicts and encourage them to think critically about what they (and others) can do to process their feelings in a healthy way. This empowers children to handle emotions positively and build resilience.



8 CREATE A SAFE SPACE

Establish an environment where children feel safe to display their emotions without judgement. Encourage open exchanges and reassure them that all feelings are valid. This supportive atmosphere promotes trust and encourages children to express themselves with confidence.



9 USE VISUAL AIDS

Take advantage of visual aids like emotion charts or mood meters to help children identify and express their feelings. Use these tools regularly in your interactions. They provide a visual representation of emotions, making it easier for children to communicate their emotional state.



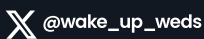
10 CELEBRATE EMOTIONAL GROWTH

Acknowledge and celebrate progress in emotional literacy, and praise children for expressing their emotions and handling them effectively. Positive reinforcement is a useful tool that will encourage continued growth and reinforces the importance of emotional literacy – encouraging young people to maintain the good habits and healthy behaviours that you've taught them.



Meet Our Expert

Adam Gillett is Associate Vice-Principal for Personal Development at Penistone Grammar School and works on a secondment one day a week for Minds Ahead, an organisation that supports schools in improving their mental health provision.



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