

Whitchurch Weekly



14th Feb
2025
Issue 21

Message from the Headteacher

Dear Whitchurch Families,

This half term has been full of exciting opportunities for our pupils, with enriching experiences both in and out of the classroom. We recently hosted a coffee morning to discuss our School Development Plan (SDP), and it was wonderful to see so many parents engaged in conversations about our future goals. We appreciate your input and support as we continue to develop the school.



Our pupils have enjoyed a variety of workshops, enhancing their learning in creative and practical ways. Year 2 took part in an informative, hands-on session with the Fire Brigade, a recycling workshop to develop their awareness of environmental responsibility and an exhibition showcasing their creativity linked to the Great Fire of London. Year 4 explored the rich cultural heritage of African art and experienced getting up close with exotic creatures in a tropical animal workshop. These hands-on experiences have helped to broaden their understanding and encourage a love of learning beyond the classroom.



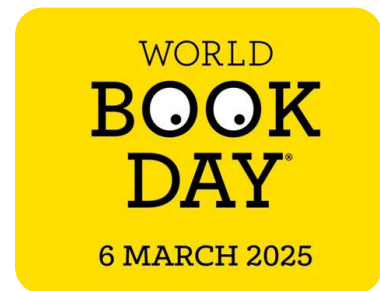
School trips have also been a highlight. Year 1 had an exciting visit to Windsor Castle, where they learned about British history and the role of the monarchy. Year 5 explored the wonders of science and technology at the Science Museum and also had the opportunity to attend a fantastic performance of 'Oliver!' at Bentley Wood High School, bringing literature and drama to life. Year 6 visited the Natural History Museum, followed by a visit to the London Central Mosque, deepening their understanding of different cultures and religious practices.



Music continues to play an important role at Whitchurch and we are very proud of the pupils who represented us in the HMS Guitar Festival. The Friends of Whitchurch Bake Sale, 'Bake memories' was enthusiastically supported by the community.

Class assemblies have been a joy to watch, highlighting the hard work and confidence of our pupils. These moments are always special, giving children the opportunity to share their learning, develop their public speaking skills, and take pride in their achievements. Meanwhile, our school radio show has been filled with fun facts and engaging content, so be sure to check it out with your children on our website.

Looking ahead, we are delighted to welcome a visiting author on Friday 28th February, inspiring our children with a love of reading and storytelling. We are, of course, also excited to celebrate Book Day on Thursday 6th March, with plenty of activities planned to make it a memorable occasion for all. We look forward to seeing pupils taking part in reading and art themed events throughout the day.



Thank you for your ongoing support. I look forward to another productive half term, and hopefully some warmer weather.

Have a lovely half term.

Ms Rachel Inniss
Headteacher



Enrichment Highlights



Year 3 Roman Day

This week Year 3 celebrated their topic about the Romans with a special Roman Day featuring a range of activities to learn more about life in Roman times. Activities included making Roman soap from coconut oil and honey, as well as creating wonderful mosaic art and shields. It was a successful day and the children looked fantastic dressed up in their home-made Roman costumes.

Mrs Hill



Reception 'Come and Read' Session

Reception children invited a loved one to come and read with them in class this week. They had a wonderful time sharing stories together. Thank you to Reception parents and carers for coming along!



Mrs Patel

Enrichment Highlights



Year 2 Great Fire of London Art Exhibition

This week, Year 2 hosted an exhibition of the Great Fire of London to parents and carers. The children recreated scenes of the destruction using recycled materials and the end result showed vibrant fire blazing across Tudor London.

Mrs Akhund



Sport

Year 5 and 6 Indoor Cricket and Cross Country

Indoor Cricket

Some of our Year 5 and 6 children took part in a challenging but exciting day of indoor cricket at Harrow School this week. The children did tremendously well and made it to the final match. Well done for your effort in showing great teamwork!



Cross Country

There was another cross country run this week held at Pinner RFC where most of the Year 5 and 6 children who took part enjoyed this very muddy event! All children were very brave and showed great resilience in such conditions.



Miss Byrne and Miss Wong

Enrichment Highlights

Follow us on Instagram:
WhitchurchPS



Music

Music Performances

Our young musicians' performances at this week's celebration assemblies were a real treat for all the children. Nineteen pupils from Year 2 to Year 6 played a variety of orchestral and non-orchestral instruments. These half-termly informal performances provide a fantastic opportunity for children to perform in a supportive setting in front of their friends and teachers. Well done to the following children:

Violin Elissabeth (3SM), Sophie (3SH) and Maya (4BS)

Cello Radhika (3LA)

Clarinet Moss (5SK)

Recorder Reeva (5TG) and Toby (6ET)

Tabla Dheven (4PC) and Aran (6ET)

Piano Nyla (2ST), Fedor (4BS), Alex (5SK), Kian and Faith (6ET)

Guitar Ziyen and Krish (4BS), Hriday (6HH) and Reyansh (6HA)



Mrs Leutfeld, Director of Music

Year 5 visit to Bentley Wood to see 'Oliver!'

This week Year 5 enjoyed a matinée performance of 'Oliver!' at Bentley Wood High School, allowing them to recap their previous learning about the Victorian era. The show featured beautiful songs and dances that left everyone wanting more!

Miss Chauhan-D'Souza

Theatre



Whitchurch Woodland

Project
update



Woodland Update

Hello to our wonderful school community from the Whitchurch Woodland!

This week our generous community has been busy on the Whitchurch Wishlist buying lots of donations for the Woodland. Thank you so much to:

Dylan and family (Year 6)
Akshyan and family (Year 4)
Hanan Adamjee
Bogdan Scutelnicu
Paris and family
Dheven and Kahini and family
Leon and Aleks Georgaki-Nielsen and family
Sabeen
The Liston family
Yogesh Nagpal



thank
you!



A massive thank you to Mr Coutinho who has made the raised beds and we would like to thank Weatherwell fencing and building merchants for their kind donation of wood panels for this project. Thank you also to Mrs Coutinho for assisting with the build. Soon we will be able to sow and plant our first crops with the children!

Thank you to Paris and family who have kindly offered to help bring our sad pond and broken decking back to life. During the half term some volunteers will be building a small shelter plus seating area so when it's complete we will be sending another video update!

Without our community, none of this would be possible, so thank you for your donations and enthusiasm. Very soon the children will start gardening and then lessons will begin for small groups before we roll this out to all classes in the future. Watch this space!

Mrs Portou

View our
Whitchurch
Woodland
Amazon wish
list here

General Notices and Highlights



Radio Whitchurch - Fun Facts

You can now listen to School Council's second radio show on the school website (via the following link).

Listen
to our radio
show here

Staff Training Day - Monday 24th February

A reminder that Monday 24th February is a Staff Training Day (no children in school).

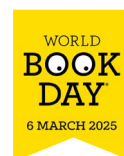
Staff
Training Day
on Monday
24th February
(no children)

5TG Class Assembly

5TG's Class Assembly has been recheduled for Thursday 13th March at 9.05am.

Visiting Author and World Book Day

We have an author visiting Whitchurch on Friday 28th February. We will be celebrating World Book Day on Thursday 6th March - children will be able to dress up in their comfiest pyjamas and bring a story to share with the class! Children are asked to bring in a £1 donation on this day to support the school reading initiatives.



World Book Day Tokens

Children have received a £1 book token they can use to purchase a book for World Book Day. Please see the World Book Day website.

View £1
books for
World Book
Day here

Clothing for Welfare

If your child has been sent home from school in spare clothing, please wash these items and return them to school. We would be grateful if you are able to donate any of the following items: tights (girls), underwear (boys), jogging bottoms and trousers (boys/girls) - suitable for all ages. Clothes in bigger sizes (13+) are also needed.

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

Penalty Notice Fines for Unauthorised Absences

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

Friends of Whitchurch



Bake Sale Highlights

Thank you to everyone who baked a cake and came along to buy a tasty treat at our Bake Sale on Wednesday!



We raised
£450 at the
Bake Sale!

FoW Bag2School Collection Thursday 27th February (at morning drop off)

Please fill your bin bags with old clothes and return to the main school gate on Thursday 27th February at 8.45am

We accept good quality items for re-use:

- Men's, Ladies' and Children's clothing
- Paired shoes (tied together or elastic band around)
- Bags, Handbags and Jewellery
- Hats, Scarves, Ties and Belts
- Socks and Lingerie
- Household Linen, Curtains, Towels and Bedding (bed sheets, pillow cases and duvet covers)

We DO NOT accept:

- Duvets, Blankets, Pillows and Cushions
- Carpets, Rugs and Mats
- Soiled, painted, ripped or wet clothing
- School Uniforms (with/without logo), Corporate Clothing and Workwear
- Textile offcuts, yarns or threaded materials



Spotlight on Year 4

Year 4
are exploring
animal patterns
and textiles
in Art



Fabric of Nature

In Art, Year 4 have been exploring natural patterns, taking inspiration from plants and animals. We developed a range of ideas then drew our best design onto calico and painted these. We have enjoyed working with textiles and developing our creativity!

Mrs Darr (Year 4 class teacher)



Year 4 views

“The fabric of nature was really fun. I think that I did a really good job. First we drew something about nature on the fabric and then we painted it. It was a bit hard to draw on the fabric but easy to paint it.” Riya



“I liked learning how to sketch rainforest animals focusing on different part of the animals and patterns on each animal. “ Rithvi



“I enjoyed zooming into the pattern of rainforest animals and focusing on the small details such as their eyes, feathers, legs and stripes on some of them.” Alessio

“What I liked was using tracing paper to draw repeated patterns from a tropical animal (my chosen animals was the Macaw) and then turning the paper over to transfer the drawing into my art book. This technique took a little practise but when I perfected it, it worked very well.” Jeyshan



Spotlight on Year 6

Year 6
have been
designing tiles
inspired by
Islamic Art



Islamic Art

Our Art focus this half term has been Islamic art. We started by identifying the features of Islamic art including geometric shapes, repeated patterns and symmetry. We learnt that animals and people cannot be included in Islamic art, but natural images such as plants and flowers are a regular feature. We noticed some of these features when we visited the Central Mosque in Regents Park. We enjoyed creating their own 8-pointed stars and using compasses to draw repeated patterns of overlapping circles. Following this we created a clay tile which was decorated using the common colours of blue, red, green, gold and white. We are very proud of the results!

Mrs Selby (Year 6 class teacher)



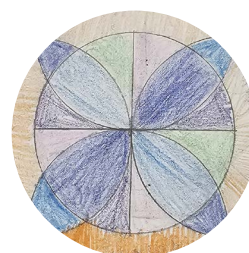
Year 6 views

"I have enjoyed being able to make a pattern in clay on my Islamic tile and look forward to adding the colour." Luca

"In Islamic art they use a variety of shapes and colours and I have learnt that blue represents peace and calmness and Gold is beauty and love." Hawa

"I have really enjoyed the geometry in islamic art, learning how to use a compass to draw accurate circles. It wasn't easy at first but it made the shape look better than before." Mohamad

"My favourite thing about Islamic art was the 8-pointed star as the end product looked amazing and it was really fun creating it." Kiana



Dates for your Diary

Spring
2nd



Thursday 27th February	FoW Bag2School Collection (8.45am) 6ET and 6HH Junior Citizenship Scheme (10am)
Friday 28th February	Visiting Author 6CM and 6HA Junior Citizenship Scheme (10am)
Tuesday 4th March	3SM visit to Pizza Express, Stanmore
Thursday 6th March	World Book Day (come dressed in PJs!)
Wednesday 12th March	Spring Music Concert (4pm)
Thursday 13th March	4PC and 4XL visit to The Science Museum
Friday 14th March	4BS and 4ND visit to The Science Museum 2SA visit to Florence Nightingale Museum
Tuesday 18th March	2DN visit to Florence Nightingale Museum
Wed 19th to Fri 21st March	Year 6 Residential Visit to Danbury
Thursday 20th March	2ST visit to Florence Nightingale Museum
Friday 21st March	2KK visit to Florence Nightingale Museum
Tuesday 25th March	Year 3 VR Volcano Workshop
Wednesday 26th March	HMS String Festival FoW Celebrate Your Female Hero (3.20pm)

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 Mar	5TG*
Thurs 20th Mar	4XL
Thurs 1st May	1PD*
*rescheduled	

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

Inclusion Highlights



We have had a busy half term ensuring that inclusion is at the heart of everything we do for the children and that their educational journey is a happy, fair, accessible and exciting one! All the children have been working hard and enjoying all of their small group learning with our support.

Life Skills - 'Dressing and Personal Care'

The children have focused on the importance of teeth brushing, looking after our hair and skin and learning to become more independent with these things as well as independent dressers. During these sessions the children have practised doing up buttons, zipping up jackets and putting on their shoes.

Social Skills

We have continued to work within themes such as sharing, feelings, 'what's in the bag?' and our senses. The children have explored different ways of interacting with their peers and recognising their emotions. Activities such as 'what's in the bag?' allow the children to take turns, work on their conversational skills and improve their focus time.

Therapy Room Provision

Our new Therapy Room was set up to specifically focus on listening skills, extending concentration and helping children who may also have education, health and care plans achieve their long term outcomes. It has been a fantastic opportunity for the children to be in a smaller, quieter setting where we can focus entirely on their individual needs and support them with planned and timetabled adult led activities. This has led to improvements to pupils, not only in their listening skills and concentration, but also in their emotional regulation, and communication and interactions with other children, which are integral to learning. The children have participated in a wide range of activities including Bucket Time, Small World Play, Phonics, Art and different sensory activities.

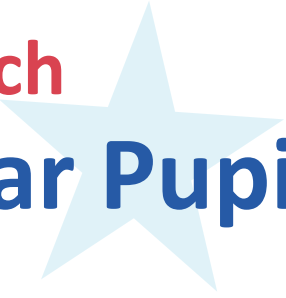
We look forward to more exciting activities after the half term break!

Miss Tunstall

Whitchurch



Star Pupils



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



1RA Ayesha
1SM Asona
1PD Abraham
1IN Kelly

2ST Saajan
2KK Mishti
2DN Mehreen
2SA Emma

3NL Devdath
3SH Faris
3LA Sarah
3SM Kayden

Respect
Responsibility
Resilience
Honesty
Generosity
Aspiration

4BS Dhiya
4XL Kavir
4PC Hussain
4ND Tanaya

5SK Khawlah
and Aimal
5SC Daria
5TG Mia
5RC Kyro

6HH Hriday
6ET Kiarna
6HA Nazmin
6CM Aisha

Attendance



Stars



This week's
attendance
stars are
6CM (97%)

Whole
School
90.9%

Top tip!

Make sure your child is in school on time and ready to learn - every day!

Staff

Snapshot

Name: Shazia Ashraf
Role: Learning Support Assistant



All about me

Hi, I am Shazia. I have been a part of Whitchurch community for 8 years now. I was born and brought up in Karachi, Pakistan. After completing my MBA (HR) degree I worked in a bank for a short while. In 2006 after getting married I moved to the United Kingdom. I live with my husband and two lovely daughters.

Hobbies and interests

I am passionate about cooking and enjoy making food and hosting parties for friends and family. I like to eating out trying different cuisines from around the world. I also like exploring different cafes and patisseries. Recently I tried Italian Bear Chocolate and their hot chocolate was heavenly. Another thing that excites me is amusements parks. I love roller coasters. Whenever I travel I always make sure I visit the theme parks and do all their rides! On the weekends I enjoy going for walks with my girls, meeting up with friends and I also love listening to Bollywood music.



Best part of my role

The best part about my role as a Learning Support Assistant is that you develop a wonderful trustworthy relationship with children. Watching them develop their abilities is something truly special and rewarding. It's not only about teaching but being in this role has also been a great learning experience. You learn something new everyday.

Support for Families

Online Safety



Online Relationships and Dating Apps

Findings from Ofcom last year indicate that as many as 16% of the UK's population are currently using dating apps to form new connections. That's more than 11 million users in this country alone, and among so many, there are bound to be some who don't hop on these platforms with the best of intentions.

This is especially important to remember when we consider that an Ofcom consultation in the lead-up to the Online Safety Act found that some children and young people use these apps - regardless of their age restrictions. It's vital that parents and educators remain aware of the risks associated with dating apps and learn how best to keep youngsters safe from them.

Please refer to the poster attached to this newsletter for an expert-led guide, detailing the most prominent risks of these platforms.



Barracudas
Holiday Activity
Day Camps
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



Things to know about saying 'NO' to your child

We all wish our children would just comply when we ask them to do something. However we all know that really isn't always the case! Thankfully, it is possible to help children want to cooperate without resorting to yelling, threats or harshness.

The most important thing to remember is that children only listen to us because of who we are to them. So be sure to keep strengthening your relationship: consciously connect with them before giving them a direction. You can also try to transform it into something fun and inviting! Children will accept your limit when you first accept their feelings about your limits (sadness, anger, disappointment...). Finally, children follow our requests when they feel they have some control in the situation: avoid power struggles by giving them a choice and some autonomy.

It's ok to say no to your child!

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@schoolscounsellingpartnership.co.uk**

Hope Harrow Online Workshops, 7pm-9pm

Sibling Rivalry - Tuesday 25th February

Living with Teens - February and March

Gaining Family Co-operation - Monday 3rd March

View
leaflets here
for info and
booking



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 ONLINE RELATIONSHIPS & DATING APPS

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Dating apps are used to help people find new relationships – whether casual or more long term – matching users based on age, interests, gender and more. Some may consider dating apps harmless to under-18s because they aren't able to use them, but effective age verification measures are quite scarce, and it's been known for young people to end up on apps of this type.

EASE OF ACCESS

The relatively lax age verification process of many dating apps makes them incredibly accessible to children who really shouldn't be using them. This carries the obvious risk of exposing under-18s to a dating scene populated by adults – who may not even be aware of the young person's true age. This is concerning when we consider the 'hook-up culture' common on these apps – with many people using them to arrange casual sexual encounters.

CONTACT AND CONDUCT RISKS

Once someone is active on a dating app, their social media profiles can be linked to the app and might be accessed by others. This can lead to random users 'sliding into their DM's' (sending a direct message) without consent. Complete strangers could start bombarding a young person's inbox with pictures, messages and sexual comments.

SCAMS AND SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Some young people may feel they've formed a real bond with someone through online dating, but there's always a risk that it's not genuine. Scammers on these apps often build romantic connections with their victims – then once they feel they have their victim's trust, they begin asking for money under false pretences (such as suggesting they meet in person and requesting a 'loan' to cover a train ticket).

UNVERIFIED ACCOUNTS

As with all online interactions, you may not be talking to whom you think you are. Without paying a subscription, users of dating apps can often only view a certain number of profiles at a time. A TikTok trend has advised young people to set their age limit to 80 years and over – putting them in a sparse and more 'exclusive' category to bypass the usual restrictions. Unfortunately, this can lead to matches with someone much older.

PEER PRESSURE

The pressure to be in a relationship can be huge, and many young people use online dating apps as a cost-effective way to meet others. Some users find it difficult to meet people organically due to their lifestyle, and may not have the time or money to go out and socialise. It's also common for young people to set up accounts for their single friends in the hope of finding a match for someone they know.

SKewed PERSPECTIVES

Dating apps can promote an unrealistic view of what makes someone attractive. With such vast options, some users can become both picky and extremely harsh about others' appearance. Ultimately, all you see on these apps are pictures (with no insight into someone's personality), and some young people struggle with the fear of being judged. Even when someone does start dating, there's a persistent paranoia that their partner is only one swipe away from a potentially better match.

Advice for Parents & Educators

TALK ABOUT DATING APPS

Let young people know that they can talk to you about anything, even something as private as their dating life. At school, the relationships, sex and health curriculum can assist with conversations around healthy relationships, consent and online safety. Emphasise the message that you want to help them make healthy, safe and informed choices. If they feel embarrassed talking to you, make sure they have a trusted adult who can help them.

VERIFICATION STAMPS

Explain that someone using a dating app should only communicate with those who have gone through a verification process. Online dating apps use a variety of methods to ascertain a user's identity, including scanning valid documents (such as a driver's licence or passport). Verification can also involve users taking a selfie to ensure that the photos on their profile match it.

ENCOURAGE DATA PROTECTION

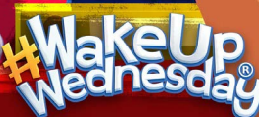
Empower young people to protect their data and personal information. Explain why including things like their school, age and surname in their profile could potentially be dangerous. Make sure they know never to give out personal details, and that there's no reason for other users to ask for them. If they feel uneasy about a situation online, they need to speak to someone that they can trust.

REPORT AND BLOCK

Remind young people that they can always report or block (or both) anyone who makes them feel uncomfortable on any platform. Ask if they know how to do this and offer to help them figure it out if they're unsure. Every app should have advice on how to report or block another user, so be sure young people are familiar with the settings.

Meet Our Expert

Rebecca Jennings works at RAISE (www.raiseducation.org.uk) in the field of relationships, sex and health education, providing educational, age-appropriate workshops for pupils around the more sensitive areas of the curriculum – including online safety and healthy relationships.



The National College®

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

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