

Whitchurch Weekly

28th Feb
2025
Issue 22



Author Gareth P. Jones visits Whitchurch

Today we were fortunate to be visited by children's author Gareth P. Jones, who spoke to children across the school about his work as an author and shared some of his excellent writing and songs! Children were able to buy a copy of his books at our book sale this afternoon and to have their copy signed by Gareth. Everyone was enthused by Gareth's visit in preparation for World Book Day next week - super charging our passion for reading and inspiring us to be creative writers!



Enrichment Highlights



Year 6 Harrow Junior Citizenship Scheme

This week Year 6 took part in the Junior Citizenship Scheme, helping them to prepare for the challenges they face as they become young adults.

Children participated in group sessions on topics relating to good citizenship, including travelling by bus and tube, fire safety and basic first aid. These sessions taught them valuable life skills - increasing their awareness of what they can do to help themselves and others and helping them to make responsible decisions for a healthier and safer lifestyle.

"It was really fun because they showed us how to be safe in a fun way with lots of cool props and examples." Maya

"We were given advice on how to apply for our 11-15 zip card that can save us up to £5000 on travel! They gave us a zip card holder with a game and link to how to apply, it was helpful." Luca

"I got to act as a bus driver on a model bus and wear the hat as my friends acted getting on and off the bus. We were shown how to behave sensibly on the bus and the dangers." Sophia



Enrichment

Clubs and Instrumental Lessons



Premium Enrichment Clubs

We have a range of external enrichment clubs at Whitchurch. Please refer to the flyers sent out termly via School Spider and contact the club to sign up your child to one of these extra-curricular activities!

I Heart Dance - register here

NEW! I Heart Dance - Theatrical dance production (register via the link above)

Design Fusion Art - Art club: 07515 928699, info@designfusionartclub.co.uk

Gala Academy - Yoga club: <https://gala-academy.co.uk/wps-booking>

Select School of Dance - Street dance and ballet: 07771 683588

The Elms: info@theelms.co.uk, 020 8954 8787

World Karate Club: 07424 312125

CricketTots: notout@crickettots.com, 07846 990179

Premier Chess Coaching: www.premierchesscoaching.com/pay, 07525 164463

Instrumental Lessons

The application period for instrumental lessons for the next academic year is now open. All children from Year 2 upwards will have the opportunity to receive weekly instrumental lessons delivered by highly skilled specialist teachers from the Harrow Music Service (HMS).



Starting in September 2025, paired and group lessons (with up to three pupils) will be offered for the following instruments: **violin, viola, cello, flute, clarinet, oboe, saxophone, trumpet, trombone, French horn, singing, piano, guitar, drum kit, marimba, recorder, harmonium, sitar and tabla**. For further details, please refer to the School Spider message.



Mrs Leutfeld, Director of Music

Whitchurch PlayPALs

A PlayPAL...
Plays with you
Advises you
Listens to you



New PlayPALs

Well done to the following children in Years 2 to 5 who have been chosen as PlayPALs - to 'Play with you, Advise you and Listen to you' at playtimes. Thank you to all the children who applied to be a PlayPAL this year, there were many strong applications and it was hard for us to choose!

Miss Chrysostomou (Pastoral Leader)

Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Yasmine (2ST)	Andrei (3NL)	Alessio (4BS)	Dylan N (5SC)
Raeya (2DN)	Darius (3NL)	Sabah (4ND)	Yusuf (5SC)
Vaani (2SA)	Thea (3NL)	Summer (4XL)	Amiya (5SC)
Ella (2SA)	Hasher (3NL)	Jia (4XL)	Stavyaa (5RC)
Mario (2SA)	Aarshay (3NL)	Yashvi (4PC)	Reeva (5TG)
June (2KK)	Khushi (3LA)		Ocean (5RC)
Yahya (2KK)	Rayan (3LA)		
Emanuel (2ST)	Taleah Mae (3LA)		
Leya (2KK)	Aqsa (3SH)		
Abhay (2DN)	Sofia (3SM)		



General Notices and Highlights



Spring 2 Topic Maps

Please remember to view the year group pages of our website for an overview of your child's learning this half term.

View
topic maps
here

Phoning the School

When you receive a missed call from the school, please check your voicemail before calling to find out who contacted you so that we can help you more effectively.



World Book Day on Thursday

We will be celebrating World Book Day next 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.



Stay and Read Sessions

Parents and carers are encouraged to join our stay and read sessions on the following days next week during Book Week. Please bring along your child's favourite book to read together or choose from a selection of books in class.

Monday 3rd March - Nursery AM, Reception and Year 2 (8.40am-9.05am);
Nursery PM (12.30pm-1pm)

Tuesday 4th March - Year 1 and Year 3 (8.40am-9.05am)

Wednesday 5th March - Year 4, Year 5 and Year 6 (8.40am-9.05am)

Children's Mental Health Week Fundraising - Thank you

We have raised **£571.79** for Children's Mental Health Week. Thank you to everyone who made a contribution to support our work with Schools Counselling Partnership.

FoW Bag2School Collection - Thank you

Thank you to those of you who donated clothing for FoW's Bag2School collection. Your contributions will help to raise funds for the school.



View our
Whitchurch
Woodland
Amazon wish
list here

Whitchurch Woodland Community Project Donations

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

Spotlight on Year 4

Year 4 are
learning to play
clarinets and
trumpets in
Music



Whole Class Programme - Clarinets and Trumpets

This week the children learned how to read and play the low B note on clarinets and trumpets. They previously learned to recognise notes which are off the beat and played simple syncopated melodies. The pupils will continue playing trumpets and clarinets for the rest of the year, adding tunes that include semiquavers to their repertoire. They will also begin rehearsing previously learned pieces, focusing on pitch, rhythmic accuracy and sound quality in preparation for their concert at the beginning of the Summer term.

Mrs Leutfeld, Director of Music

Year 4 views

"In Music this week, we've been learning how to play different note values, such as minims, crotchets and semibreves, as well as the low B note. I play the trumpet, and although I couldn't produce a nice sound when I first started taking lessons, my sound is now much better and accurate." Kavir

"I enjoyed the lesson today because we improvised on the clarinets and trumpets, using the C, F, and G notes. We also sang and learned a new piece that included minims, crotchets and semibreves." Summer

"Today, we did some improvisation on the trumpets and clarinets using three notes. We also learned the low B note and how to play the 'Beeline' piece." Avinash

"Playing the clarinet is both inspiring and fun. Learning new things and playing together as a class makes the lessons even more fun!" Jayden



Dates for your Diary

Spring
2nd



Tuesday 4th March	3SM visit to Pizza Express, Stanmore
Thursday 6th March	World Book Day (come dressed in PJs!)
Wednesday 12th March	Year 3 Art trip to Canons Park 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 Year 5 Ancient Greece Day (with Drama workshop)
Wednesday 26th March	HMS String Festival FoW Celebrate Your Female Hero (3.20pm)
Mon 31st Mar to Fri 4th Apr	Science Week

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)

Whitchurch



Star Pupils



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



1RA Madhav
1SM Jamie
1PD Jiyaan
1IN Ava

2ST Jai
2KK Eva
2DN Dhilan
2SA Avni

3NL Daria
3SH Damaris
3LA Joshua
3SM Elisabeth

Respect
Responsibility
Resilience
Honesty
Generosity
Aspiration

4BS Diyan
4XL Sahar
4PC Roshanee
4ND Hassan

5SK Krisha
5SC Aleena
5TG Shaima
5RC Jay

6HH Arzo
6ET Argh
6HA Daria
6CM Kiyam

Attendance Stars



This week's
attendance
stars are
2SA (99.6%)

Whole
School
93.7%

Top tip!

Establish a good routine in the mornings and evenings so that your child is prepared for the school day.

Staff

Snapshot



Name: Roselena Chowdhury
Role: Early Years Practitioner



All about me

I have spent 25 years working in Early Years education, with 16 of those years in the independent nursery sector and the last 9 years here at Whitchurch. Outside of my professional life, I'm a proud mother of three teenage children, and family is at the heart of everything I do.

Hobbies and interests

Whether it's enjoying a quiet evening at home or attending a busy family event, I cherish the time spent with my loved ones. I come from a large family, and the importance of spending quality time together is something I hold dear. In addition to family activities, I also enjoy socialising with friends, through phone calls, coffee catch-ups, walks or going for a meal. When I have the time and the budget I love indulging in one of my favourite hobbies - shopping! Whether it's food shopping, gifting, clothing and/or little items for my classroom, I'm always on the lookout for ways to enhance my surroundings, especially when it comes to enriching the environment for the children I work with.

Best part of my role

I love my job, as an Early Years Practitioner, the best part of my job is seeing the children grow and achieve new milestones. There is nothing more rewarding than watching them develop academically, socially, and emotionally. I love being part of their journey and helping them build confidence and skills, whether it's learning to write their name, mastering new concepts, or exploring the world around them. The relationships I build with both the children and their families make my work incredibly fulfilling, and the joy that each day brings is what motivates me to continue in this meaningful role. Seeing former pupils now older and hearing about their journeys is still incredibly exciting and rewarding!

Support for Families



Marvel Rivals

If there are two things that are popular nowadays, it's Marvel and video games. Marvel Rivals is a new release combining these two into one, letting players take on the role of various superheroes and villains in a competitive multiplayer shooter. At the time of writing, the title has proven immensely successful: with the developer, NetEase, reports that as many as 40 million people are playing the game – many of whom will be children, owing to the game's PEGI 12 age rating.

While most of Marvel's content has been family friendly (and this game has been deemed suitable for children as young as 12), this title does still present numerous potential risks to children and young people.

Please refer to the poster attached to this newsletter for expert advice on the potential pitfalls of Marvel Rivals and how to protect its younger players.



Barnet FC - Football for a Fiver!

On **Saturday 8th March**, Barnet FC v Dagenham and Redbridge, Barnet FC are running a 'Football for a Fiver' promotion.

All tickets are just £5 for adults and £1 for children. Tickets can be purchased from the Barnet FC website.



Support for Families



Schools
Counselling
Partnership



Learning and wanting to do the right thing

Children develop their 'inner compass' every day. They learn what they live, primarily by the example you set and the family culture that you create.

The most powerful way to teach a child a skill is to model it. When you treat others (including your child) with respect, when you apologise and when you regulate your emotions - then your child learns to do the same. Their inner compass will take shape from yours. In addition, your child constantly needs to make difficult choices so instead of telling them off and shaming them for making a 'poor' choice, use it as an opportunity to develop that compass: help them reflect on how they feel and explain that we are all tempted to take the easy way over the right way: we are not perfect, but we can do better. In order to help your child, WANT to do the right thing, make sure your limits are reasonable and age-appropriate. Set them up for success so that they can feel good about being a person who does the right thing. Finally, help your child repair relationships following any damage and remember to stay connected: when your child feels you are on their side, they are more likely to WANT to follow your lead.

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**

Hope Harrow Workshops for Parents/Carers 7pm-9pm (online via Zoom)

Living with Teens - 5th, 12th and 19th 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 MARVEL RIVALS



ESRB advise nobody under the age of 13 should play

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Marvel Rivals launched in December 2024 and amassed a player count of nearly 150,000 in mere weeks. This player versus player (PvP) shooter packs in a host of recognisable comic-book characters, pitting two teams of six against each other. Despite the game's cartoonish nature, there are several potential risks for parents and educators to be aware of.

IN-GAME CHAT

Voice chat allows players to speak to teammates and opponents within the game, but in a competitive environment, some conversations can become unpleasant. Text chat is equally prominent among those playing on PC and will be shown on the side of the screen. Moderation on chats is relatively lax, so it's important to recognise that potentially inappropriate messages could arrive at any time.

IN-GAME PURCHASES

While Marvel Rivals is free, there is an in-game store, selling character skins from recognisable movies and comic-book titles. Each season also includes a £10 Battle Pass (much like those seen in Fortnite and Call of Duty), offering a series of exclusive cosmetic items. These passes don't expire – but they can't be purchased once the next season rolls around, creating a fear of missing out.

CONTACT WITH STRANGERS

With such a huge player base, it's impossible to predict whom your child will be teaming up with or playing against. They're virtually certain to run into strangers through voice and text chat, for starters. Most of these people will just be ordinary gamers enjoying the action, but there is the risk of some users behaving inappropriately with younger players – either intentionally, or because they don't realise that they're speaking to a child.

VIOLENT CONTENT

There's no gore in Marvel Rivals, and the violence depicted is comparatively cartoonish – but the playable characters available vary between more traditional superheroes and supervillains, and figures like Black Widow and The Punisher, who use more realistic firearms. Given the game's nature as a shooter, this may make some parents and carers uncomfortable as some players will be firing these weapons at each other.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

The game includes some innuendos and mature themes in the dialogue, which could expose youngsters to content unsuitable for their age, detracting from a safe and family-friendly gaming experience. As we mentioned previously, the content of the in-game chat could also be age-inappropriate, ranging from swearing to mature themes to potentially harmful content.

FAMILIAR CHARACTERS

The inclusion of iconic characters might make Marvel Rivals appear more approachable than other games in the genre, with recognisable heroes and villains like Spider-Man and Venom. This could lead to more interest from younger players, increasing the likelihood of children playing the game without properly understanding the risks.

Advice for Parents & Educators

FOLLOW ESRB RATINGS

The ESRB rating for Marvel Rivals says the game shouldn't be played by anyone under 13. Most children of that age will be able to appreciate the moral compass of the roster of characters (people can play as Hela, the Goddess of Death, for example), while also ensuring that the violence, however cartoonish, won't overwhelm them.



FAMILIARISE YOURSELF

The game's inclusion of fan-favourite characters like Iron Man and the Hulk, plus its increasing popularity, means that younger Marvel fans will likely be eager to see what the fuss is about. Since it's free, consider playing Marvel Rivals yourself to gauge how you feel about a child playing it. Alternatively, you could let them play against the game's AI in Practice Mode, until they're old enough to compete online.

MONITOR OR TURN OFF CHAT

Voice and text chat can both be adjusted within the in-game settings. If you're particularly concerned about exposing children and young people to them, however, you can disable both forms of chat in the game's settings. If a child wants to play alongside friends, remind them that they can use their console's party chat feature or host a call on a third-party service like Discord.



DISCONNECT PAYMENT OPTIONS

Parents should ensure that no payment options – such as debit cards – are linked to the game, to prevent unauthorised purchases and charges. Children can be tempted by enticing in-game offers without fully understanding the costs. Removing payment methods avoids impulsive in-game spending and instils a sense of financial awareness, teaching young people to be careful with their money.

Meet Our Expert

Lloyd Coombes is Games Editor at the Daily Star and has been working in the gaming and tech industry for five years. A regular visitor to the App Store to try out new tools, he's also a parent and therefore understands the importance of online safety. Writing mainly about tech and fitness, he has been published on sites including IGN, TechRadar and plenty more.



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