

Whitchurch Weekly

9th May
2025
Issue 30



Year 4 Music Concert - Trumpets & Clarinets

Year 4 delivered a wonderful concert this week, impressing us all with their performances on the trumpet and clarinet. The pupils demonstrated strong instrumental and ensemble skills, performing with confidence, enthusiasm and musicality.

Their repertoire included pieces in various styles, incorporating the full C major scale. They read music notation accurately, responded to dynamic markings and followed visual cues with precision. Performing alongside pre-recorded tracks, they also showcased excellent listening skills.

Congratulations to all the Year 4 pupils on this fantastic achievement - and a special thank you to Miss Naddermier (clarinet) and Mr Rieband (brass) for their expert guidance and support.

Mrs Leutfeld, Director of Music



Enrichment Highlights



Year 5 Girls' Discovery Day at Northwood College

Year 5 girls had a fantastic time at the Discovery Day hosted by Northwood College for Girls, where they immersed themselves in a variety of activities. During the space and robotics session, the girls developed their knowledge of Micro:bits and coding skills, using them to tackle exciting challenges. They also became budding forensic scientists, uncovering clues and solving mysteries and delved into the ancient world through a captivating classics workshop.

Later on, the swimming session was a thrilling scavenger hunt for clues, where they applied their swimming skills in a fun and imaginative way. A guided tour of the school added to the excitement, with the stunning library leaving a lasting impression as a true highlight of the day.

Mrs Cumming, Year 5 Class Teacher



Enrichment Highlights



Year 2 Scooter Training

Year 2 took part in a fantastic scooter training workshop this week! The children began by playing fun skill-building games in the playground to boost their confidence and control. Afterwards, they headed out onto the local streets, where they learned all about road safety - including how to stop safely, watch for traffic and use crossings correctly. A great mix of active learning and fun!

Mrs Bainbridge, Year 2 Class Teacher



General Notices and Highlights



OPAL Outdoor Learning Survey

We are looking at our playtimes and thinking about how we can improve them by introducing the Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL) Primary Programme. Please complete the parent/carer survey to help us learn what you think about our playtimes.

OPAL
Survey

FoW Kids' Disco - Thursday 15th May

A reminder that Friends of Whitchurch are hosting disco sessions for children this coming Thursday after school. Please see **page 5** for details.



SATs Breakfast - 12th to 15th May

Next week is SATs week. The SATs breakfast for Year 6 children will take place next Monday to Thursday from 8.15am.

Junior Adventures Group - fees from September 2025

From September 2025, JAG's fees will be as follows:

Rise then Shine: £8.05 per session

Stay and Play: £13.55 per session



Junior Adventures Group - recurring bookings

Junior Adventures Group have introduced recurring bookings as part of their ongoing service improvements. Families will be able to secure preferred days for the full school year (September to July) with a fixed, regular booking pattern (such as every Monday).

Consent for Photos

Please ensure that you have completed the Consent for Photos form via School Spider.

Mathletics Awards

Congratulations to the following pupils for coming first, second and third place in Mathletics so far this year:

Arya (Year 2) - Gold award

Dhillon (Year 6) - Silver award

Siya (Year 4) - Bronze award

View our
Summer term
menu and
allergens
here



Kids' Disco

£1 per
child

Thursday 15th May
sessions from 3.15pm
in the school hall

featuring
children's DJ/
entertainer

Come along and enjoy the party!

Reception and Year 1 – 3.15pm to 4pm

Years 2 and 3 – 4.15pm to 5pm

Years 4 and 5 – 5.15pm to 6pm

Year 6 – 6.15pm to 7pm

This is a non-uniform day for Reception and Year 1 only.
They should bring £1 to school with them in the morning.

Children from Years 2 to 6 should go home after school
to get changed and bring £1 to the disco with them.

Dates for your Diary

Summer 1



Monday 12th May	3SH and 3SM visit to Neasden Hindu Temple 2SA and 2ST visit London Central Mosque / Picnic
Thursday 15th May	FoW Kids' Disco (sessions from 3.15pm to 7pm) 2DN and 2KK visit London Central Mosque / Picnic
Friday 16th May	Year 1 visit to Canons Park - Science Walk (AM)
Monday 19th May	3LA and 3NL visit to Neasden Hindu Temple Year 4 Junior Choir Choral Day at NLCS
Tuesday 20th May	5SK and 5TG visit to Kew Gardens
Wednesday 21st May	4PC and 4XL visit to London Zoo 6ET and 6HH visit to the Paradox Museum
Thursday 22nd May	Class Photographs 4BS and 4ND visit to London Zoo 6CM and 6HA visit to the Paradox Museum
Friday 23rd May	Class Photographs 5SC and 5RC visit to Kew Gardens



Class Assemblies

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

Tues 20th May RBP
Tues 10th June RLS
Tues 24th June RTP
Tues 1st July* RWD
*rescheduled

Thurs 22nd May 5SC

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

Spotlight on Humanities

Year 3
are learning
about Europe
in Geography



Europe & Map Skills

In Geography this half term, Year 3 have been learning about Europe including Russia. We have been using atlases to locate countries and accurately plot mountains and rivers onto our own individual maps. We have been discussing how physical features like mountains and rivers can influence a country's border. We have shown a lot of enthusiasm for this topic and are becoming expert map readers! Who needs online maps when Year 3 are so confident?

Mrs Hill, Year 3 Class Teacher

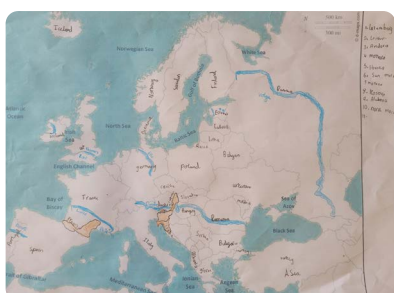
Year 3 views

"It's a bit tricky but it helps us to learn about the world and if we get lost we know where to go." Natanael

"I think Geography is fun because we get to draw on a map and learn interesting words." Sophie

"I find Geography interesting because we get to see a map of Europe and plot places on it." Daniel

"I find the lessons fun because I can learn the names of the countries, mountains and rivers of Europe." Nicolas



Spotlight on Humanities

Year 4
are learning
about land use
in our local
area



Land Use & Map Skills

This half term, Year 4 has been diving into the fascinating world of Geography by exploring land use in our local area. We have been learning about how land is utilised and the importance of understanding its impact on our community. On our upcoming trip to Stanmore Marsh, we will observe first-hand how the land is currently used and brainstorm ideas for potential improvements. In class, we have been mastering the art of drawing maps, discovering their key features and exploring map symbols. We are looking forward to creating our own sketch maps of Stanmore Marsh during the visit.

Mrs Solanki, Year 4 Leader

Year 4 views

“Land use is wise because you have shops, school, houses, park, offices and many other things including churches and temples.” Avinash

“I think we should use land more effectively and more conservatively so that we don’t waste land and harm animals and plants.” Kavir

“People use land for many types of things. In rural areas (countryside), land can be used for things such as forestry, farming and camping. I have learnt about different types of settlement, which are hamlets, villages, towns, cities and also megacities.” Jia

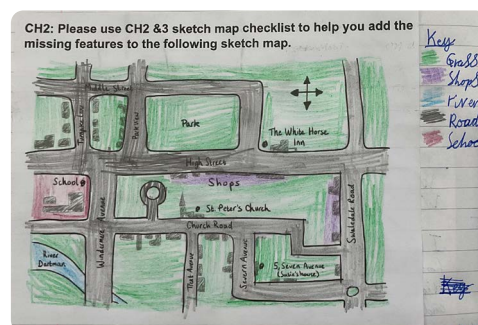
“A sketch map has a title, frame, a key, simple drawing, labels and annotations.” Diana

Match the Ordnance Survey Symbols

The key is missing some information. Add the names of the features or draw the correct symbols to complete the key.

PO	Post Office	Motorway	Windmill
	Footbridge	Parking	Sand
Sch	School	building	Mud
	Cycle trail	Single-track railway	River
	Campsite	Coniferous trees	Footpath

Once you have completed the key, have a go at drawing a simple map using some of the symbols. Don't forget to include a key!



Whitchurch Star Pupils



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

Tigers Aarav
Leopards Seline
Lions Shreya and Tiaan
Jaguars Shriyan and Prisha

1RA Aarya
1SM Furkan
1PD Josiah
1IN Kelly

2ST Elyas
2KK Dorothy
2DN Ariya
2SA Hansin

Respect
Responsibility
Resilience
Honesty
Generosity
Aspiration

3NL Hasher
3SH Zayan
3LA Simon
3SM Vian

4BS Jeremia
4XL Zainab
4PC Tia
4ND Arjan

5SK Armin
5SC Alexis
5TG Nada
5RC Matthias

6HH Aadhya
6ET Anisha
6HA Niyam and Nazmin
6CM Stefania

Attendance Stars

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

Whole
School
96.1%

Did you know?

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

Support for Families

Wellbeing



Fostering a sense of belonging

Creating a strong sense of belonging is essential for children's emotional wellbeing and academic success. This guide explores ten simple and effective strategies, such as encouraging participation, celebrating diversity and addressing bullying, that help to build inclusive environments where every child feels valued and connected.

Please see the poster attached to this newsletter for effective solutions to build inclusive, nurturing environments that help children and young people feel a strong sense of belonging.



Exam Day Readiness

Exams can be a nerve-racking experience for young people, especially when pressure and expectations start to mount.

There are a range of practical, easy-to-implement strategies to help reduce anxiety and set pupils up for success - from morning routines to emotional reassurance.

Whether it's preparing a balanced breakfast, helping children to use calming techniques or simply creating a peaceful environment, these strategies show the importance of routines, resilience and reassurance - helping children to approach exams with focus, self-belief and a sense of calm.

Please see the poster attached to this newsletter for tips on how to take small steps that make a big difference.



Support for Families



Schools
Counselling
Partnership

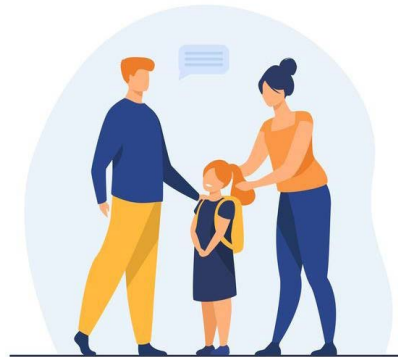


What are your biggest strengths as a parent or carer?

What would someone admire about your parenting if they could watch your best moments with your child? Make a list of all the things you are most proud of - even if they seem small and simple. Also include those not so great moments that you have been able to notice and resolve.

Now let's build on those strengths... Read through your list and give yourself credit and appreciation for all your hard work. Now think of what it is that helps you to be your personal best as a parent/carers: what support could help you to be that parent/carers more often and how can you give this support to yourself every day? Next, notice when you act in a way with your child that makes you feel good about yourself and do a little celebratory dance, or give yourself a high five!

Appreciating yourself will help you be your best self more often and will also help you enjoy parenting even more.



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**

Staff Snapshot

Name: Dipa Harji
Role: Learning Support Assistant



All about me

I have been at Whitchurch for nearly 25 years and have worked with children all the way across the school. Previously I worked in finance and started my own family. I support my Mum who now struggles with her vision, but she is still a super mum and I enjoy spending time with her. I am looking forward to my oldest son getting married in February next year, being a mother-in-law and, in future, being a grandmother!

Hobbies and Interests

I come from a large family and I love spending time with them all. At weekends I enjoy going to the gym doing my yoga and pilates classes. My husband and I also enjoy going for long walks. During the last school holiday we went to Portugal and walked across the largest pedestrian suspension bridge in the world!



Best part of my role

I love to see the passion children have for learning and to watch them learn and grow! It is great to be part of their school life. It is very emotional and rewarding when former pupils pass me in the street and say "Mrs Harji do you remember me from Whitchurch? I am now in college!" - it brings tears to my eyes!

Throughout my time at Whitchurch I feel privileged to have worked with so many children with special educational needs and disabilities - I have learnt so much from working with them. I have also met some wonderful people and made lifelong friends!



Reading Corner

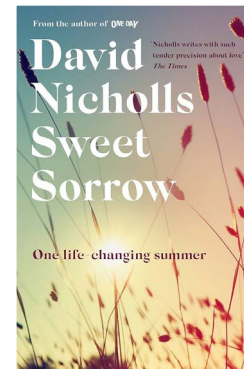
reading for parents
and carers

Staff share
their favourite
books for parents
and carers to
enjoy



'Sweet Sorrow' by David Nicholls *Miss Chrysostomou*

This is one of my favourite books by David Nicholls. 'Sweet Sorrow' is written from the perspective of 16-year-old Charlie Lewis, a teenage boy navigating his complicated life. There is plenty of humour, but also some lump-in-the-throat moments. The novel has a perfect balance between telling the tale of first love and that of the rest of life.

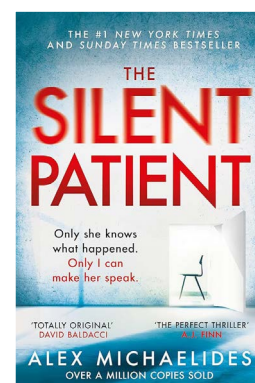


The novel's beautiful writing style perfectly encapsulates feelings, which is something that has stayed with me. It's definitely a touching and nostalgic trip down memory lane for those of us that grew up in the 90s.

'The Silent Patient' by Alex Michaelides *Mrs Pavli*

My favourite book is 'The Silent Patient' by Alex Michaelides. It's about a woman who stops speaking after something very shocking happens, and a man tries to help her talk again and find out the truth. I don't get as much time to read as I used to, but this book was so exciting that I didn't want to stop.

I really liked how the story was written - it kept me guessing and made me want to know what would happen next. There was a big surprise near the end that I didn't expect at all! I love mystery stories, and this one was one of the best I've read.





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.

Each parent/carer - for each child

Fines
will be
issued
to:

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.

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

FOSTERING A SENSE OF BELONGING

Feeling a genuine sense of belonging is essential for the emotional and social development of children and young people. Belonging significantly boosts self-esteem, resilience, and mental wellbeing, reducing feelings of isolation and anxiety. This guide provides practical strategies to help parents and educators cultivate inclusive environments, enhancing both academic outcomes and overall happiness among young people.

1 CELEBRATE INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES

Acknowledge and celebrate the uniqueness of every child. Promoting diversity and inclusion creates an environment where differences are valued rather than stigmatised. This acceptance empowers children to confidently express their identities and feel genuinely included, fostering a robust sense of belonging within both school and home settings.

2 CONSISTENT COMMUNICATION

Regularly communicate and actively listen to children, showing genuine interest in their thoughts and experiences. Creating open communication channels helps young people feel heard and valued. This approach not only builds trust but also reinforces children's perception of themselves as a vital part of their family, school and community.

3 MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION

Give children opportunities to actively participate and contribute, whether in classrooms, at home, or in community activities. Meaningful participation helps children feel their input matters, reinforcing a sense of purpose and value. Including them in decisions and responsibilities enhances their self-worth, promoting a deeper sense of belonging and inclusion.

4 FOSTER STRONG RELATIONSHIPS

Support and encourage positive relationships between peers, educators, and families. Strong, healthy relationships significantly impact a child's sense of belonging, providing emotional support and reducing feelings of loneliness. Facilitate social interactions through group activities, teamwork, and collaborative learning to strengthen these vital connections.

5 CREATE INCLUSIVE SPACES

Design environments that reflect diversity and are welcoming for everyone. Inclusive spaces where all children see themselves represented can dramatically improve their feelings of safety and acceptance. Consider classroom displays, books, and resources that celebrate various cultures, abilities, and backgrounds to visibly reinforce inclusivity and belonging.

6 MODEL POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

Adults play a crucial role by demonstrating inclusive, empathetic, and respectful behaviours. Modelling positive interactions and attitudes sets a clear standard for children to follow. Children are likely to replicate inclusive behaviour, creating a supportive community atmosphere where everyone feels accepted and valued for who they are.

7 BUILD EMOTIONAL LITERACY

Teach and encourage emotional expression and understanding among children. Developing emotional literacy enables young people to articulate their feelings and empathise with others. An emotionally intelligent environment cultivates mutual respect and compassion, fostering a deeper sense of belonging and interpersonal connection within groups.

8 SUPPORT PEER MENTORSHIP

Encourage peer mentorship or buddy systems within educational settings. Peer support enhances feelings of connectedness and security, reducing feelings of isolation. When children support one another, they naturally build community bonds, nurturing a supportive culture where belonging and friendship thrive.

9 RECOGNISE EFFORTS REGULARLY

Consistently acknowledge children's contributions and achievements, however small. Recognition reinforces a child's understanding that their presence and efforts are important. Celebrating individual and collective successes helps cultivate a positive environment where children feel acknowledged, motivated, and deeply connected to peers and adults around them.

10 ADDRESS BULLYING PROMPTLY

Quickly address any incidents of bullying. Promptly intervening demonstrates a clear commitment to an inclusive and safe environment. Creating a culture where incidents are swiftly and effectively addressed reinforces trust, security, and a sense of belonging for everyone involved.

Meet Our Expert

Anna Bateman is Director of Halcyon Education Ltd and Director for Wellbeing and Family Services at Leigh Trust. With extensive experience in systemic mental health in schools, she supports educational leaders across the UK to develop inclusive, resilient, and supportive learning environments. Anna is also the lead expert for mental health at The National College.



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Source: See full reference list on guide page at: nationalcollege.com/guides/fostering-a-sense-of-belonging



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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

EXAM-DAY READINESS

The lead-up to exams can be an emotionally challenging time. As the date approaches, nerves can become harder to manage. From nutrition to emotional support, this guide offers 10 practical strategies to reduce stress and enhance performance. Whether at home or in school, these tips encourage focus, resilience, and wellbeing – giving every student the best opportunity to approach exam day with clarity and self-belief.

1 FUEL THE BRAIN

Encourage students to eat a balanced breakfast and hydrate before exams. The brain is around 80% water, so even mild dehydration can reduce memory and concentration. Provide water, cereal bars, or fruit on exam day – especially helpful if anxiety affects appetite. A little fuel can go a long way towards better performance.

2 PROMOTE POSITIVE SELF-TALK

Support young people to challenge negative thoughts. Help them replace 'I'm going to fail' with 'I've worked hard; I can do this'. Positive affirmations boost confidence and reduce anxiety. Practise these together at home or in school settings.

3 PRACTISE RELAXATION TECHNIQUES

Encourage daily use of calming techniques, such as diaphragmatic breathing, guided muscle relaxation, or mindfulness. These techniques help regulate stress responses. Consider running short morning sessions before exams, or practising together at home to promote calm focus.

4 CREATE FAMILIAR COMFORT

Ensure a supportive adult is visible and available before exams. The calm presence of a parent or teacher can offer a sense of safety. Schools can provide 'calm zones'; parents can support with consistent routines and reassuring conversation.

5 ENCOURAGE VERBAL EXPRESSION

Invite students to talk about their exam worries. Whether it's a quick check-in with a teacher or chat with a parent, open conversations reduce emotional pressure. Active listening is often more powerful than immediate problem solving.

6 ORGANISE EXAM-DAY LOGISTICS

Prepare exam-day essentials in advance. Schools can coordinate staff to greet students and manage pre-exam spaces. Parents can prepare clothes, equipment and transport the night before to prevent stress.

got this!

7 BUILD A COPING TOOLKIT

Teach students simple 'in-the-moment' coping strategies. These include calm breathing, focusing on what they can control, and using grounding techniques. Practise these together so they become easy to recall under pressure.

8 EMBRACE A BALANCED ROUTINE

Reinforce healthy routines: regular sleep, nutritious meals, movement and time to unwind. Families and schools can support students by encouraging outdoor time, screen breaks and restful evenings before exams.

9 NORMALISE EXAM NERVES

Let students know that feeling anxious is normal and doesn't mean they're unprepared. Reassure them that a certain level of stress is natural – and can actually improve focus and performance when managed well. A calm, understanding tone – at home and at school – helps build confidence and resilience.

10 KEEP SPACES CALM

Reduce pressure in exam-day environments. Whether in the school common room or family kitchen, avoid last-minute cramming. Instead, use soft lighting, gentle music, and quiet time to support a composed mindset.

Meet Our Expert

Stefan Fussenich is a teacher educator and DfE subject learning coach (advanced practitioner). Stefan has extensive management and teaching experience across various posts in education, and is a qualified lecturer with Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills status.



#WakeUpWednesday
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Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/exam-day-readiness>



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