

# Whitchurch Weekly

6th June  
2025  
Issue 33



## Year 5 children visit YESfest 2025

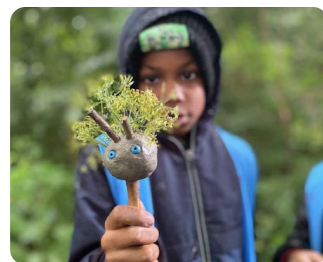
Some children in Year 5 attended this year's YESfest 2025: a two-day, overnight trip to learn about sustainability, biodiversity, nature and conservation.

We started the day at the prestigious Harrow School, where children learned about the Eden Project: plants, sustainable living and ethical shopping. Participating schools then attended a carousel of activities to learn more about ways to save the planet. We then travelled to West Lodge Primary School, our host school for the evening. The children made pizzas, sat around a camp fire, shared stories, toasted marshmallows and camped in tents! Here's what the children had to say...

*"I loved YESfest! I got the opportunity to be with my friends  
doing fun activities and staying in a tent!"*

*"I really enjoyed making my own pizza. It was out of this world!"*

*Mrs Portou*



# Enrichment Highlights



## Stay and Read Sessions

This week, we welcomed parents and carers into classrooms across the school for our popular Stay and Read sessions. From Nursery to Year 6, children proudly shared their reading skills and favourite books, creating a warm and joyful atmosphere in every classroom.

It was fantastic to see so many families enjoying stories together - whether exploring picture books in Early Years or diving into chapter books in Key Stage 2. These moments helped to celebrate the love of reading and reinforce the vital role it plays in every stage of learning.

A big thank you to everyone who joined us and helped make the sessions such a success. We look forward to more opportunities to share the magic of reading with you soon!

### *Miss Goldsmith*



# Enrichment Highlights



## Year 2 Gymnastics

Six of our gymnasts from Year 2 competed in a gymnastics competition today. They delivered strong performances in both their floor routines and vault jumps, with one child taking away a bronze medal! Well done girls! A huge thank you to all the Year 6 girls who helped them to prepare for the tournament.



## Year 5 and 6 Quad Kids

Some of the Year 5 and 6 athletics team took part in a Quad Kids competition at Harrow School. Children took part in a 75m sprint, 600m race, a standing long jump and a vortex howler throw. We look forward to hearing the results in a next couple of weeks!



## Science Visitor

We were thrilled to welcome Cecilia, a Science visitor, who led an exciting acid and alkali experiment with the children. Everyone followed the lab rules carefully, wore the correct safety equipment and took part in the hands-on activity with great enthusiasm. The session was both educational and fun, with lots of singing and full participation from all involved!



# Whitchurch Woodland

Project  
update



## Woodland Update

Many thanks to the following families for your very generous donations for the woodland:

- Amelia, Aarin and family for the hardhats
- Rithvi and Reyansh family for the many Amazon Wish List donations

We rely on donations and the Amazon wish list to build the resources we need, so thank you so much to our kind and generous parents and carers for your many contributions. The resources are being gathered in preparation for September's lessons and we are working on the scheme of work for the Autumn term.

You will see if you visit the woodland that the garden is now in full swing with a variety of vegetables, strawberries and fruit trees - which are ready to be planted for our mini orchard. Many thanks to Mr Coutinho who runs the garden.

The new decking is underway and should be completed soon. Thank you to Paris and family for their dedication and efforts to bring this area back to its former glory. The pond is next!

This weekend we plan on clearing large sections of the area around the pond. If you would like to help, please bring a spade or pitchfork **this Sunday (8th June) after 10am until around 4pm**. You can enter through the gate at the JAG entrance (next to the staff car park).

The wish list has been updated with extra items and can be found below!

*Mrs Portou*

View our  
Whitchurch  
Woodland  
Amazon wish  
list here



# General Notices and Highlights



## HLTA Vacancy

We have a vacancy for a Higher Level Teaching Assistant to join our team. For more information and an application pack please see the Vacancies page of our website.

Apply  
here

## Class Photograph Orders

Class photographs are now ready to order from Tempest - please refer to the School Spider message for order links. You can take advantage of the free 'deliver to school' option for approximately two weeks; alternatively home delivery is available for £5 postage and packaging. If you need any help placing an order, please contact Tempest on 01736 751555 (option 3) or via the contact form on their website [www.htempest.co.uk](http://www.htempest.co.uk)

## FoW 'Celebrate your Male Hero'

**Wednesday 11th June, after school**

Friends of Whitchurch are holding a special event in the playgrounds on Wednesday after school - come along and buy a small gift (£1 to £3) to help celebrate a special male in your life for Fathers' Day.



## FoW Summer Fair - Volunteers

**Sunday 29th June, 12pm-4pm**

A reminder that Friends of Whitchurch are looking for volunteers to help at the Summer Fair. If you are able to give some time during the day, please sign up via the link.

Sign up to  
volunteer  
here

# Class Assemblies

Tuesdays  
9.05am-  
9.45am

Tues 10th June	RLS
Tues 24th June	RTP
Tues 1st July	RWD

RLS class  
assembly  
next week

View our  
Summer term  
menu and  
allergens  
here

# Dates for your Diary

Summer 2



Wednesday 11th June	FoW 'Celebrate Your Male Hero' (3.20pm)
Monday 16th June	3NL and 3SM visit to Verulamium Museum
Wednesday 18th June	Summer Music Concert (5pm)
Friday 20th June	2SA and 2KK London Eye River Cruise and Picnic
Monday 23rd June	Reception Sports Day (9.30am-11am)
Tuesday 24th June	Year 1-3 Sports Day (9.30am-11.30am)
Wednesday 25th June	3SH and 3LA visit to Verulamium Museum AM/PM Nursery visit to Woodside Animal Farm Year 4-6 Sports Day (9.30am-12pm)
Friday 27th June	2DN and 2ST London Eye River Cruise and Picnic
Sunday 29th June	FoW Summer Fair (12pm-4pm)
Monday 30th June	AM Nursery Sports Day (9.30am-11am) PM Nursery Sports Day (1.30pm-3pm)
Wednesday 2nd July	Transition Day (Children meet their new teacher)
Tuesday 8th and Wednesday 9th July	Parents' Evening (from 3.30pm)
Monday 14th July	Reception visit to Hertfordshire Zoo 1RA and 1PD visit to London Aquarium (SeaLife) Year 6 Production (5.30pm-7pm)
Tuesday 15th July	Year 4 day visit to Woodrow High House Year 6 Production (5.30pm-7pm)
Friday 18th July	1SM and 1IN visit to London Aquarium (SeaLife)
Monday 21st July	Year 6 Leavers' Assembly (2pm-3pm) Year 6 Leavers' Party (6pm-8pm)

# Friends of Whitchurch



**FoW Celebrate  
Your Male Hero**  
**Wednesday 11th June**  
**(3.15pm-4pm)**

**FoW Summer Fair**  
**Sunday 29th June**  
**(12pm-4pm)**

**Friends of Whitchurch** **Whitchurch Primary School and Nursery** **Father's Day Sunday 15th June**

**FOR A SPECIAL MALE IN YOUR LIFE**

Its that time of year where you can show appreciation for the special guy in your life

Come along to buy a gift for a dad, grand father, uncle or a big brother!

**Wednesday 11th June**  
**3:15pm - 4pm**  
In the playgrounds

Gifts available from £1 - £3

**FOW SUMMER FAIR** **Whitchurch Primary School and Nursery**

**Sunday 29th June 2025**  
**12pm-4pm**

**GAMES** **PRIZES**

**SUMMER-TASTIC FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY**

**RAFFLE** **FOOD** **DJ**  
**ARTS & CRAFTS** **SHOPPING**

**£2 ENTRY**  
**KIDS GO FREE!!!**

**Whitchurch Primary School**  
**Wemborough Road**  
**Stanmore**  
**HA7 2EQ**

**Gifts**  
**£1 to £3**  
**each**



**£2 entry**  
**for adults**

# Spotlight on Reception

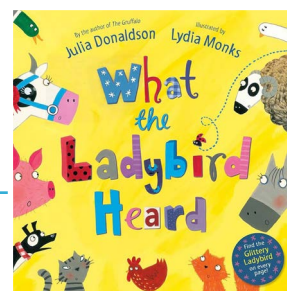
Reception  
are learning  
all about  
Animals



## Animals

This half term in Reception our topic is Animals and we have started by learning about farm animals. We have enjoyed the story 'What the Ladybird Heard' by Julia Donaldson and sequenced pictures from the story along with our own captions. We have been drawing our own representations of farm animals and have been learning about mother and baby animal names and matching them. During our topic we will be learning about other animals such as dinosaurs, under the sea and safari animals.

*Mrs Patel, Reception leader*



## Reception views

"There was two men and they were looking at the ladybird." Ariya P

"The ladybird found out, they are going to steal the fine prize cow." Zain

"Pig is the mummy and piglet is the baby." Vladimir

"The farmer and the ladybird and the cow. The bad man was trying to steal the cow." Shreya

"The dog says woof woof. The pig says oink oink." Antonia

"The cow goes moo." Vian

"The ladybird was telling all the animals that the robbers was stealing the cow." Joshua

"The farmer takes good care of the animals."

Celine

"The cow was supposed to get in trouble."

Raeya

"The horse says neigh." Benjamin

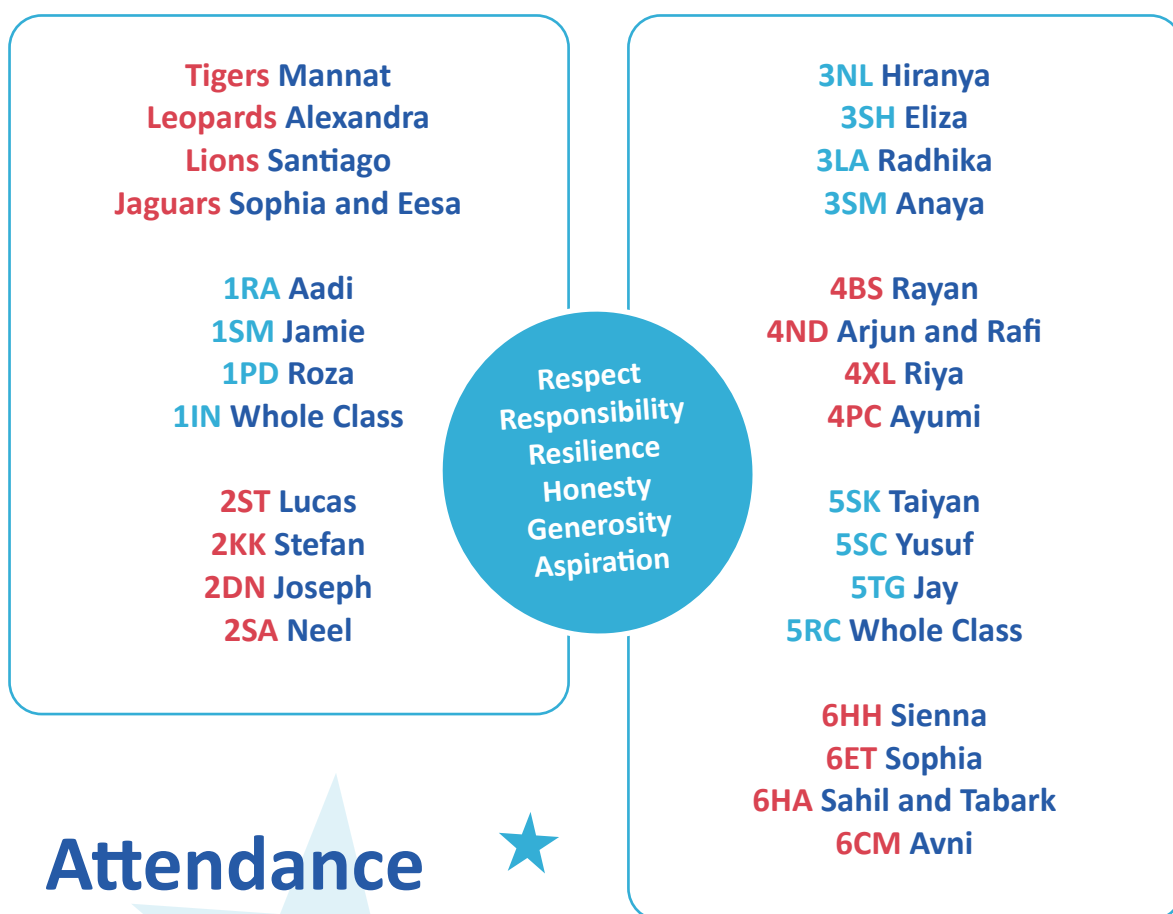
"Goose and goseland, Duck and duckling and pig and piglet." Zachary



# Whitchurch Star Pupils



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



## Attendance Stars



This week's attendance stars are 5RC (96.2%)

Whole School 89.6%

### Top Tip!

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

# Support for Families

Online Safety



## Emojis

They say a picture's worth a thousand words and when it comes to emojis, that's often true. But in the wrong context, these innocent-seeming icons can take on a whole new meaning, sometimes hinting at things that aren't as light-hearted as they appear.

Please refer to the poster attached to this newsletter for a guide to some of the slang and symbols young people use online and an explanation of how some could be masking real issues, from bullying and exclusion to harmful behaviours.



### Meet our Education Mental Health Practitioner Friday 13th May (9am)

Parents/carers of children in Years 1 to 6 are invited to come and talk to our Education Mental Health Practitioner, Imogen, about how she can support children with difficulties at home or school. She can offer support and advice surrounding the following...

- Managing fears/worries
- Managing challenging behaviour
- Emotion regulation
- Sleep Hygiene



### Family Hub Network - Summer Term

Early Support is a free service available to all those living in Harrow. Some sessions will need to be booked in advance - please check the timetable on the Support for Families page of our website.

View  
programme  
here

# Support for Families



Schools  
Counselling  
Partnership



## Family Meetings Create Connections

When our days are so full and busy, family meetings are an opportunity to regularly bring families together. They can help your children learn to solve problems, they help them to feel like important members of the family and they also allow the space to share any emotions or concerns that might be troubling them.

Introduce them to your children by saying that you have a new fun idea to make it easier to work out problems that come up. Schedule it at the same time every week and invite suggestions from everyone for the agenda. You can agree on a set of rules/values, such as listening to each other and using kind words. Create traditions and rituals, like lighting a candle or using a talking stick. Start with something positive such as sharing appreciations, followed by things that everyone likes or wants to be improved. It may be helpful to keep a Family Notebook to write down any agreements made, to reflect back on. Finally, share something you are looking forward to and any announcements for the week ahead. It is also always good to end with a family hug or other agreed ritual that brings everyone together.



### 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@schools counsellingpartnership.co.uk](mailto:tom@schools counsellingpartnership.co.uk)**

# Staff Snapshot

**Name: Xiaodong Liu**  
**Role: Year 4 Class Teacher**



## All about me

Hello, I am Ms Liu and I teach in Year 4. I come from north-west China, where I taught English in private schools, as well as Business English at university level, before coming to the UK in 2020 to study my Masters and PGCE in Leeds. It was here that I had my first British pet - an adorable cat called Misha - who helped me so much as I felt quite lonely and missed my home very much! I have a son who is 18 years old and currently studies in Germany. My mantra is 'be confident, be smiling, be yourself!'



## Hobbies and Interests

One of my favourite things to do is to travel. I have been to more than 20 countries including America, Australia, New Zealand, Iceland, Japan and Morocco. Iceland is my favourite place because of the nature and beautiful landscapes. I love life in the UK and I have visited many parts including Edinburgh, Belfast, Cardiff and of course London. One of my favourite places to visit is the National Gallery to immerse myself in paintings! I like listening to music (currently jazz!) and shopping for clothes and cosmetics! I am a foodie and enjoy Chinese hot pot, Thai, Indian and Japanese food... oh and also British food such as fish and chips - yummy! I also enjoy making sweet treats including cheesecake!



## Best part of my role

Whitchurch is a great place to work. I am proud to work with my class and be involved with running our School Council as well as our radio station with the help of Dan, our IT man! There are lots of challenges in this role but challenge is rewarding and I hope to inspire our young minds!



# 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.

Fines  
will be  
issued  
for:

## 5 consecutive days of Term Time Leave

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.

# What Parents & Educators Need to Know about EMOJIS

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Emojis are more than playful expressions — they form a fast-evolving digital language that many adults struggle to decode. For young people, this 'secret code' is central to how they communicate identity, humour and emotions. With over 5 billion emojis sent daily on Facebook Messenger alone, understanding these symbols is key to engaging meaningfully with digital youth.

### GENERATIONAL MISCOMMUNICATION

An emoji like 🍷 (thumbs up emoji) might seem friendly to adults, but teens often interpret it as sarcastic or passive-aggressive. These differing interpretations can create confusion or unintended tension in cross-generational conversations.

### SHIELDING BULLYING OR PEER PRESSURE

When embedded in emojis, mean-spirited jokes or exclusionary language can fly under the radar. Terms like 'mid' or 'delulu' may seem harmless, but they can be used to undermine peers in subtle ways.

### RAPIDLY SHIFTING MEANINGS

Emoji meanings can change overnight. A person standing emoji (🧑) once signified awkwardness but might now be repurposed for something entirely different. This ever-changing lexicon can leave adults in the dark and young people vulnerable to misunderstanding or misuse.

### MASKING DISTRESS OR HARM

Some emojis are used to discreetly signal troubling behaviours. For instance, 🍂 (falling leaves emoji) or 💊 (pill emoji) might suggest drug use, while 🌸 (wilted flower emoji) could hint at emotional struggles. Such usage can obscure serious issues, making them harder for trusted adults to detect.

### NORMALISING RISKY BEHAVIOURS

Emojis can make harmful actions seem light-hearted or fashionable. Strings like 🔥🍷 (fire + 'woozy' face + pill emojis) may appear humorous but can reference partying, intoxication or dangerous challenges, which might otherwise raise red flags.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### LEARN THE LINGO

Stay updated with emoji trends and definitions using resources like [emojipedia.org](https://emojipedia.org) or Urban Dictionary. Knowing current meanings builds confidence when engaging with young people and helps spot potential concerns early.

### CREATE SAFE SPACES FOR DISCUSSION

Encourage casual chats about emojis, online slang, memes, or social media trends. Showing interest without judgement reassures young people that they can talk about their digital world openly and safely.

### ASK, DON'T ASSUME

Approach unfamiliar emojis with curiosity rather than suspicion. A light-hearted "What does 🍷 (juice box emoji) mean these days?" can open conversation and show that you respect their knowledge.

### PRIORITISE TRUST OVER SURVEILLANCE

While parental controls and monitoring tools can be useful, emotional safety matters most. Be someone children and young people feel they can come to — not just someone who's watching them.

## EMOJI CHEAT SHEET - The following slang terms and emojis are some common examples — please be aware this isn't an exhaustive list.

### COMMON EMOJIS:

🤡 (Clown face) Foolishness or clowning around	🥰 (Pleading face) Over-affectionate or 'simping'
😎 (Cool face) Cool, stylish or ruthless	👁️ (Eyes) Watching drama unfold
😍 (Hot face) Intense attraction or excitement	🐐 (Goat) Greatest of all time (G.O.A.T.)
😐 (Meh) Stone-faced, unbothered	👉 (Nails) Confidence, sassiness, or indifference
👑 (Crown) 'Slaying', as in doing great	🚩 (Triangular flag) Red flag: a warning sign about someone's behaviour

### POTENTIALLY CONCERNING EMOJIS

🍷 (Ear of corn) Slang for pornography (avoids censorship algorithms)	🌸 (Wilted flower) Often used to convey emotional struggle or sadness
❄️ (Snowflake, snowman, snow cloud) Can symbolise cocaine	👁️ (Snake) Can represent betrayal or being 'two-faced'
🔑 (Key, lying face) Related to cocaine use	🔫 (Water pistol) Sometimes used to reference violence or self-harm
🍂 (Falling leaves, herb, maple leaf) Can symbolise cannabis	⚠️ (Warning) Used to emphasise drama, threats or emotional turmoil
💊 (Pill) May reference drug use or prescription misuse	🍜 (Steaming bowl) Refers to nudes ('noods' is an abbreviation of noodles)

### Meet Our Expert

Keith Brani is a globally renowned emoji expert and the Editor in Chief of [emojipedia.org](https://emojipedia.org), the world's number one emoji resource. He has an MSc in Business Psychology from University College London and an MBA from Quantic School of Business and Technology.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College®