

17 September 2021

MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

'We build too many walls and not enough bridges.' – Sir Isaac Newton

Dear Parents/Carers,

It has been another good week in school and our children are now well settled into normal routines. Next week we look forward to welcoming our Reception children for their first full week.

On Wednesday 15 September 2021, the Prime Minister confirmed that Nadhim Zahawi MP has been appointed as the new Secretary of State for Education. Zahawi, who [fled Iraq to come to the UK when he was nine](#), said: "From my own experience, I know what a beacon of opportunity this country can be and I want all children, young people and adults to have access to a brilliant education, the right qualifications and opportunities to secure good jobs. I can't wait to get started, working with the amazing teachers and staff in our nurseries, schools, colleges and universities as well as employers and businesses." We all wish him well as a vibrant and successful education system benefits society as a whole.

Attendance

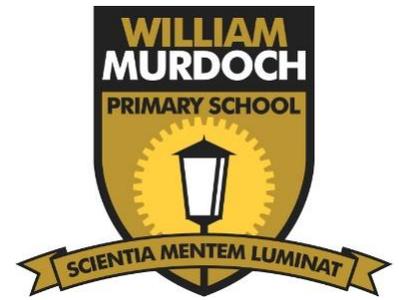
Attendance has been very good so far this term. Thank you for your help in making sure that your children attend school and arrive on time. Although we continue to maintain a soft start to the day, punctuality is vitally important. All school doors close at 8.50am. Any children arriving after that time will need to enter via the office and will be signed in as late. Children undertake important learning first thing in the morning and it can be unsettling for children who arrive late. If your child is unable to attend school, it is extremely important that you inform the school of this before 9.00am on the day of absence. Please either email the school at enquiry@williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk or leave a message on the absence line, giving your child's name, class and a brief reason for absence. If we are not informed of a reason for an absence, it will be recorded as unauthorised.

Please also arrive promptly to collect your child(ren) at the end of the day.

If your child is booked on a club and will not be attending for any reason, it is really important that you and **not your child** speaks to a member of the office staff before the club is due to start. This is for safeguarding reasons. Thank you in advance for your cooperation and support.

Welcome Meetings

Welcome Meetings are usually held at the beginning of the academic year, during which parents have the opportunity to meet and hear from their child's class teacher. Unfortunately, these meetings are unable to take place this year due to COVID-19. However, teachers in each year group have recorded virtual Welcome Meetings which give you lots of information regarding the year



group your child has just started. This includes information about the curriculum, uniform and expectations amongst other important messages. Please take the time to watch the Welcome Meeting for your child's year group using the links below:

Reception: <https://youtu.be/B4NwcYLyfxo>

Year 1: <https://youtu.be/nLZCKF0N5S8>

Year 2: <https://youtu.be/P1mUKjnj4aA>

Year 3: <https://youtu.be/r8jHxaYMBto>

Year 4: <https://youtu.be/svCI9S8rp4U>

Year 5: <https://youtu.be/TQWCv0pJ9DA>

Year 6: <https://youtu.be/ImSMBQA4ugA>

A copy of the relevant link was also posted on your child's Class Dojo page on Wednesday of this week and can therefore be accessed from there as well.

Year 6 Parents - Secondary Transfer Meeting

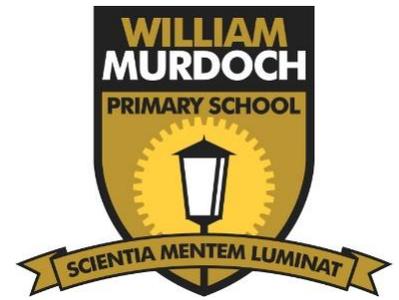
The school has produced a video that explains in detail the procedures for applying for a secondary school place. Please make an effort to watch the video if you are unsure, or it is the first time you are making an application. If, however, you are still having difficulty after watching the video, Mr Desai will be holding a Secondary Transfer Workshop on Tuesday 21 October 2021 at 3.30pm in the Upper School Hall. If you wish to attend the workshop, you must show proof of a negative lateral flow test or, in the absence of a negative test result, wear a mask for the duration of the workshop.

The video can be found at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lo4Qvs1kNqI>

School Meals – Dolce

Many thanks to the vast majority of parents who have clicked on the email link from SchoolGrid and booked their child's school meals. If you would like your child to receive school meals, which includes Free School Meals, Universal Infant Free School Meals (Reception, Year 1 and Year 2) and paid school meals, you will need to set up a SchoolGrid account. Please check your inbox and junk mail folders for an email from SchoolGrid. If you cannot retrieve this link or it has expired (the link is only valid for 24 hours), please email the Main Office at enquiry@williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk so [that a new link can be sent to you](#). The office staff are also more than happy to help parents who are finding it difficult to register.

Dolce requires all parents to pre-order their child's meal in advance. This can be done on a weekly or termly basis. This is to help the catering team to prepare the right amount of meals. Currently we have been supporting this process by allowing children to choose meals in class but this inevitably cuts into teaching and learning time. Therefore, **children will no longer be able to choose**



meals in class. During the week commencing 20 September 2021, **where a meal has not been selected by parents, children will receive the default option of a jacket potato.**

Termly Newsletters

On Wednesday of this week we gave your child a hard copy of the termly newsletter which details the topics your child will be covering in each subject this term. It is good practice for children to do some background reading on topics that they will be studying. A soft copy of the newsletter is available from the school website.

COVID-19 UPDATE

COVID-19 Vaccine Update for 12 to 15 Year Olds

This autumn, all young people aged 12 to 15 are being offered a first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. Vaccinating young people should help to reduce the need for young people to have time off school and should reduce the risk and spread of COVID-19 within schools. The main purpose of the COVID-19 childhood vaccination programme is therefore to provide protection to the young people who receive the vaccine and to reduce the disruption to face-to-face education this winter.

Like all school-based vaccination programmes, the School Age Immunisation Service (SAIS) team will be the primary provider of the vaccination programme and will be legally responsible for the delivery of the vaccine. More information on the COVID-19 vaccine, the vaccination programme and how it will work, as well as answers to some frequently asked questions, is included in the [Public Health England guidance for schools](#).

[NHS leaflets](#) are available to provide more information to parents, carers and eligible young people on the vaccine, including how it works and what to expect after having the vaccine. Accessible versions and translations are also available.

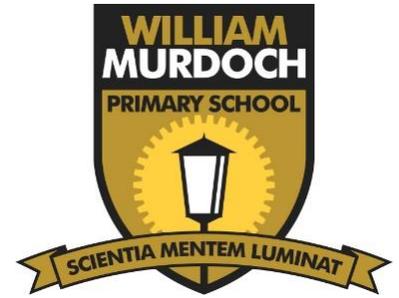
COVID-19 Response: Autumn and Winter Plan 2021

The government has published the [COVID-19 Response – Autumn and Winter Plan 2021](#). This guidance sets out plans for autumn and winter 2021/22 in England. It includes the government's "Plan A" – a comprehensive approach designed to steer the country through autumn and winter 2021/22. It also outlines a "Plan B" which would only be enacted if the data suggests further measures are necessary to protect the NHS.

Safety Measures

Although we are trying to get as close to 'normal' as we can, we are still continuing with caution and maintain a number of safety measures in school in order to keep the children and staff as safe as we can:

- Both children and staff are still handwashing/hand-sanitising at regular intervals throughout the day
- Classrooms and communal areas are well ventilated



- We are strictly limiting the amount of mixing across whole year group sets inside the school
- Touch point cleaning continues throughout the day, with cleaning of regularly touched surfaces such as door handles, bannisters, hand rails and other surfaces
- We make use of quarantine rooms in case children display COVID-19 symptoms whilst in school
- Staff are being asked to test for COVID-19 using Lateral Flow Tests twice weekly and report their results to the NHS

If your child or anyone in your family has possible COVID-19 symptoms, please do not send them to school and get a PCR test as soon as possible. You need to inform the school of the result so that we can take any actions needed and make sure we are following government guidance. If you are unsure, please call the Main Office for advice.

Breakfast Club

Breakfast Club is back up and running and we still have a small number of places available. The cost of this provision is £2.50 per day for the first child, and £1.00 per day for any additional children, and must be paid for in advance on a half-termly basis. If you require any further information, please contact the Main Office at enquiry@williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk.

Free School Meal Eligibility

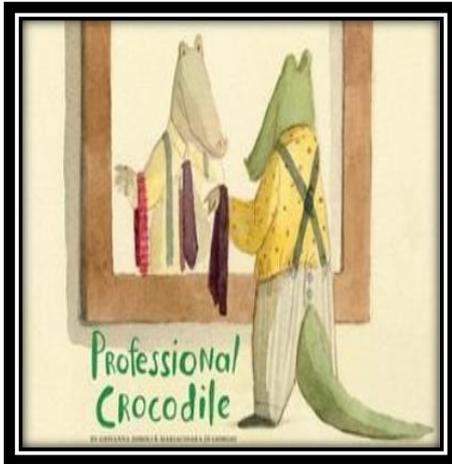
The school has implemented a system to accurately record pupils' entitlement to free school meals. Please access the following link to register: www.cloudforedu.org.uk/ofsm/birmingham/. The school will then be notified of all children who qualify for free school meals. Even if you are not eligible at present, please complete the application online as you will be notified of your entitlement if your personal circumstances change.

Nursery/Reception Places for September 2021

There remain a limited number of Nursery and Reception places for this academic year. If you have a child (or know of a friend or family member who has a child) who is born between 1.09.2017 and 31.08.2018 (Nursery) or 1.09.2016 and 31.08.2017 (Reception), we strongly encourage you to apply as spaces are strictly limited. Please register your interest by either telephoning the Main Office on 0121 554 0999 or via email on enquiry@williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk. We are more than happy to help with completing the application process.

Mr Panichi's Book of the Week

Lower School



Professional Crocodile – Giovanna Zoboli and Mariachiara Di Giorgio (Illustrator)

A glorious wordless picture book that tells the story of Mr Crocodile's morning routine as he makes his way to work. The illustrations are beautiful and full of wonderful detail so each re-reading brings something new and previously unseen. The ending is splendidly witty too. A great book to share with children (and adults!) of all ages.

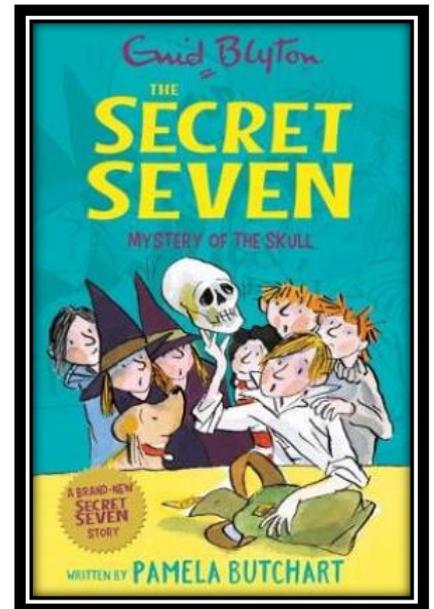
Upper School

The Secret Seven: Mystery of the Skull – Pamela Butchart and Enid Blyton

Another writer at the heart of this current golden age of children's literature, Pamela Butchart excels at making readers laugh. This re-telling of Enid Blyton's addictive septet's adventures manages to remain timeless but also adds a streak of modernity to the narrative.

Our Secret Seven sadly aren't more diverse than the original, but they do display a little more wit and humour and the narrative is far more fast-paced and the dialogue more enduring. The children battle to discover the mystery of the buried bones at a newly-bought hotel with two extremely fishy new owners. Butchart brings out the individualism of each of the sleuthing seven, whilst staying true to the themes of friendship and teamwork.

This seven don't have mobile phones to help them out, but with Ross's imaginative illustrations, and Butchart's vivacious exuberance, there is an adorable innocence and simplicity to this ageless storytelling.



Mr Slinn's Artists of the Week

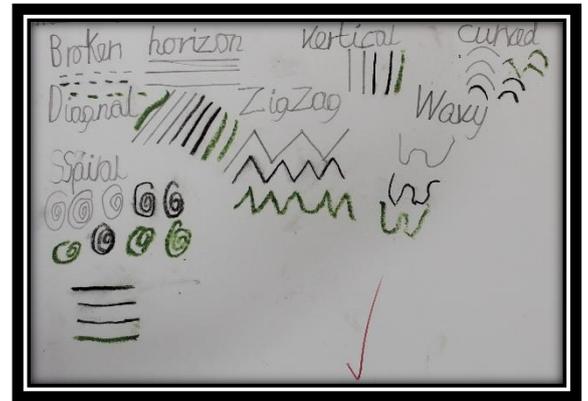


Maya Y2.3

The children in Year 2 have been learning about colour and shape in their Art lessons. Maya was able to apply paint very effectively in her work and the outcome was very successful.

Lorenzo Y3.2

In Year 3 the children have been learning about line. Lorenzo worked very hard and drew several different types of line. It is great that so much care has been taken when creating this piece of work.



Pupil of the Week



Aakifah – Y5.1

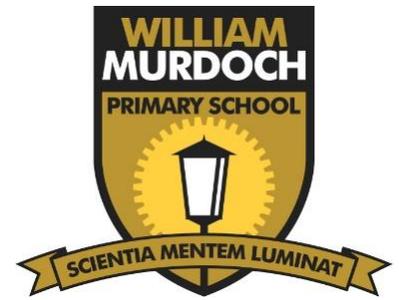


Gagandeep – Y5.2



Kausar – Y5.3

KNOWLEDGE LIGHTS UP THE MIND



Hajira – Y6.1



Annika – Y6.2



Mmbondo – Y6.3

Thank you for your continued support in these unprecedented times and we look forward to continue working alongside you this year.

Your sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'M. Singh'.

Mr M Singh
Headteacher



WILLIAM MURDOCH PRIMARY SCHOOL

ANTROBUS ROAD, HANDSWORTH, BIRMINGHAM, B21 9NT, TEL: **0121 554 0999**, FAX: 0121 554 6332

EMAIL: enquiry@williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk, WEB: www.williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk

HEADTEACHER: MR M. SINGH