

20 January 2023

MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

***'And if you don't think you have anything to be grateful for, keep looking. Because you don't just receive optimism. You can't wait for things to be great and then be grateful for that. You've got to behave in a way that promotes that.'* – Michael J Fox**

Dear Parents/Carers,

Although it was a very long day, on Monday myself, Mr Matthews and Mrs Pannu were privileged to make a special visit to observe teaching and learning at Michaela School in London. Michaela's last Progress 8 score placed them 5th best school in the country. Its headteacher, Katherine Birbalsingh, is a leading voice in education internationally.

Michaela does things differently. It is an Outstanding school and gives the following as one of the reasons why:

'Our desks are in rows and the teacher stands at the front of the class and leads the children to new and exciting destinations. This requires sharp explanations, checking for understanding, and a belief that the teacher is the authority in the classroom.'

It is often referred to as the 'strictest' school in the country. However, our visit highlighted how, at Michaela, staff have cultivated an ethos of kindness allied to high expectations for learning behaviours:

'Because without excellent discipline, learning cannot take place. Pupils at Michaela feel they are treated fairly and justly. Thanks to our high expectations, it means that learning can flourish.'

At William Murdoch Primary School we are committed to providing the very best we can for our children. In order to do this, we are equally committed to learning and improving on our best efforts by building on best practice.



NEU Strike Action

As you may know, one of the teaching unions, the NEU has voted for strike action, which affects our school on the following dates:

1 February: All schools in England and Wales

1 March: East Midlands, West Midlands and the NEU's eastern region

15 and 16 March: Two-day strike of all schools in England and Wales.

Some of our staff are members of this union and will therefore take part in this industrial action.

WILLIAM MURDOCH PRIMARY SCHOOL

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HEADTEACHER: MR M. SINGH

I will update you with our plans as soon as we know the level of strike action.

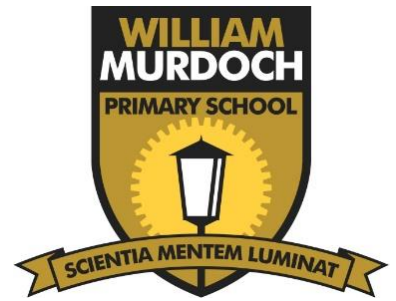
Nursery Dinosaur Workshop

The children in Nursery were surprised by some special visitors this week. As part of the children's 'Dinosaurs' topic they took part in a dinosaur workshop. They had the opportunity to meet and interact with 'Jam' the life size dinosaur. The children also got the chance to meet and learn about some baby dinosaurs. Finally, they embarked on a wonderful adventure, using a green screen to create a scene in a jungle setting, whilst being followed by a dinosaur.



Parental Concerns

If you have any concerns about your child or feel that you need to speak to someone about their learning, behaviour or anything else you feel is important, please make sure that your first port of call is their teacher. This will be the person who knows your child best and is most likely to be able to help you. You can see the teacher at the end of the day when children are being dismissed or contact them through Class Dojo. Should you need further help, each year group has a Team Leader who will also know your child well and will be able to help. Team Leaders take responsibility for all aspects of the children's learning and behaviour within their year groups. This is the best way to resolve any matters quickly and efficiently.



GameFinder: Age Related Gaming

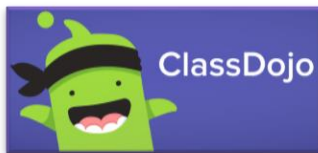
Finding games for children that are appropriate for their age, which also work on the devices the children use and that they will actually enjoy playing, can be a minefield; particularly when parents are being bombarded with the 'but everyone else is playing this game' script! GameFinder is a new and free service available from Taming Gaming which can help parents identify the most suitable games for their child, depending on factors such as how old they are, what devices they have and what types of games they like to play. The answers to these filters enables GameFinder to provide an instant list of recommendations. To use GameFinder, please visit:



<https://www.taminggaming.com/en-gb/gameFinder>

Reception Writing Stay & Play

On Friday 27 January 2023, Reception will be holding a Writing Stay & Play session from 2.15pm to 3.15pm. During this session we will be looking at the RWI (Read, Write, Inc) home reading book scheme. You will then be given strategies and ideas on how you can support your child using this book scheme at home.



Our Communication to You

Please take the time to read emails sent to you. We try to make sure that everything you are sent relates to your child, so nothing is irrelevant. If you would like further information on any email we send, please contact the class teacher or the Main Office for assistance. We



also encourage you to follow us on Twitter [@WilliamMurdochS](https://twitter.com/WilliamMurdochS) as we post reminders, useful information, and live updates from school and other

community events of interest. Don't miss out, or let your child miss out. Please also keep up to date with everything William Murdoch via Class Dojo.

Healthy Snacks

A reminder that children are not permitted to eat unhealthy snacks in school. They will instead be asked to save their snack to eat after school. This also applies to junk food in packed lunches. There is some excellent packed lunch advice and recipes within the following link:

<https://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/recipes/healthier-lunchboxes/>.



Mr Panichi's Book of the Week

Lower School



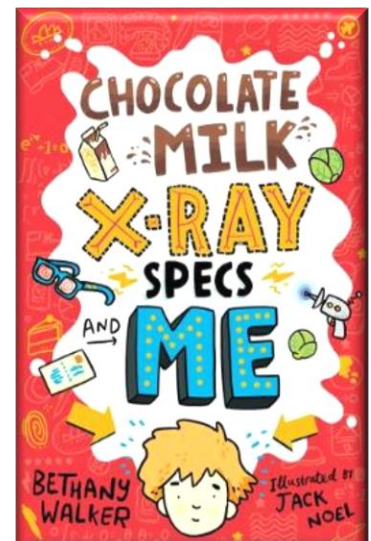
Omar, The Bees And Me - Helen Mortimer & Katie Cottle (Illustrator)

A spring-infused delight of a story, where two children rally the whole community in creating a bee corridor to help encourage local wildlife, while celebrating their cultural diversity and customs. As with any good picture book, there are so many layers to this book. The main theme throughout is that of sustainability. The children of Class One encourage the members of their community to plant wild flowers in order to boost the numbers of bees in the area. They help deliver envelopes of seeds to all the houses between the school and park. This book helps children understand how vital bees are in order to pollinate and provide food. It will inspire children to think about how they can create bee corridors in their local community too. Katie Cottle's illustrations bring another layer of vibrancy to the story. They radiate warmth and joy. There are also other aspects of story that can be explored, such as developing friendship and cultural identity. When Omar brings honey cake to Show and Tell and explains that his grandpa used to keep bees 'a long way away' among the 'apricot trees and jasmine bushes', it sparks the idea of creating a bee corridor - but, more than that, it brings an opportunity for Maisie and Omar to connect and build a friendship. The end pages are gorgeous and filled with essential bee facts and a recipe for a delicious honey cake. This book is perfect for all children to explore and a great starting point for so much learning.

Upper School

Chocolate Milk, X-Ray Specs & Me! - Bethany Walker & Jack Noel (Illustrator)

Freddy Spicer is at home while his parents, international sprout farmers, are away in Outer Costanga (which is so far away Freddy can't even find it on a map). Freddy is with his grandfather and at a new school where he has trouble making friends and is also secretly in love with Samira. A strange lady has moved in next door and captivated Grandpa; it looks like a wedding is on the cards. Freddy has also accidentally blown up the shed with a blast gun he thinks his parents left for his birthday. All he really wants to do is go to Blast Yourself Bonkers and hopefully gain friends; but his parents have not returned in time. This story is told in the form of letters, from Freddy and his parents and also some of the other characters. What the reader knows, but Freddy remains clueless about, is that his parents are not actually sprout farmers but secret agents on the tail of the mastermind criminal Dr Alpha Bett. This is the joke of the book, that Freddy never realises what is going on and yet somehow manages to save the day by accident. I generally do not find books for



children particularly funny, though this is one of the exceptions because it is very cleverly written; I laughed my way through this book because the reader can see what is going to happen and Freddy remains engagingly unaware. The book is delightfully doodled and illustrated by Jack Noel in much the same way as Freddy would have done and this adds to the joy of the letters and postcards he sends.

Artist of the Week

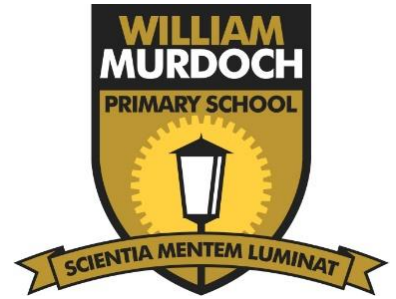


Christina Y5.2

In Year 5 the children have recently started a unit of work called 'African Art'. The children learnt that groups of people, sometimes within the country of Mali, carve antelope headdresses which they then use in special ceremonies. Everyone had the chance to draw their own versions of some of the headdresses worn. Christina drew her work with lots of attention to detail and should feel very pleased with the outcome.

Hana R.3

The children in Reception have been learning about the various types of transport that people can use. These methods of transport varied from those that we commonly see to those which are slightly more uncommon. Hana produced a piece of artwork, based on a hot air balloon, with different types of materials and did a grand job.



Pupil of the Week

Congratulations to our Year 1 pupils, Samuel, Alice and Jaideep for demonstrating exceptional effort this week. Keep it up!



Upcoming dates

January							2023
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	
						1	
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	
23	24 Y4 Fire Safety Workshop	25	26	27 Reception Maths Stay & Play Session	28	29	
30	31 Y3 Ancient Greeks Workshop						

Many thanks for your continued support and cooperation. Have a relaxing weekend.

Your sincerely,

Mr M Singh
Headteacher