

24 September 2021

MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

'The grass is greener where you water it.' - Dr John Gottman

Dear Parents/Carers,

I hope that you are continuing to enjoy the good weather. Our Reception children completed their first full week. The children have all settled in fantastically well and have been busy discovering lots of new exciting things including taking part in Forest School. It has been lovely to see them getting to know each other and growing in confidence throughout the week! We hope that everyone soon feels settled and part of the school family here at William Murdoch.

It has been another busy week with a multitude of learning activities taking place each day including the instrumental instruction of violin, guitar, brass and sitar to name a few. Before and after school clubs are also in full swing. We have a number of intervention strategies in place to support pupils in their learning with the school offering 1:1 or small group tutoring through Department for Education approved agencies.

We have spent thousands of pounds on upgrading library books in both the Lower School and Upper School libraries. Reading activities permeate all curriculum areas and we use every opportunity to develop a reading culture. We ask that children spend at least half an hour each day reading in order to develop a reading habit. I cannot overstate the importance of reading. It develops stronger analytical skills, expands the vocabulary as well as improving your child's ability to focus and concentrate.

Did you know that if you read for 20 minutes a day, you'll read 1,800,000 words per year?

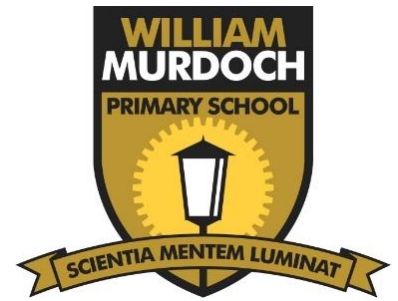
School Meals Pre-Ordering Reminder

There has been an increased number of parents who have contacted the Main Office this week enquiring as to why their child has received a jacket potato on a daily basis. The reason for this is because there has been no pre-ordered meal. Dolce requires all parents to pre-order their child's meal. This can be done on a weekly or termly basis. If you fail to pre-order your child's meal, they will receive the default option of a jacket potato. If you are having difficulty in placing your child's order or setting up your child's SchoolGrid account, please contact the Main Office at enquiry@williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk.

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.

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



COVID-19 UPDATE

Following a review of our COVID-19 Outbreak Management Plan, we have made the decision to ask that children who are awaiting a PCR result, because they have had close contact with a positive case **within their household**, remain at home until the PCR test result comes back. Once the result is received, we ask that you ring us for further advice on how to proceed. Although this is slightly different from government guidelines, Public Health England have said they will support schools making this decision, in order to minimise the risk of the spread of infection in schools. If the close contact is from outside the household, children can be in school whilst waiting for their PCR result. We really appreciate your co-operation with this decision.

Although the Department for Education guidance asks schools to only inform parents if our numbers of positive cases reach the thresholds of 5 or more children in one class, or more than 10% of a group of close contacts, I have taken the decision to always keep you informed of every positive case in the setting. This will be carried out as a "Warn and Inform" service, so parents can be more mindful of potential symptoms in their children.

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

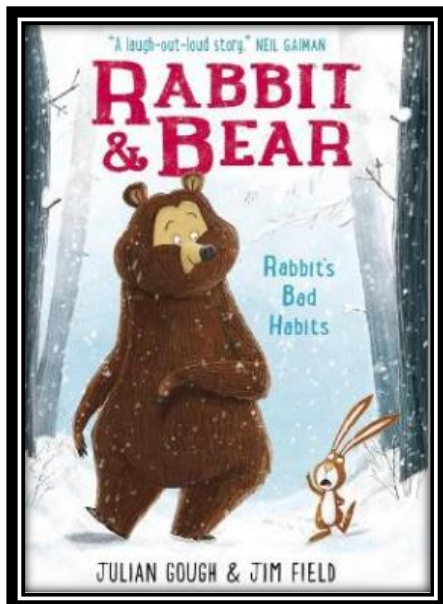
If your child or anyone in your family has possible COVID-19 symptoms, please do not send them to school and get a PCR test as soon as possible. You need to inform the school of the result so that we can take any actions needed and make sure we are following government guidance. If you are unsure, please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

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



Rabbit & Bear: Rabbit's Bad Habits – Julian Gough and Jim Field (Illustrator)

A tale of friendship, gravity, and a little fun along the way. Bear wakes up from her hibernation early to find snow on the ground and meets the grumpy and rather self-important although apparently very knowledgeable Rabbit. Bear soon starts to learn about gravity, avalanches, why rabbits eat their own poo... Rabbit has surreptitiously stolen Bear's Winter food hoard but his survival instincts don't extend to easy escape when a wolf appears. Bear's intervention and generous nature lead to a lasting friendship between the pair as they contemplate the snowy landscape from the mouth of a cave and consider creating a companion for their Snow Man.

From novelist and playwright Julian Gough, and the winner of the Roald Dahl Funny Prize, Jim Field, comes a brilliantly funny story of a rabbit and bear who discover that things are

always better when they're shared with a friend...

Upper School

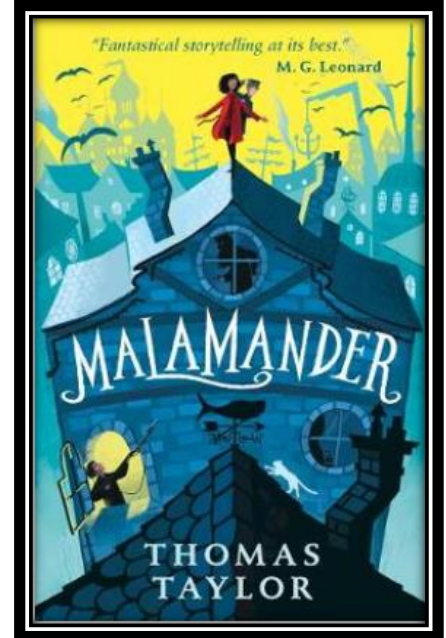
Malamander – Thomas Taylor

This is a fast-paced novel with all the ingredients of a fantastic read! With its clever play on words, subtle humour and quirky characters, the illustrations capture the feel of this fantastical, energetic mystery bringing the book to life.

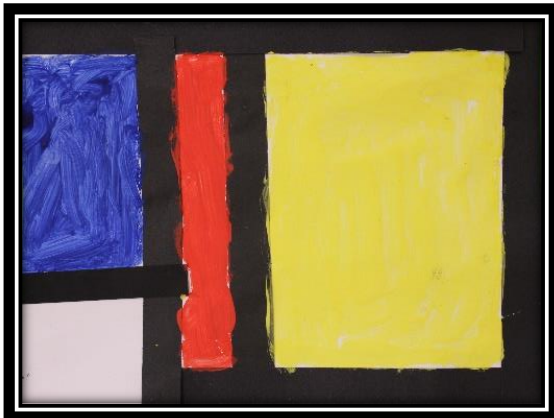
Set in present time, together with the map at the front of the book and the descriptive language, it creates the illusion that it is a narrative set in the past and draws the reader in straight away.

In the remote seaside town of Eerie-on-Sea, Violet Parma stumbles through the lost and found department of the Nautilus Hotel, where she meets Herbert Lemon and they both are caught up solving the mystery of the disappearance of Violet's parents twelve years ago.

No one knows what happened on the night Violet's parents vanished but there are rumours that their disappearance might be something to do with the vicious sea-monster: the Malamander!



Mr Slinn's Artists of the Week



Taranveer Y1.3

The children in Year 1 have been learning about the artist Mondrian during their unit of work based on colour.

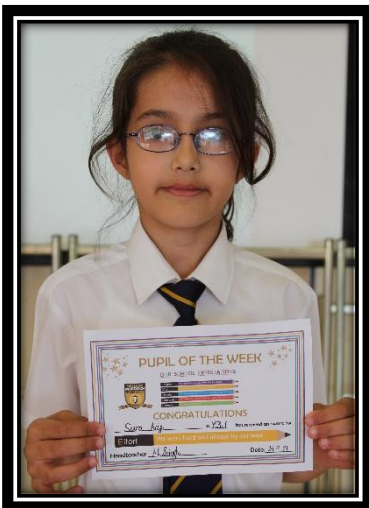
Taranveer was able to create a fantastic piece of work inspired by this artist. It was great to see the primary colours being used so well!

Hajira Y6.1

In Year 6 the children have been using real segments of fruits and vegetables to create different prints. The children also created pencil drawings of the pieces of fruits and vegetables. Hajira produced an excellent drawing of an orange.



Pupil of the Week



Sara - Y3.1



Lorenzo – Y3.2



Keyaan – Y3.3

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

Your sincerely,



Mr M Singh
Headteacher

