

3 February 2023

## MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

***“Your assumptions are your windows on the world. Scrub them off every once in a while, or the light won’t come in.” – Isaac Asimov***

Dear Parents/Carers,

It has been another incredibly busy week in school. I am always impressed by the attitude shown by pupils to make the most of their day and in our teaching staff who do their very best to ensure that they are able to do so.

The curriculum at William Murdoch Primary School is far more challenging than anything in my day and, I would hasten to add, it is far more challenging than even a few short years ago. As a school we are leaving no stone unturned in developing our curriculum. We continue to work with a range of leading partners including the King Edward Grammar Schools, who are supporting the development of our ambitious Science curriculum, the London based Primary Knowledge Trust’s History, Geography and Art curriculum, Services for Education’s Charanga Music curriculum and the National Association of Teachers of Religious Education’s (NATRE) Discovery RE curriculum to name a few.

Our subject leads are also engaged with a programme of peer reviews run by Birmingham Education Partnership, who have responsibility for school improvement of all Birmingham schools on behalf of Birmingham City Council. This week we welcomed History Leads from Elms Farm Primary School and Rednal Infant School, who carried out a peer review of our History curriculum with our History Leads.

The review included a learning walk to see History being taught in Year 3, 4 & 5, a look through pupils’ History books and a pupil voice survey with six selected pupils from each of those year groups. The feedback from the reviewers was very positive; they commented upon the exemplary behaviour of pupils in all lessons, as well as their engagement with challenging content, including Viking gods, Henry VI and The French Revolution. The reviewers also praised the subject knowledge of the teachers, the scaffolds that were in place to support pupils with their learning, as well as the quality of work produced by the pupils in all of the classes.

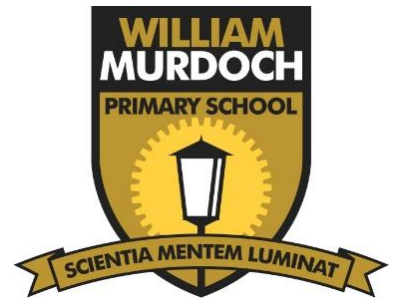
There is a significant amount of reading within these different curriculums, and this is no accident. We have deliberately layered reading into the curriculums to improve reading fluency, background knowledge and vocabulary acquisition. I have written many times on the importance of reading on a daily basis and encourage you to foster this with your children by hearing them read, reading to them and showing that reading matters by making a habit of reading yourself.

**WILLIAM MURDOCH PRIMARY SCHOOL**

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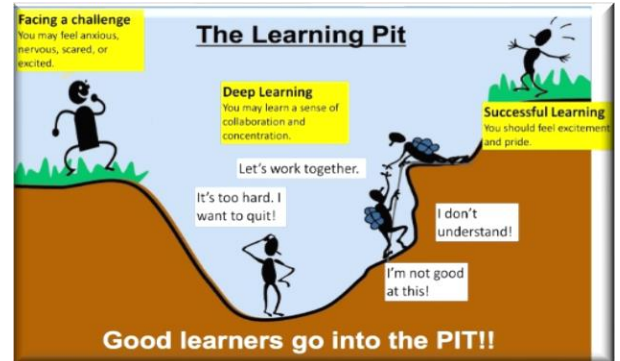
HEADTEACHER: MR M. SINGH



## The Learning Pit

The learning pit explains the reality that when you learn something new, you may make a mistake, you may fail, and it may be difficult, but it doesn't mean you can't learn it. It just means you are in the learning pit and need to try again in a different way until you can get out of the learning pit. We teach our pupils that being in the learning pit is a positive thing. This is because it means that you are going to learn something new. The skills of resilience and perseverance are key components of learning and will help you get out of the learning pit. Click below to watch a short film that explains the

Learning Pit further: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8pdYmAbWR-k>



## School Car Park

It is very unfortunate to note that there are a small number of parents who have repeatedly disregarded the requests of staff not to park in the car park or to walk through the car park. The pedestrian path is there to separate pedestrians and vehicles and was brought in by the Health and Safety Executive following an incident where a child was knocked down in the car park a number of years ago.



Regrettably, I will be issuing warning notices to offending parents and, if their behaviour does not change, then we will reluctantly need to consider banning offending individuals from the school site.

Many thanks to the vast majority of parents who adhere to the site access guidelines.

## Year 3 Ancient Greeks Workshop



On Tuesday, Ben from Past Productions guided our Year 3 pupils through the world of Ancient Greece. The children were able to use their knowledge from last term to help them answer all sorts of questions ranging from what the word 'invade' means to the story of the Greek hero Alexander the Great. Pupils were introduced to Zeus and other Greek gods, and they had the opportunity of dressing up as them. Following this, pupils took part in various activities including making Ancient Greek paper plates and designing Ancient Greek pottery based on Greek gods, heroes and monsters.

## Pupil Stories

As a school we are immensely proud of Ella-Rose in Y5.3, who has become an important member of both the boys and girls' school football teams. She has also become a player for both Aston District girls (the first girl ever from WMPS) and Diamond Academy. We would like to congratulate Ella-Rose for being a positive role model to her peers and inspiring others to reach their goals. With all of these extra-curricular activities, Ella-Rose has not allowed her studies to falter either. If anything, she now tries even harder in class which has been noticed by her class teacher. Well done Ella-Rose- hopefully someday we may see you on television doing what you really enjoy, playing football for Aston Villa or even England.

Again, we welcome any news of our pupils achievements. If you have anything you would like to share, please contact Mrs Pemberton at [enquiry@williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk](mailto:enquiry@williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk).



## UNICEF Article of the Week

Safer Internet Day is marked on 7 February every year. We all have a right to feel safe and secure, and that means online as well as in the real world. Safer Internet Day is an annual event that promotes the safe, responsible and positive use of the internet. The internet can be a great place but needs to be used carefully.

**Article 17: (Access to information from the media):** Every child has the right to reliable information from a variety of sources and governments should encourage the media to provide information that children can understand. Governments must help protect children from materials that could harm them.

**Article 19: (Protection from violence, abuse and neglect):** Governments must do all they can to ensure that children are protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and bad treatment by their parents or anyone else who looks after them.

**Article 34 (Sexual exploitation):** Governments must protect children from forms of sexual abuse and exploitation.

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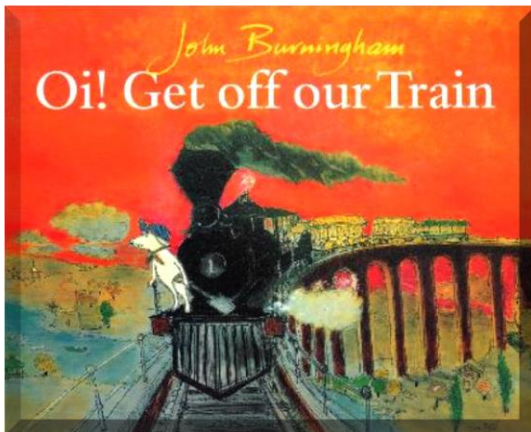
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HEADTEACHER: MR M. SINGH



**Mr Panichi's Book of the Week**

**Lower School**



**Oi! Get off our Train - John Burningham**

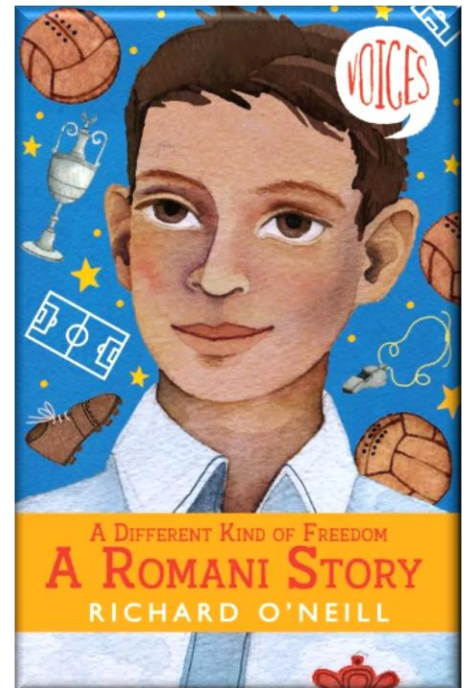
Oi! Get off our Train is about an adventure that a boy and his dog take on their train. They travel to different places stopping to play games, eat picnics or play in the water as they go. At each stop they meet an endangered animal who wants to join them on their train. Each time an animal appears, the pair shout, "Oi! Get off our train!" As the animals board the train, they explain why the boy should let them on the train as they are endangered. The animals show the real struggle they are facing. The boy shows compassion and lets the animals on the train. As he continues his adventure, he

meets many more endangered animals. But was it all a dream? Or did his adventure really happen?

**Upper School**

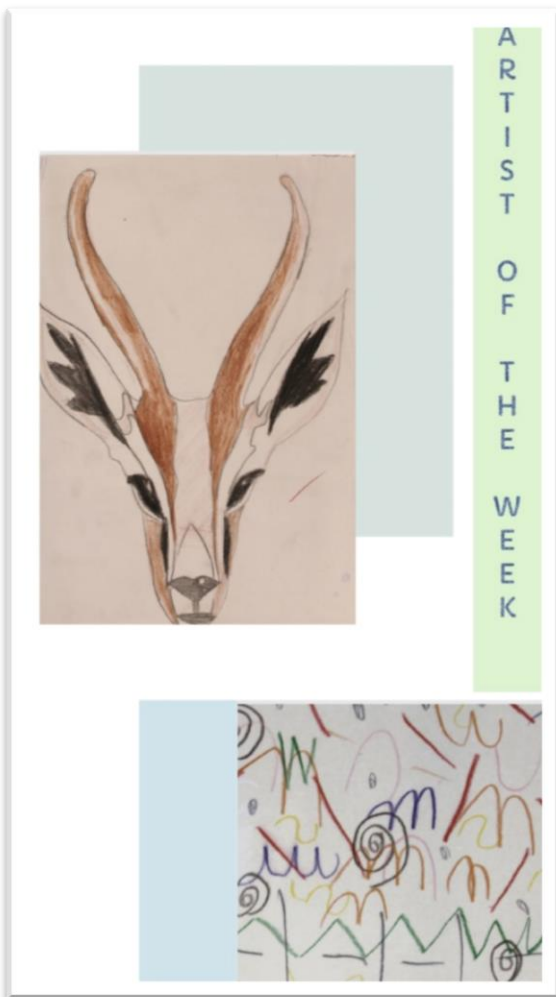
**A Different Kind of Freedom: A Romani Story - Richard O'Neill**

A thoroughly enjoyable read set in 19th-century Sheffield. This book tells the story of Lijah – a Romani boy living in a Traveller camp. Lijah enjoys collecting scrap with his dad and brother, travelling on the cart and listening to his dad's stories by the fire. One day, visitors from the Sheffield census come around and decree that Lijah has to start going to school. At first, he struggles with reading and writing and faces prejudice when some of the other children call him 'gypsy' or 'tramp', he soon discovers a fascination for a new game called football and finds a way to join in with the other boys. Back home, Lijah's dad is not happy about Lijah playing football, calling it a dinlo (foolish) game. His dad instructs Lijah not to play, but does accept a gift of a football for Lijah in order to make a good connection with a local businessman called Jack Davis. Over time, Jack bonds with Lijah over his passion for football and tells him about a famous Romani player called Rab Howell. Can Lijah follow in his new hero's footsteps while still staying true to his roots and keeping peace with his dad? Written by a Romani author, this quick and compelling read deals with big themes of heritage, family, changing times and prejudice in sport. As the author explains in his note to preface the story, "If you come from a marginalised community, you often have a number of challenges to overcome. Or to use a football analogy: you're starting the game a couple of goals down." The story provides an original new angle into the stream of football storybooks available and it was interesting to consider



the time when professional football was first becoming popular and the legacy of Sheffield in football history, as well as to learn about Rab Howell. Many young readers will relate to the difficulty Lijah encounters balancing cultural traditions with modern life, as well as the tensions between family expectations and following one's own passions.

## Artist of the Week



### **Hiba Y5.1**

In Year 5, the children have been exploring different pieces of work within a topic entitled African Art. The children will be creating masks out of card resembling antelope faces, similar to other masks that they have learnt about within the module. Therefore, the children were tasked with designing their masks and Hiba did a fantastic job! We look forward to seeing the final results!

### **Sophia R.3**

In Reception, the children have been learning about the artist Joan Miró. They explored how he used lines and colour in his artwork. The children then had a go at creating their own works of art using a range of techniques similar to those used by Joan Miró. Sophia created a very colourful piece of work full of exciting details.

**Pupil of the Week**



Congratulations to our Year 6 pupils, Reaen, Hassan and Emmanuel for demonstrating exceptional effort this week. Keep it up!

**Key Dates**

February 2023						
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
		1	2	3	4	5
6 Reception Police Visit	7 Safer Internet Day	8	9 Reception Fire Service Visit	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17 Reception Arts & Design Stay & Play Pupils Break up for Half Term	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27 Pupils Return to School	28					

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

Your sincerely,



Mr M Singh  
Headteacher