

8 October 2021

## MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

*'If you feel pain, you're alive. If you feel other people's pain, you're a human being.'*

- Leo Tolstoy

Dear Parents/Carers,

Another busy week has gone by and – blink and you will miss it – the first month of the school year has finished. I suppose time flies when you are having fun!

### Parents' Evenings

Parents' Evenings will be held next week where you can find out from your child's teacher(s) how they have settled into their new class and year group. We will also be asking parents to complete a short questionnaire. It will not take more than 3 minutes and will provide vital information to help plan our school improvement priorities. Many thanks in advance for taking the time to complete this.

	Lower School Hall	Upper School Hall
Monday 11 October 2021	Year 6	Year 2
Tuesday 12 October 2021	Year 5	Year 1
Wednesday 13 October 2021	Year 4	Reception
Thursday 14 October 2021	Year 3	Nursery

### Harvest Festival

We were treated today to two special Harvest Festival assemblies by Y2.1 and Y3.2.



We are delighted that this year we can return to our traditional way of celebrating Harvest Festival in school. We do this by asking all the children to bring in non-perishable food items such as: tins, packets, pasta, cereal, biscuits, etc. Please do not send in any perishable items as their life span is not long enough for how the food is distributed. The food donations are to be brought into school during the week commencing 11 October 2021.

### School Photos

The photographer will be in school on Thursday 14 October 2021 to photograph the children in the **Upper** School and on Thursday 21 October 2021 to photograph the children in the **Lower** School.

We will arrange for siblings to be photographed together, however, due to coronavirus mitigations, the school is unable to allow family photographs. Please ensure that your child is in **full school uniform even if they have PE on the day of their photograph.**

## Dolce Catering – Prize Winner



Yesterday the new catering providers ran a special competition whereby the lucky child whose lunch tray had a prize winning sticker received a £5.00 Amazon voucher. As you can imagine the children were excitedly checking their trays. The prize was won by Marget (Y3.2) who, when asked what she would spend her voucher on, replied that she would like to buy a pet. I think she may well be disappointed looking for one on Amazon though! Nonetheless she was all smiles on the day.

## Aston Villa Football Club

This year, the school is working closely with Aston Villa Football Club, who are coming into school each Wednesday to work with both staff and pupils in support of our PE curriculum. Aston Villa are supporting the CPSU and NSPCC Parents in Sport Week 2021, which runs from 4 to 10 October 2021 and focuses on giving parents the information and tools they need to be part of the bigger safeguarding picture in sport. As part of the week, a free e-learning course has been created to help parents understand their role in keeping children safe in sport and to let you know who to turn to if you have any worries. The course itself will only take around 10 minutes to complete. Please see the attached document for further details and a link to the course, amongst other useful reading.

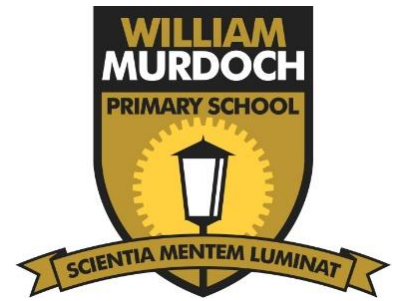
## Handsworth Park Art Trail

Come and enjoy the autumn colours in Handsworth Park and take part in free walking tours of the Arts Trail, with a local artist guide. Handsworth Park Arts Trail was created over three years ago and introduced new innovative pieces of public art into the beautiful setting of Handsworth Park. The tour will include some history about the park (Victorian and more recent), who the artists are, why and how they chose their designs, how public art is made and where else in Birmingham you can see public art.

Following the tour, free tea, coffee, juice and biscuits will be served in the Sons of Rest Building in Handsworth Park, and there will be an opportunity to discuss what people liked about each piece of art and



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why. The tour lasts approximately one hour and the light refreshments and discussion will also last approximately one hour (two hours total).

The tours are suitable for people with a wide range of disabilities. The main paths are flat and in good condition and the artwork can be seen from the paths if people aren't able to walk over grass. There is parking and disabled toilets on site at Handsworth Wellbeing Centre.

The tours are suitable for people of all ages, young and old. Please register all adults and children over 5 years of age.

The tour meeting place is outside Handsworth Wellbeing Centre, Holly Road, Handsworth, Birmingham, B20 2BY.

More information and booking details can be found using the following link: [Handsworth Park Art Trail](#)



## Parents of Year 6 Pupils

Families with children due to start secondary school in September 2022 (i.e. those children born between 1 September 2010 and 31 August 2011) are now able to apply online for secondary school places. The deadline for applications is 31 October 2021 and places will be offered on 1 March 2022.

All the information families need to make their applications is on the council website:

[https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/20119/school\\_admissions/1778/secondary\\_school\\_year\\_7\\_admissions/1](https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/20119/school_admissions/1778/secondary_school_year_7_admissions/1)

It is particularly important that families carefully consider the school's admission criteria and name at least one school on their application where their child would have been offered a place in previous years. Please be aware of the deadline as parents who apply late are less likely to be offered one of their preferred schools.

## COVID-19 Community Champion Update

All schools in the UK have now returned to full-time classroom teaching, with reduced COVID-19 safety measures. However, there has been a [rise in the number of children absent](#) from England's state schools due to testing positive or showing COVID symptoms. This is why all healthy 12 to 15-year-olds are being offered a single dose of the Pfizer vaccine to help limit school disruption over the coming winter months.

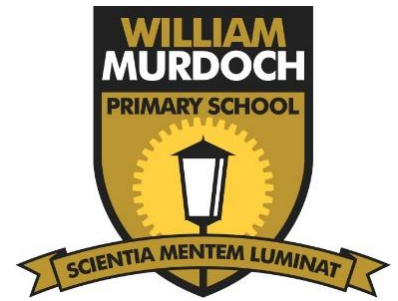
Evidence suggests one dose cuts the risk of catching the Delta variant by about 55%. It also reduces the chances of people getting very sick or spreading it to someone else. The rollout has already begun in England and Scotland. Invites are being sent out in Wales, while in Northern Ireland teen vaccinations are expected to start in November.

## WILLIAM MURDOCH PRIMARY SCHOOL

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HEADTEACHER: MR M. SINGH



To view the latest government vaccine information and resources, please visit the [gov.uk website](https://www.gov.uk).

## **Birmingham Weekly COVID-19 Statistics**

This week, cases across Birmingham decreased to 2,736 cases, compared to 2,946 cases reported the previous week, a decrease of 7.1%. Cases decreased in all age groups this week, except the 60-79 and 80+ age groups, which increased by 8.0% and 6.7% respectively.

## **Homework**

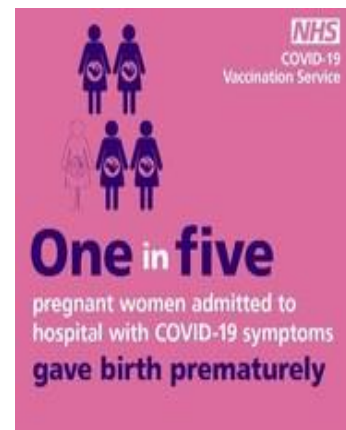
Homework is a staple of school life, and of home life. After all, almost every one of us will have done homework ourselves as a child and most of us will be drafted in to help with it at some point as a parent, carer or grandparent. Although schools are not *obliged* to set homework, and some don't, at WMPS we set daily homework and expect children to do it. The only homework that will be marked regularly in school is spellings, knowledge organiser quizzes and Maths. We also encourage daily reading (at least 20 minutes a day).

## **COVID-19 vaccinations during pregnancy**

COVID-19 vaccinations are recommended for those who are pregnant or trying to get pregnant as it can be more dangerous to pregnant women. Whilst 2 in 3 people who test positive for COVID-19 in pregnancy have no symptoms at all, COVID-19 can increase the risk of adverse events during pregnancy.

Of pregnant women admitted to hospital with COVID-19 symptoms:

- One in seven needed intensive care
- One in five gave birth prematurely
- One in three developed pneumonia



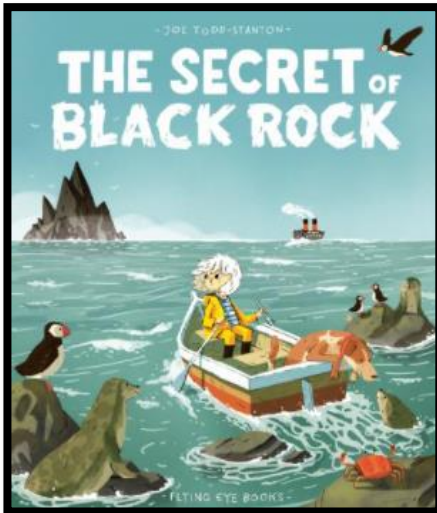
Vaccines are safe and effective for pregnant women. They do not contain COVID-19 and so cannot infect the pregnant person or baby. Mild side effects are common, such as a sore arm, headaches, fatigue, but these do not affect the pregnancy. Lots of pregnant women worldwide have already been vaccinated and no safety concerns have been highlighted. There is no evidence to suggest that COVID-19 vaccines impact fertility of those trying to get pregnant.

For more information visit [Royal College of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists website](https://www.rcog.org.uk), speak to your doctor or directly email [Habib.Ullah@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:Habib.Ullah@birmingham.gov.uk).



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

**Lower School**



**The Secret of Black Rock – Joe Todd-Stanton**

There are several legends about the nature of the Black Rock in the fishing community where Erin Pike lives with her mum and their dog. What is the secret of Black Rock? One day Erin sneaks onto her mum's fishing boat which leads to her finding out. Her adventure in the underwater world encompasses an environmental message within the framework of a story set out in a graphic novel format.

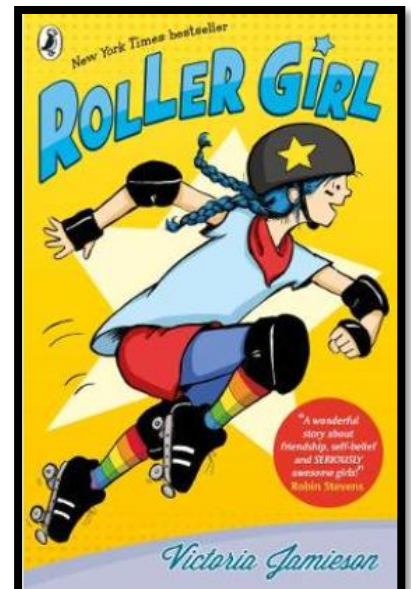
This is a surreal modern folk-tale about an adventurous little girl protecting an innocent living creature against those who wish to harm it.

**Upper School**

**Roller Girl – Victoria Jamieson**

Astrid and Nicole have always done everything together until one summer they sign up for different camps. Astrid then has to deal with the struggles of losing her best friend, preparing for high school and developing her roller skating skills.

Victoria Jamieson has created a wonderful tale that depicts all of the common difficulties children go through as they prepare for the transition to high school. This is perfect for children in Years 5 and 6 who are starting to prepare for this emotional and testing journey. Themes of friendship, resilience, aspirations and self-belief are all covered in a way that will leave readers always eager to find out what Astrid will do next.



## Heroes Stamp Design Competition

In the summer term the children took part in the Heroes Stamp Design Competition. After some careful consideration, a selection of art work from both Lower School and Upper School was entered into the competition.

An incredible 606,049 entries were received from children across the UK, with an amazing 7,479 schools taking part. Sadly, none of the entries that our school submitted were put forward to the final stages of the competition, but everyone should be incredibly proud of their efforts!

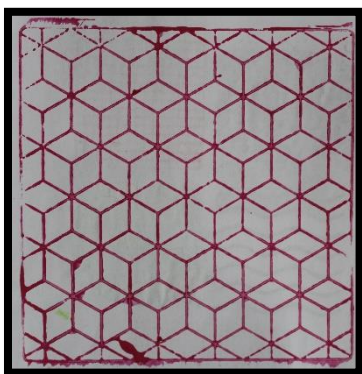
Prime Minister Boris Johnson said: "It is of great credit to the children of this country that in world record breaking numbers they picked up their paintbrushes, pens and paints and paid artistic tribute to the heroes of our coronavirus response. Their brilliant efforts represent the collective gratitude of the nation to everyone who went above and beyond during the pandemic. Congratulations to all those who have made it to the next round and thank you to everyone who has taken part."



The children's designs contributed towards a GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS™ title for the largest postage stamp design competition! Well done to all of the children!

There were so many brilliant designs. Ankreet (Y2.1), Asees (Y2.3), Harveen (Y6.1), Laibaa (now in Year 7), Rehaandip (Y5.2) and Rumaisah (Y6.3) were amongst the children who excelled in this challenge.

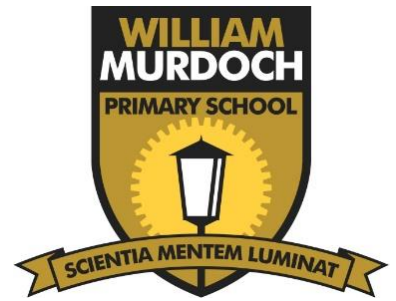
## Mr Slinn's Artists of the Week



Siyana Y2.2

In Art the children have been working through a unit called 'Colour and Shape'. In the lessons they have learnt about the artist Paul Klee. The children then created their own pieces of work in a similar style to Klee using geometric shapes and a range of tints and shades. Siyana worked very hard and created a superb piece of work.

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Maira Y6.3

This term, in Art, Year 6 have been experimenting with the printing technique. The children had to carve lines into a printing block and make their own prints. Maira managed to produce an excellent print packed with lots of interesting detail.



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, appearing to read 'M. Singh', written in a cursive style.

Mr M Singh  
Headteacher



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