

17 March 2023

MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

*"People do not decide their futures, they decide their habits and their habits decide their futures." –
F.M Alexander*

Dear Parents/Carers,

In what can only be described as another hectic week, the school has been a hive of learning and activity, both indoors and outdoors. Children in both Upper School and Lower School have received an array of enrichment activities with specialised instruction from coaches with the Aston Villa Foundation and from Warwickshire Cricket Club, as well as some amazing science workshops as part of Science Week celebrations in school (more on that later in the newsletter).

A special thank you to parents in Year 6 who attended the SATs workshops this week, and to Mr Matthews for leading the workshops.

For Parents' Evening next week, we have a special treat for you. We have curated a display of art and design work that has been completed during the academic year. There is a board dedicated to each year group from Nursery right through to Year 6. Please do spend some time in the Upper School hall to view up close the amazingly creative pieces of work. You may even spot your child's talents on display.

I would like to take the opportunity to wish our brilliant mothers in our school community a wonderful Mother's Day. I hope you are all suitably spoilt by your children and that you receive the recognition that you deserve for all that you do for your family. If you are extra lucky you may even get to sleep in!



Year 4 Visit to Warwick Castle



This Thursday, Year 4 went on a trip to Warwick Castle to strengthen their understanding of the Wars of the Roses History topic. Pupils were told the story of the historic battles and the significance the castle itself played during those times. Children also explored other areas of the castle such as The Great Hall, State Rooms, the Kingmaker Exhibition and the Royal Weekend Party. Year 4 thoroughly enjoyed their time on this trip as they learnt new facts about our country's history.

Science Week

Y2.2 ignited British Science Week with a wonderful introductory assembly relating to the theme 'Connections'. The children showcased the positive connections that have been made within our school between children, staff and parents. We make connections every day and this was definitely emphasised.

The whole school took part in various activities ranging from happy smells, fantastic fingerprints, nature connections, sustainable soap and inventing like a Victorian! Each year group had a carousel of scientific activities that they could participate in.

In **EYFS**, the children enjoyed using their sense of smell and smelling different everyday items. In **Year 1**, we saw forensic scientists capturing their fingerprints using different mediums. Children in **Year 2** became engineers and architects and used a variety of materials to construct a bridge; they used their scientific knowledge on the properties of materials to help them.

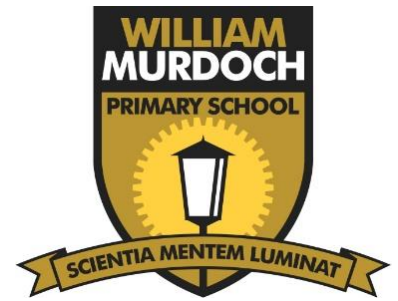
Year 3 looked at protecting habitats and remembered that food chains start with a producer, which is often a plant. They discussed and shared their views on what could happen if one part of the food chain was missing. **Year 4** and **Year 5** are beginning to grow mould and not in the way that you think! They carried out an experiment to observe the effect of good handwashing practice and the likelihood of what poor handwashing would cause on a slice of bread. This experiment will take a few weeks, so watch this spore!

The scientists in **Year 6** were constructing a simple seismometer. A seismometer records vibration such as earthquakes and sound waves. The children explored what everyday instruments they could use to create a dynamic reading.

To commemorate our British Science Week, the whole school had the opportunity to experience a fantastic, crazy Silly Science workshop. There were a lot of BANGS, air blowing; oh, and did we forget to mention fire! What an incredible experience for all of the children! The look of 'awe' and 'wonder' was priceless.

Y5.2
Visit to





Handsworth Library

Last week, Y5.2 went on a trip to Handsworth Library to take part in a creative workshop. The workshop was organised by the IKON Gallery. The children looked at photographs by an artist called Vanley Burke and then engaged in conversations and creative activities about key themes within the work that they saw. The exhibition was accompanied by education packs that guided the children through sensitive issues. The packs were designed by artist educator, [Haseebah Ali](#), and included questions on subjects of race, language, culture and religion and creative exercises, allowing the children to express their identities. At the end of the session, the children had fun drawing portraits of themselves, writing words to describe themselves around their work and finally creating a piece of origami in the shape of a bird. The children set an excellent example for the school in terms of their behaviour and Mr Slinn was incredibly pleased with the results of the session.

Parents' Evening

Please note the spring term parents' evening will take place next week. The Lower School parents' evening will take place on Monday 20 March 2023, with the Upper School parents' evening being held on Wednesday 22 March 2023. Parents' evening will be held in the traditional way, with a five-minute appointment slot and an opportunity for parents to look through their child's books.

Comic Relief

The school supported the Comic Relief appeal today. Children took part in a non-uniform day by wearing something red for a £1.00 donation. Red Nose Day cookies were also on sale during breaktime. Many thanks for your continued generosity.



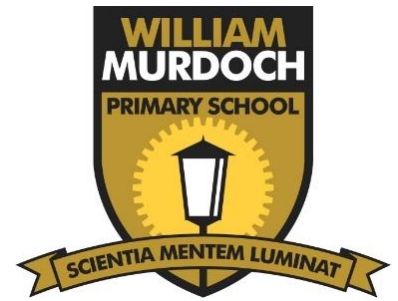
Govilon Residential Visit

The Year 5 and 6 residential trip to Govilon Activity Centre is fast-approaching. If your child has secured a place on the visit, please ensure all monies are paid by the deadline of Friday 28 April 2023 to ensure they can attend what will be a memorable weekend.

Year 6 Secondary School Allocations

If you are the parent/carer of a child in Year 6, you should have received an offer email and letter naming the secondary school your child has been offered for entry in September 2023. You **do not** need to contact Birmingham School Admissions if you intend to accept your child's offer of a school place.

You only need to inform School Admissions if you are **refusing** the school place your child was offered, and this must be done by **Wednesday 29 March 2023**. Details of how to do this was included in your offer letter. If they are not informed by this date that you wish to refuse your offer, the secondary school will update their records to show the offer has been accepted.



We strongly encourage you to accept your offer, this is so your child has a guaranteed school place to attend in September 2023.

By refusing your offer, please be aware that your child's school place may be offered out to another child from that school's waiting list once they are made available. Your child will have **no school** to attend in September as School Admissions only make one school offer to a child. If a family refuses their school offer, they are not required to offer your child a place at an alternative school.

Your child will only be offered a place at another school if a place becomes available on the waiting list for one of your higher preferred schools due to waiting list movement once they are available, or if you appeal against the decision to refuse your child a place at one of your preferred schools and your appeal is subsequently upheld (successful).

The offer being accepted will not affect your child's waiting list position for any of your higher preference schools or influence the outcome of any appeal you may submit.

If your child has not been offered a place at any of the schools that you applied for, this will be because the school(s) you applied for have received more applications than there were places available, and other children that better met the admission criteria than your child were offered those places. Details of the school admission criteria that all applicants are considered under are available here:

https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/downloads/file/24941/secondary_schools_admissions_criteria.

New Catering Service

From Monday 17 April 2023, our school catering service will be provided by staff employed directly by the school as part of William Murdoch Primary School Catering Services Team, who will take over from Dolce in the provision of our school meals service. Detailed information on the new catering service at William Murdoch Primary School was sent home with your child earlier this week, so please do check their bags for this information.

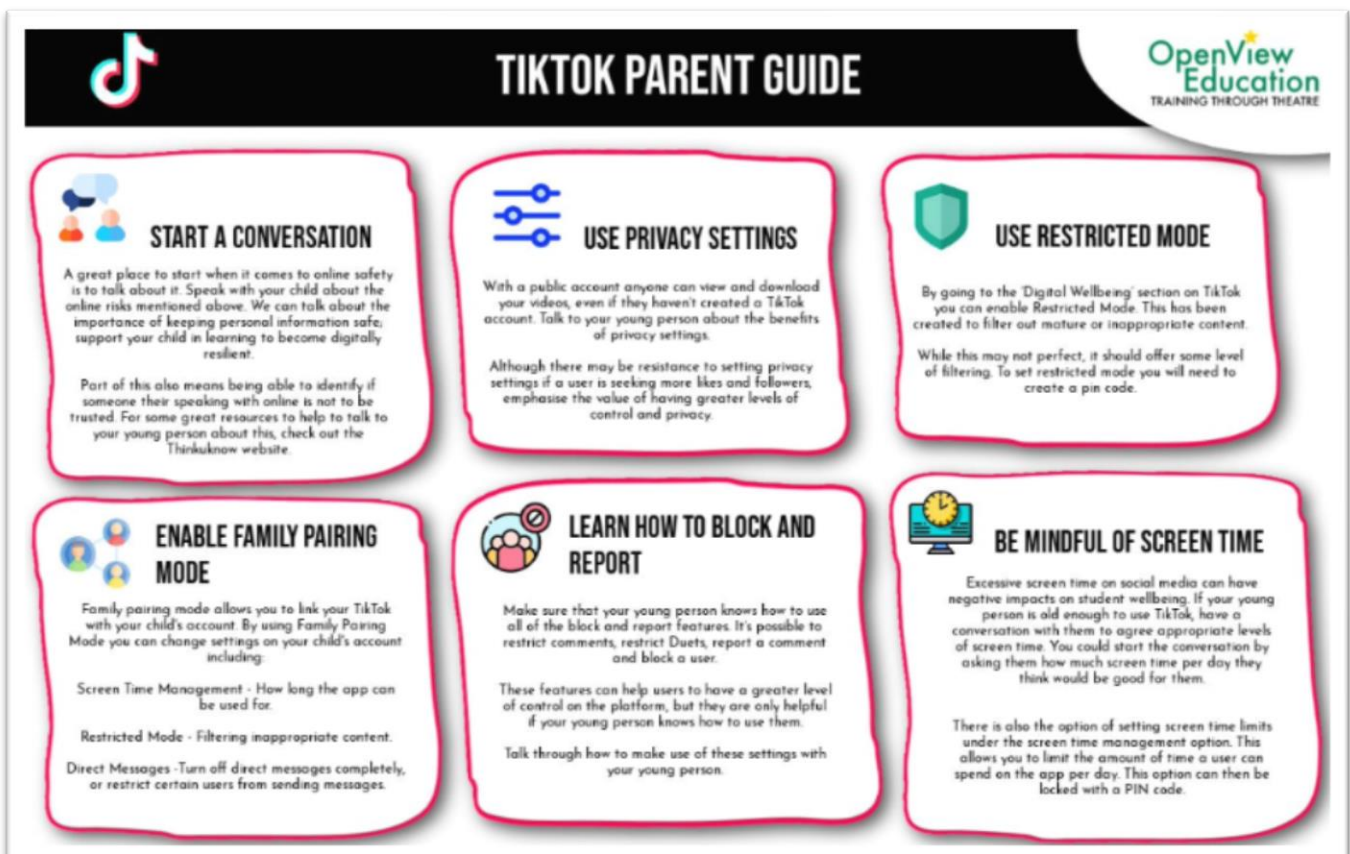
To ensure all pupil allergies and dietary requirements are up-to-date and that we have the correct meal plan information, parents must complete the 'Pupil Allergy & Dietary Form' enclosed in the pack for all children. **All Pupil Allergy & Dietary Forms must be handed into your child's class teacher by Monday 20 March 2023.**



Internet Safety: TikTok

OpenView Education are a dedicated team of theatre professionals, educators and subject specialist with a focus on providing theatre-based training in Anti-Bullying, Internet Safety and Wellbeing for students of all ages. Associate Members of the Anti-Bullying Alliance and CEOP Ambassadors (Child Exploitation and Online Protection Command), OpenView integrate role-play, puppetry, forum-theatre and a high energy delivery to create powerful learning experiences. They have produced an internet safety guide for parents concerned by the use of the popular TikTok app.

OpenView say: 'From working in person with hundreds of schools each year, we understand the challenges that schools face around TikTok, that's why we have created this short TikTok guide for parents and carers. It outlines the steps that parents can take to help keep their children safe while using TikTok.' We have added the link to the growing Internet Safety section on the school website, and attached it here for you <https://www.openvieweducation.co.uk/tiktok-parent-guide/>



TIKTOK PARENT GUIDE

START A CONVERSATION

A great place to start when it comes to online safety is to talk about it. Speak with your child about the online risks mentioned above. We can talk about the importance of keeping personal information safe; support your child in learning to become digitally resilient.

Part of this also means being able to identify if someone their speaking with online is not to be trusted. For some great resources to help to talk to your young person about this, check out the Thinkuknow website.

USE PRIVACY SETTINGS

With a public account anyone can view and download your videos, even if they haven't created a TikTok account. Talk to your young person about the benefits of privacy settings.

Although there may be resistance to setting privacy settings if a user is seeking more likes and followers, emphasise the value of having greater levels of control and privacy.

USE RESTRICTED MODE

By going to the 'Digital Wellbeing' section on TikTok you can enable Restricted Mode. This has been created to filter out mature or inappropriate content.

While this may not be perfect, it should offer some level of filtering. To set restricted mode you will need to create a pin code.

ENABLE FAMILY PAIRING MODE

Family pairing mode allows you to link your TikTok with your child's account. By using Family Pairing Mode you can change settings on your child's account including:

- Screen Time Management - How long the app can be used for.
- Restricted Mode - Filtering inappropriate content.
- Direct Messages - Turn off direct messages completely, or restrict certain users from sending messages.

LEARN HOW TO BLOCK AND REPORT

Make sure that your young person knows how to use all of the block and report features. It's possible to restrict comments, restrict Duets, report a comment and block a user.

These features can help users to have a greater level of control on the platform, but they are only helpful if your young person knows how to use them.

Talk through how to make use of these settings with your young person.

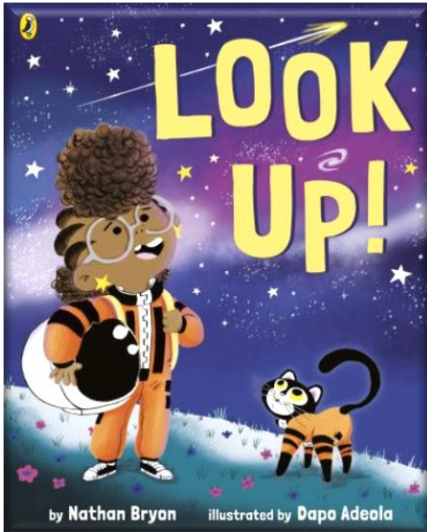
BE MINDFUL OF SCREEN TIME

Excessive screen time on social media can have negative impacts on student wellbeing. If your young person is old enough to use TikTok, have a conversation with them to agree appropriate levels of screen time. You could start the conversation by asking them how much screen time per day they think would be good for them.

There is also the option of setting screen time limits under the screen time management option. This allows you to limit the amount of time a user can spend on the app per day. This option can then be locked with a PIN code.

Book of the Week

Lower School



Look Up! - Nathan Bryon & Dapo Adeola (illustrator)

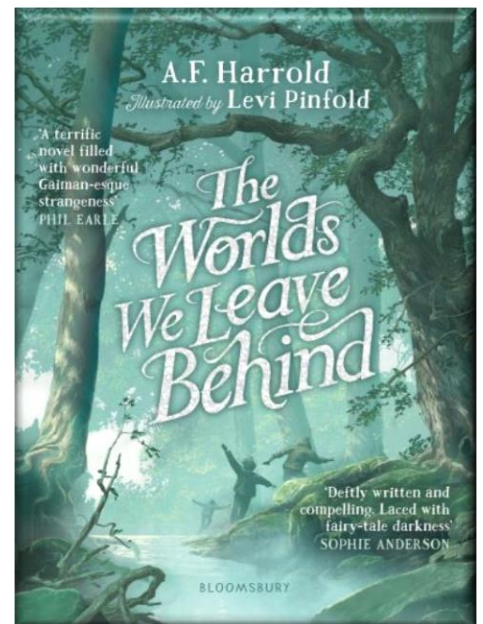
Join Rocket on joyous, life-affirming adventures with the first book in her series, Look Up! and the later title, Clean up! The ever-curious Rocket explores space, the natural world and even fights plastic pollution. But will her big brother ever look up from his phone?

Full of passion and heart-warming energy, Rocket's questions and positive approach to life make the books a joy to read aloud and the illustrations provide much fun for younger readers.

Upper School

The Worlds We Leave Behind - A.F. Harrold and Levi Pinfold (illustrator)

I'm keeping this one brief as I do not want to spoil it for you. This is one of those books that I often find myself thinking of – it really stayed with me! I'm a fan of A.F. Harrold's writing and this book is great – dark, unsettling and certainly thought-provoking! Centred on poor decisions and how consequences can be far-reaching. I'd highly recommend this one for those who like a bit of creepy mystery!



Mr Slinn’s Artist of the Week



Sahil Y2.1

In Year 2, the children have been learning about Ancient Egypt and the art that was created at this point in history. They learnt about the sphinx in Egypt and why they were created. The children had the opportunity to make their own models of a sphinx and had lots of fun making the structures out of clay and painting them using a range of metallic colours.

Gurdev Y5.3

In Year 5, the children have been working through a unit of work centred around Chinese Art. They learnt about the importance of calligraphy in Chinese Art and had a go at creating some versions of their own. Gurdev worked very well with the ink and put lots of care into the work that he produced.

Many thanks for your continued support and cooperation.

Your sincerely,

Mr M Singh
Headteacher

Key Dates

| March | | | | | | 2023 | |
|-------------------------------------|-----|-------------------------------------|-----|--|-----|------|--|
| Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat | Sun | |
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 World Book Day | 4 | 5 | |
| 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 Girls Football Tournament Finals | 11 | 12 | |
| 13 | 14 | 15 Y4 visit to Warwick Castle | 16 | 17 Y4 Mother's Day Assembly | 18 | 19 | |
| 20 Lower School Parents' Evening | 21 | 22 Upper School Parents' Evening | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | |
| 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 Y3 Easter Assembly Pupils Break up for Easter | | | |