

11 October 2024

## MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

*"The two most important days in your life are the day you're born and the day you find out why."* – Mark Twain

Dear Parents/Carers,

We are thrilled with the exceptional performance of our pupils in the last academic year on statutory assessments and end of year statutory tests, reflecting the hard work of the children, the support of their families, and the dedication of our staff. Below is a summary of the attainment data for William Murdoch Primary School with some comparisons with local authority and national averages where these are known.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), 70% of our Reception children achieved a Good Level of Development (GLD), surpassing both Birmingham's 65% and the national average of 68%. In Year 1, 93% of children met the phonics screening threshold, again outperforming Birmingham (87%) and national averages (80%).

For Year 6 SATs, our pupils excelled in all areas, with 79% meeting the expected standard in Reading and 87% in Maths, far exceeding both local and national averages. WMPS pupils also demonstrated strong outcomes in Grammar, Punctuation, and Spelling (78%) and Reading, Writing and Maths combined score (63%), which are higher than both local and national averages. These results highlight the continued academic excellence at William Murdoch Primary School.

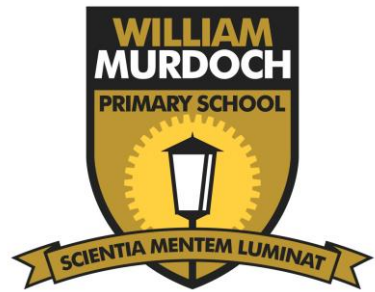
### Parents' Evening

It was wonderful to see so many parents on Monday and Wednesday of this week for Lower School and Upper School Parents' Evenings respectively. I would like to pass on my thanks to all the staff who supported the parents' evenings.

Parents' evening highlights the partnership that is required between parents and school in helping children to progress to the very best of their ability. With this in mind it is important that all adults model to children that learning is a lifelong passion and something that never stops. This can be done in a number of ways. For example:



# KNOWLEDGE LIGHTS UP THE MIND



- Talk to your child about what you are learning about at the moment.
- Read books, newspapers and magazines in front of your child.
- If you can't answer a question that your child asks you (which very often happens to me when my niece asks me about the intricacies of space, i.e. how many stars are there in the sky? How far would you have to dig to get to the centre of the Earth? Or, when can I go to the moon?), research the answer together and show your child that you are curious to find out the answer.
- Model asking questions and then finding out the answers, i.e. as you walk through the park, ask aloud: What do you think that squirrel is eating? In Autumn, why do some leaves turn red, while others turn yellow? Why does my shadow look different to how it did this morning?



Our staff have a number of training days each year and two hours of in-service training each week. As I said, ***learning is a lifelong passion and something that never stops!***

## BBC 500 Words Competition

Since 500 Words began, it has inspired over a million children across the UK to write their own short-stories. This year the BBC want to hear from even more children, no matter what their ability. The competition is a celebration of children's creativity, so stories will not be marked on spelling, grammar or punctuation. There will be two age categories: 5-7 and 8-11 year-olds. All children need to do is write a story they would love to read in 500 Words or less.

The closing date for entries is Friday 8 November 2024 at 9pm.  
More information on how to submit your entry can be found here:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/500-words/articles/zqc8mbk#zsfk239>



## WILLIAM MURDOCH PRIMARY SCHOOL

ANTROBUS ROAD, HANDSWORTH, BIRMINGHAM, B21 9NT TEL: 0121 554 0999 FAX: 0121 554 6332  
EMAIL: [enquiry@williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk](mailto:enquiry@williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk) WEB: [www.williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk](http://www.williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk)  
HEADTEACHER: MR M. SINGH



## Year 5 visit to Guru Nanak Nishkam Sewak Jatha Gurdwara

Half of the children in Year 5 visited the Guru Nanak Nishkam Sewak Jatha Gurdwara on Wednesday this week and the educational experience that everyone had was excellent. After a short walk from school to the Gurdwara, the children walked up the magnificent steps and were greeted by a very well-informed tour guide. The children were shown the main prayer hall, multiple important rooms in the building and the dome at the top. Throughout the trip the children were given an insight into the history of Sikhism and many of the important customs and traditions within it. As always, the children demonstrated excellent behaviour throughout the visit. More of the Year 5 children shall visit the Gurdwara next week on Wednesday 16 October.



## Year 4 visit to Jethavana Buddhist Viharaya Temple

On Tuesday and Wednesday of this week, Year 4 went to visit Jethavana Buddhist Viharaya Temple to learn more about Buddhism. We had the opportunity of meeting a monk who explained some of his duties and told us the story of Buddha. Pupils were able to ask questions about the temple and the history of Buddhism. And it was explained to them that Buddhism is not actually identified as a religion but is more of a belief system or way of life. The children were exceptionally behaved and respectful and represented us tremendously well. Well done Year 4!

## Aston District Football Tournament

Over the last two Thursdays, Mr Harris, Mr Walker and Mr Blackmore have taken the school football team made up from children from Years 4 to 6 to compete in the Aston District Football Tournament. We played against teams from the local area including Welford, St Mary's, Heathfield and St Michaels. Each opponent gave us a new challenge with St Mary's and Heathfield proving to be our toughest opponents. The team performed exceptionally well and finished top of the league which means they have now qualified for the Premier League in the Spring Term. We would like to thank all those involved for the hard work they have given in helping us achieve this wonderful outcome!

League Table

	Team	Played	Won (3 pts)	Draw (2 pts)	Loss (1pt)	Goals For	Goals Ag.	Goal Diff.	Pts
1.	W. Murdoch	4	3	1	0	9	5	+4	11
2.	Welford	4	3	0	1	8	5	+3	10
3.	St. Michaels	4	2	0	2	8	6	+2	8
4.	Heathfield	4	1	0	3	6	7	-1	6
5.	St. Mary's	4	0	1	3	4	12	-8	5
6.	James Watt	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

## Parents of Year 6 Pupils - Open Mornings at King Edward VI Handsworth Grammar School for Boys

King Edward VI Handsworth Grammar School are holding Open Mornings which are aimed at boys who have already sat their 11+ and still considering their secondary school options. Please see the attached leaflet for more information.

## Road Safety - Wear your seat belt

At William Murdoch Primary School, the safety of our children, parents and staff is paramount. This includes as they make their way to and from school. It has been seen that some of our children are not wearing their seatbelt when coming to and from school in a car.

UK CHILD CAR SEAT LAW - HEIGHT			
Baby	Baby and toddler	Toddler and child	Child
 Newborn to 85cm (From 0 to 15-18 months old)	 Newborn to 105cm (0 to 4 years old)	 61cm to 105cm (15 months to 4 years old)	 100cm to 135cm (4 to 12 years old)

A reminder for our parents:

- Using a child car seat or booster seat
- Children must normally use a child seat until they're 12 years old or 135 centimetres tall, whichever comes first.
- Children over 12 or more than 135cm tall must wear a seat belt.
- You can choose a child car seat based on your child's height or weight.



## Communication and Autism Course for Parents

The Communication and Autism Team (CAT for short) is part of Access to Education who are a group of services supporting children and young people with additional needs in schools across Birmingham. Every mainstream school and academy have a Communication and Autism Team professional assigned to the setting.

The Communication and Autism Team have developed a 6-week course for parents/carers called CAT PAC to support understanding around autism as well as giving parents/carers a chance to talk with others. The course looks at different aspects of autism such as: communication and interaction; sensory differences; eating, sleeping and toileting differences; and supporting anxiety and emotional distress. For further information, please see the attached leaflet.

## Pupil Data Collection Sheets

Thank you to all those parents who have completed and returned their child's data collection sheet. There are still a small number of forms which are still outstanding. These pupils have been sent home today with another copy of their data collection sheet and we ask parents to check through the information carefully and amend where necessary. The completed Data Collection Sheets should be returned to the class teacher, in the envelope provided by **Monday 14 October 2024**.





## Harvest Donations

With food poverty an increasing issue for many families up and down the country, the annual WMPS harvest donation to local food banks and charities is more important than ever. We are asking all children to bring in some 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 weeks commencing 7 and 14 October 2024. Many thanks in advance for supporting this initiative.

## UNICEF Article of the Week



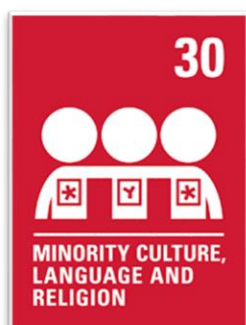
This week, pupils across the school have looked at:

**Article 2: No Discrimination**

**Article 30: Minority Culture, Language and Religion**

This week's article of the week has focused on Black History Month. Black History Month takes place in October every year and is a celebration of key figures and events in Black history. Having begun in the USA, it has been celebrated in the UK since 1987, with the emphasis on celebrating particularly the history and contributions to society of people with an African or Caribbean heritage.

This year, the theme of Black History Month in the UK is reclaiming narratives. The theme of reclaiming narratives focuses on sharing stories of Black history and culture, as well as correcting historical inaccuracies.



Pupils across the school have looked at article 2 which is non-discrimination and the Convention applies to every child without discrimination, whatever their ethnicity, gender, religion, language, abilities or any other status, whatever they think or say, whatever their family background.

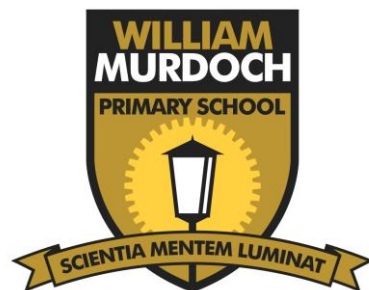
Article 30 which is children from minority or indigenous groups, and focuses on how every child has the right to learn and use the language, customs and religion of their family, whether or not these are shared by the majority of the people in the country where they live.



## Nursery and Reception Open Days

We are incredibly proud of our early years provision and would welcome visits to the school for any parents who may be considering Nursery or Reception places in the future. We will be holding Nursery and Reception open days on:

# KNOWLEDGE LIGHTS UP THE MIND



Monday 18 November 2024 at 9.30am

Monday 2 December 2024 at 9.30am

Thursday 9 January 2025 at 9.30am

Please contact the Main Office if you or someone you know would like to attend.

## Parents of Nursery Pupils



Applications are now open for the 2025 Reception intake. The application must be made directly with the local authority and **must** be submitted by **Sunday 15 January 2025**. Please refer to the website <http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/schooladmissions> where you can find further information. If you need any help or support in completing the application for your child, please speak to Mrs Kullar in the first instance or contact the Main Office.

## Parents of Year 6 Pupils

Families with children due to start secondary school in September 2025 are now able to apply online for secondary school places. The deadline for applications is 31 October 2024 and places will be offered on 3 March 2025.

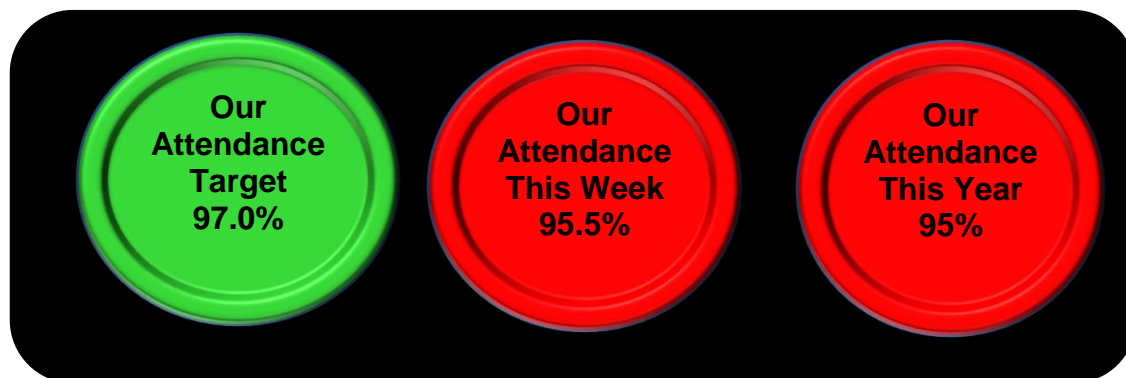
All the information families need to make their applications is on the council website:

[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.

## WMPS Attendance Stats

Over a school year, we are due to be open for 190 days, which equates to 380 sessions. Registration takes place at 8.50am in the morning and after lunch in the afternoon. Attendance is affected if a pupil is not present at school for any whole session including registration.



## WILLIAM MURDOCH PRIMARY SCHOOL

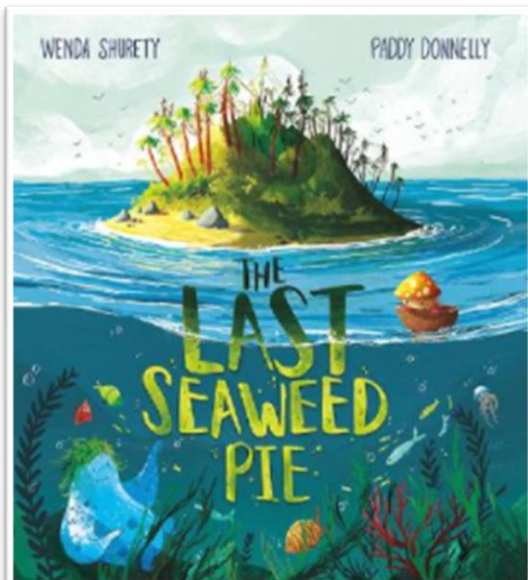
ANTROBUS ROAD, HANDSWORTH, BIRMINGHAM, B21 9NT TEL: 0121 554 0999 FAX: 0121 554 6332

EMAIL: [enquiry@williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk](mailto:enquiry@williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk) WEB: [www.williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk](http://www.williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk)

HEADTEACHER: MR M. SINGH

## Mr Panichi's Book of the Week

### Lower School



#### **The Last Seaweed Pie - Wendy Shurety & Paddy Donnelly**

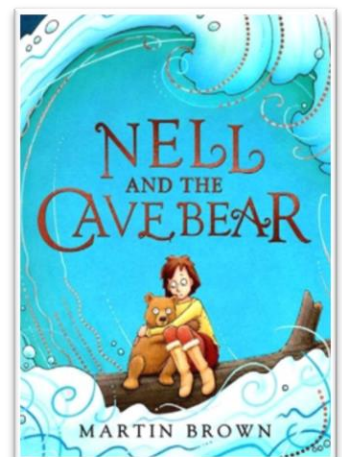
This delightful book serves as a fantastic introduction to environmental care and emphasizes the importance of avoiding plastic waste and litter. The Treeple dwell high among the branches. They enjoy constructing stick houses, climbing alongside lemurs, and baking papaya pies. But above all, the Treeple have a passion for creating. In contrast, the Seaple live deep in the ocean. They love building homes from shells, swimming with fish, and preparing seaweed pie. However, what they cherish most is observing nature. While the Treeple aren't inherently bad, they tend to act without consideration. They create items without pondering their necessity and, when land becomes scarce, they think it's a good idea to dispose of their waste in the ocean. This leads to trouble for the Seaple. The Seaple

respond by reusing and recycling the things that the Treeple have thrown away. This story provides a wonderful opportunity for discussion and encourages children to think creatively about how everyday items can be reused, recycled, and repurposed. Paddy Donnelly's beautiful illustrations enhance the story's atmosphere, bringing the worlds of the Treeple and Seaple to life, with engaging characters throughout. Additionally, the back of the book offers suggestions on how everyone can become an ocean hero and help keep our seas and beaches pristine. Plus, 3% of the cover price is donated to the Marine Conservation Society.

### Upper School

#### **Nell and the Cave Bear - Martin Brown**

Nell lives in a cave with her clan, and her best friend is a small cave bear who will grow into a massive creature. One day, Nell overhears the adults discussing plans to give Cave Bear away to another clan, and she's devastated. Determined to protect her friend, she decides to escape with him. They journey along the stream from their village, hoping to find a safe haven. Along the way, they encounter mammoths, unfriendly clans, and a fierce little wildcat. Throughout their adventure, Nell is determined to find a way to stay with Cave Bear. This enchanting story blends gentle humor with a light touch of adventure. The illustrations, rendered in soothing blue tones, enhance the narrative and its playful moments. It also references well-loved stories like Bear Hunt and Winnie the Pooh. The concluding pages provide tips on caring for a cave bear, which might be the most delightful part. Martin Brown, known for his work on the Horrid





Histories series, infuses the book with a playful wit. Ultimately, this is a touching tale of friendship and the first installment in a series featuring Nell and her beloved Cave Bear.

### Mr Slinn's Art Exhibition

This week an art exhibition was set up in school ahead of the Lower School and Upper School Parents' Evenings. The display included lots of the amazing work that the children have been creating over the last 12 months. Every 'Artist of the Week' from the 2023-2024 academic year, from both Lower School and Upper School, had their work on display and it was great to see the exhibition being received so positively by the many people who encountered it. The work on show was diverse, with sculptures, paintings, sketches and many other styles of Art on display.

There was also a wide range of Olympic themed projects on show during the exhibition from different year groups in the school. It was clear that the children are working very hard on the projects that they are being set and are taking pride in the work that they are producing. We look forward to seeing more projects from the children in the future.







Your sincerely,

*M. Singh*

Mr M Singh  
Headteacher

**Dates**

14 & 16 October 2024

16 October 2024

25 October 2024

Year 3 visit to Birmingham City Centre

Year 5 visit Guru Nanak Nishkam Sewak Jatha Gurdwara

Teacher Training day