

17 January 2025

MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

***'Those who are at war with others are not at peace with themselves.'* - William Hazlitt**

Dear Parents/Carers,

A key component of our education offer revolves around bridging the word gap. At William Murdoch Primary School, we are dedicated to tackling social inequality by ensuring that every child has the chance to experience 'the best that is' in our world. A key part of this mission is our emphasis on developing cultural capital and expanding vocabulary across all subjects. By introducing students to the vital knowledge and creativity that form the foundation of an educated society, we help them recognise human accomplishments and reach their full potential.

Studies show that a 'word gap' can emerge between disadvantaged children and their peers even before they enter school, with serious consequences for literacy, academic achievement, behaviour, and mental health. To close this gap, we prioritise phonics and reading instruction, nurture a love for language, and actively involve parents in supporting their children's education. Our curriculum includes high-quality texts, guided reading, phonics and spelling programmes, and a structured approach to vocabulary development that includes explicit teaching of Tier 2 and Tier 3 words.

We are equally passionate about celebrating diversity and exploring the richness of ethnic, cultural, and linguistic traditions in both our school and the wider community. Through carefully designed lessons, literature and art, we inspire students to appreciate diversity and embrace inclusivity.

I have written on a number of occasions on the importance of reading. It is the cornerstone of the curriculum offer at William Murdoch and we look for every opportunity to build reading fluency. Did you know that by simply turning on subtitles when watching programmes means your child will read a staggering number of words? Put them on and your child will read the equivalent number of words that are in all the Harry Potter books, all of the Lord of the Rings, all of the Chronicles of Narnia and everything Roald Dahl wrote, combined!



Research has shown that it can double the chance of your child leaving school as a proficient reader. You can turn them on for the whole family or most streaming services will now allow you to do it just for children's profiles. Perhaps, after all, there is a magic button...

A Magical Morning with Jack and the Beanstalk

This week, our Lower School children were treated to an unforgettable performance of Jack and the Beanstalk, brought to life by a visiting theatre company. The talented performers captivated their young audience with humour, energy and a touch of magic, delivering a delightful rendition of this classic tale.

The children were thoroughly engaged, laughing along with the antics of Jack and his friends, gasping at the towering giant, and cheering for the happy-ever-after ending. We are so pleased to have been able to offer this experience, and we thank the theatre company for bringing the magic of live theatre to our school. Judging by the smiles and excited chatter, it's safe to say this panto was a huge hit!





Parent/Carer Autism Awareness Course

The Communication and Autism Team (CAT) are running an awareness course for parents/carers of autistic children or of children on the Neurodevelopmental pathway. The course has been designed for parents who want to increase their understanding of autism. The sessions will be delivered virtually via Microsoft Teams; a link will be sent to you a few days before each session. Each session will last for 2 hours. For further information, please see the attached leaflet.

Parental Concerns

If you have any concerns about your child or feel that you need to speak to someone about their learning, behaviour or anything else you feel is important, please make sure that your first port of call is their teacher. This will be the person who knows your child best and is most likely to be able to help you. You can see the teacher at the end of the day when children are being dismissed or contact them through Class Dojo (please allow up to 48 hours for a response). Should you need further help, each year group has a Team Leader who will also know your child well and will be able to help. Team Leaders take responsibility for all aspects of the children's learning and behaviour within their year groups. This is the best way to resolve any matters quickly and efficiently.



JusTalk Kids

JusTalk Kids is an alternative version of the JusTalk app, aimed at an audience aged 13 and under. As that upper age limit suggests, this social networking platform is intended to be suitable for youngsters, providing them with a space of their own to interact with a community their own age. Unfortunately, there are still risks associated with JusTalk Kids, so it's vitally important for parents to understand the potential dangers for those who use the app. The attached guide delves into the most prominent online safety concerns of JusTalk Kids, while also letting you know how to ensure that children can be protected, should they wish to create an account.

GameFinder: Age Related Gaming

Finding games for children that are appropriate for their age, which also work on the devices the children use and the children will actually enjoy playing, can be a minefield. Particularly when parents are being bombarded with the 'but everyone else is playing this game' script! GameFinder is a new and free service available from Taming Gaming which can help parents identify the most suitable games for their child, depending on factors such as how old they are, what devices they have and what types of games they like to play. The answers to these filters enable GameFinder to provide an instant list of recommendations. To use GameFinder, please visit: <https://www.taminggaming.com/en-gb/gameFinder>



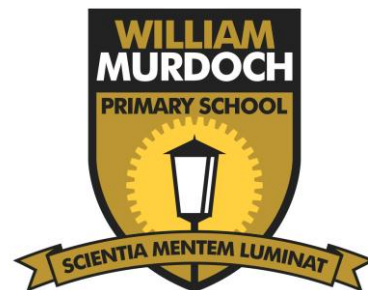
Our Communication to You

Please take the time to read emails sent to you. We try to make sure that everything you are sent relates to your child, so nothing is irrelevant. If you would like further information on any email we send, please contact the class teacher or the school office for assistance. We also encourage you to follow us on Twitter as we post reminders, useful information, and live updates from school and other community events of interest. Don't miss out, or let your child miss out. Please also keep up to date with everything William Murdoch via Class Dojo.

WILLIAM MURDOCH PRIMARY SCHOOL

ANTROBUS ROAD, HANDSWORTH, BIRMINGHAM, B21 9NT TEL: **0121 554 0999** FAX: 0121 554 6332
EMAIL: enquiry@williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk WEB: www.williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk
HEADTEACHER: MR M. SINGH

KNOWLEDGE LIGHTS UP THE MIND



Healthy Snacks

A reminder that children are not permitted to eat unhealthy snacks in school. They will instead be asked to save their snack to eat after school. This also applies to junk food in packed lunches. There is some excellent packed lunch advice and recipes within the following link: <https://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/recipes/healthier-lunchboxes/>.



Aston Villa's Football School

Aston Villa Foundation are offering an opportunity for children aged 2 - 16 to attend **x1 FREE FOOTBALL SESSION**.

The sessions will take place at a range of locations:

- Aston Soccer School - **Aston Villa FC City Academy**
- Bartley Green Soccer School - **King Edwards Five Ways**
- Sutton Coldfield Soccer School - **Sutton Coldfield Town FC**
- Harborne Soccer School - **Lordwood Girls Academy**
- Solihull Soccer School - **St Peter's Catholic School**



To redeem your child's free space, please complete the below form or scan the above QR code.

[1FREE FOOTBALL SESSION | Aston Villa Foundation](#)



ASTON VILLA
FOUNDATION



UNICEF Article of the Week

This week, pupils across the school have looked at:

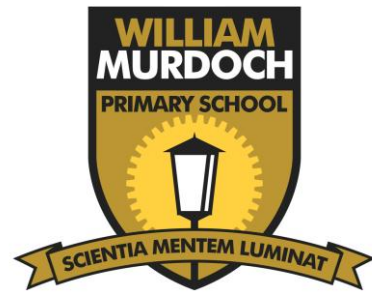
Making Rights Happen

The Convention on the Rights of the Child brings together a range of rights that all children aged under 18 are entitled to, no matter who they are or where they are born. These rights ensure that all children are given the support they need to develop and reach their potential and are protected from harm. Governments across the world have signed up to the CRC and have promised to make the rights within the CRC a reality for children in their country and a number of articles specifically mention what governments must do to make rights happen.

WILLIAM MURDOCH PRIMARY SCHOOL

ANTROBUS ROAD, HANDSWORTH, BIRMINGHAM, B21 9NT TEL: **0121 554 0999** FAX: 0121 554 6332
EMAIL: enquiry@williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk WEB: www.williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk
HEADTEACHER: MR M. SINGH

KNOWLEDGE LIGHTS UP THE MIND



Article 1 makes clear that everyone under the age of 18 has all the rights in the Convention.

Article 4 states that governments must do all they can to make sure every child can enjoy their rights by creating systems and passing laws that promote and protect children's rights.

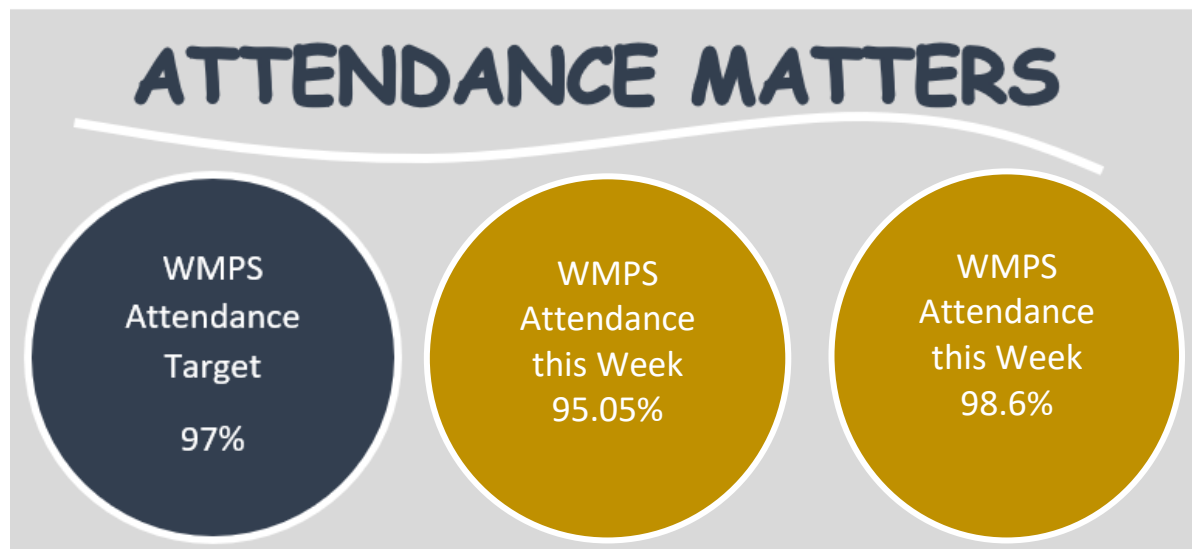
Article 41 states that if a country has laws and standards that go further than the present Convention, then the country must keep these laws.

Pupils across the school thought about their rights and why they matter and considered what must be done to make rights happen for all children.



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.

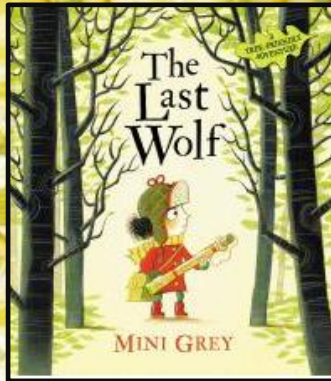


WILLIAM MURDOCH PRIMARY SCHOOL

ANTROBUS ROAD, HANDSWORTH, BIRMINGHAM, B21 9NT TEL: **0121 554 0999** FAX: 0121 554 6332
EMAIL: enquiry@williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk WEB: www.williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk
HEADTEACHER: MR M. SINGH

Mr Panichi's Book of the Week

Lower School



The Last Wolf – *Mini Grey*

A great picture book with a fabulous twist. Little Red's mother is sanguine when her daughter declares that she is off to the forest to catch a wolf. After all, none has been seen for a hundred years or more. As Little Red wends her way through the Autumnal wood she happens upon the home of the Last Wolf in the land who introduces her to the Last Lynx and the Last Bear. Together they tell her about the days when there were miles of verdant forest to run through and food to eat. Once she understands the planet's plight, Little Red comes up with a solution although she knows it will take a long time to come to fruition. A green take on the Red Riding Hood tale illustrated with humour.

Upper School



A Thief in the Village – *James Berry*

These short stories are vignettes of Jamaican village life, full of the rhythms of Caribbean speech. The stories treat of relationships between weak and strong, between generations and among young people. The themes are universal and there is a strong sense of culture and place. The reader also has an awareness of the stories continuing after the last words that appear on the page. Did the boys eventually capture the mongoose from Elias? Did Fanzo go in search of his father and brothers and sisters?

Mr Slinn's Artist of the Week

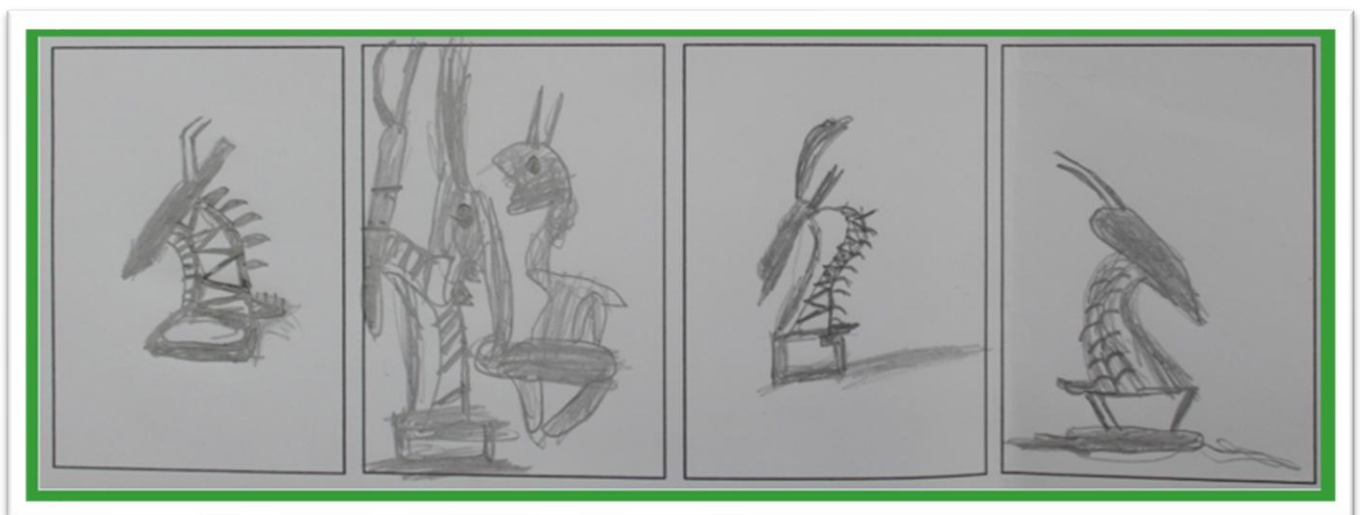
Nursery

In Nursery the children have been reading 'Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?' and had lots of fun listening to the story! Through reading this story the children have increased their understanding in relation to a range of different animals. Nursery explored how they could use different materials to create images of some of the animals within the book and had lots of fun being experimental and creative.



Mehdi Y5.3

In Year 5 the children have started a new unit of work based on African Art. The children learnt that the Bamana peoples, who are often from Mali, believe Chiwara is a spirit who taught their people the art of farming. They learnt that Chiwara takes the form of a creature who is half man and half like an antelope. Year 5 also learnt that headdresses, representing Chiwara, are used in a ceremony to honour the spirit. The children created sketches of a number of headdresses and some of the outcomes were excellent. Mehdi produced a great piece of work with brilliant attention to detail.




Pupil of the Week

Well done to our Year 1 and Year 6 pupils, for becoming this week's 'Pupil of the Week'.

Year 1

Effort



Areeba Sajid Y1.1

Arman Khosa Y1.2

Amarveer Singh Y1.3

Year 6

Effort

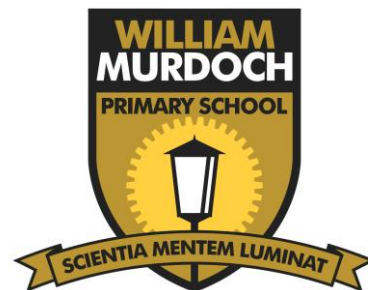


Anayah Ali Y6.1

Mansirat Kaur Y6.2

Romeo Kumar Y6.3

KNOWLEDGE LIGHTS UP THE MIND



Many thanks for your continued support, cooperation and understanding.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Singh'.

Mr M Singh
Headteacher

Dates

21 January 2025	Reception Police visit
24 January 2025	Year 4.2 Healthy Eating Assembly
24 January 2025	Reception Good Work Assembly
30 January 2025	Chinese New Year workshops for Year 2 and Year 4
30 January 2025	Reception visit from West Midlands Fire Service

WILLIAM MURDOCH PRIMARY SCHOOL

ANTROBUS ROAD, HANDSWORTH, BIRMINGHAM, B21 9NT TEL: **0121 554 0999** FAX: 0121 554 6332
EMAIL: enquiry@williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk WEB: www.williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk
HEADTEACHER: MR M. SINGH