

3 October 2025

MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

"Be a little kinder than you have to." – E. Bennett

Dear Parents/Carers,

It is starting to feel like Autumn now, with some misty mornings and a tinge of amber and brown being visible on the leaves of the trees. The first half of the Autumn Term is now very much in full swing, with outdoor Forest School sessions taking place weekly for Reception, Year 3 and Year 5 children, ably led by Mr Blackmore. In Forest School sessions, children have the opportunity to experience the local habitat, to be creative and to problem-solve together as a team. We will continue all of our approaches to skills development, in classrooms and in the outdoor areas this term, to ensure that we provide the very best experiences for our children.

At William Murdoch Primary School, the impact of our curriculum is centred on ensuring that pupils know more, remember more, and are well-prepared for the next stage of their education. This is achieved through a rich and challenging curriculum, a range of assessment tools such as pupil voice, learning walks and coaching activities, which all contribute to our continuous improvement cycle. We assess pupils using low-stakes quizzes, retrieval practice and formal tests, ensuring interventions where needed to close learning gaps. Regular feedback supports understanding, while wide reading and strong mathematical proficiency underpin key curriculum areas. Special Educational Needs pupils and disadvantaged pupils are prioritised to achieve accelerated progress and successful outcomes.

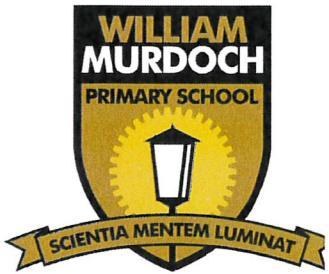
School Council

The School Council at William Murdoch Primary School is an elected body that meets regularly to discuss matters of direct concern to pupils and school. It consists of a pupil member from each class, who has been democratically decided upon to represent the children in their class. These members have already taken part in their first School Council meeting of the academic year, where various topics were discussed. It was found that pupils feel happy at school and have settled into their new classes well. The behaviour curriculum was also discussed and children believe that it is working well in school. The School Council body will continue to meet every half-term and discuss issues that arise within school and the UNICEF Articles.

Linden Dance Group Inspires Pupils with Powerful Performance on Loneliness

On Monday 29 September, our school welcomed the renowned Linden Dance Group for a moving and visually striking performance inspired by the loneliness epidemic currently affecting the UK. Drawing from real-life stories gathered through community projects, the production featured four talented performers exploring themes of entrapment and safety; all set within and around a dramatic 4-metre-high metal birdcage.

KNOWLEDGE LIGHTS UP THE MIND



Many pupils were captivated by the performance, with several expressing a keen interest in joining dance groups and exploring movement as a form of expression. It was wonderful to see such enthusiasm and curiosity sparked by the experience.

As a school, we believe in the importance of introducing children to a wide range of artistic experiences. These performances not only highlight important social issues but also give pupils the opportunity to experience something new; encouraging empathy, creativity, and personal growth through the arts. It was a truly inspiring day, and we look forward to welcoming more opportunities that ignite imagination and open minds.



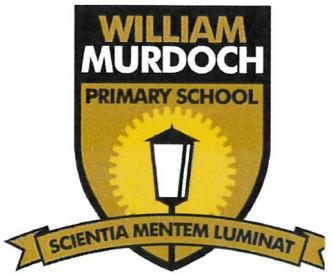
National Poetry Day

National Poetry Day is a UK-wide celebration of poetry that takes place annually on the first Thursday of each October. The aim is to encourage everyone to enjoy, discover and share poetry. In school, poetry work was completed in each class and everyone got to listen to some wonderful pieces of poetry. For example, Year 4 recited the poem 'The Moon' by Robert Louis Stevenson, Year 1 started learning the poem 'Are You Curious?' by Gwen Jones, whilst Year 5's wrote Haikus about the different seasons. It was a day filled with creativity, inspiration, and the magic of words.

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We want to extend our heartfelt gratitude to all who made National Poetry Day at our school a success. Their enthusiasm and love for poetry truly shone through. As we reflect on this day, let's continue to encourage our young poets to explore the world of literature, express their thoughts, and embrace the magic of words in their everyday lives.

Here are some lovely pictures from the day.



Harvest Donations Deadline Extended to Monday 6 October 2025

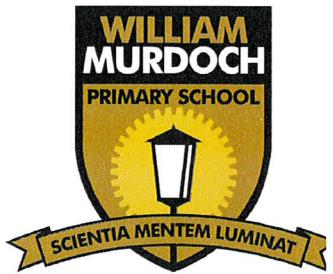
With food poverty an increasing issue for many families up and down the country, the annual WMPS harvest donation to local food banks and charities is more important than ever. We are asking all children to bring in some non-perishable food items such as: tins, packets, pasta, cereal, biscuits, etc. Please do not send in any perishable items as their life span is not long enough for when the food will be distributed. Many thanks in advance for supporting this initiative.

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Pupil Data Collection Sheets

We are currently updating our systems and pupil records to ensure that we have the most up-to-date information. Last week, all pupils were sent home with their Data Collection Sheets. Please take your time to check through the information carefully and amend where necessary.

All adults who are responsible for your child must be included on the form, alongside their relationship to your child. As part of the school's safeguarding procedures, we have implemented a 'Password' policy. If anyone would like to change their password or they have forgotten it, please see the Main Office. All medical conditions that your child may have, including allergies, must be included on the form.

Please ensure that you provide an email address that you check on a regular basis, as this is the school's main method of communication.

Any outstanding Pupil Data Collection Sheets will need to be completed and returned when you attend your Parents' Evening appointment.

Parents' Evening

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.

The Lower School Parents' Evening will take place on Monday 6 October 2025 with the Upper School Parents' Evening being held on Wednesday 8 October 2025. Appointments for parents' evening are for 5 minutes. If you have a particular concern that may take longer than this to discuss, please see your child's class teacher and arrange an appointment at another time.

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).

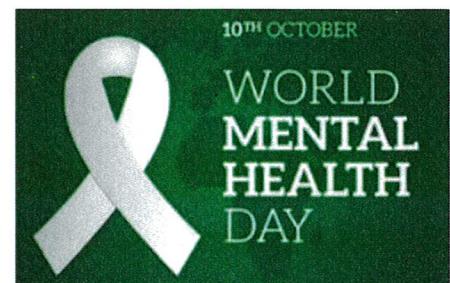
World Mental Health Day

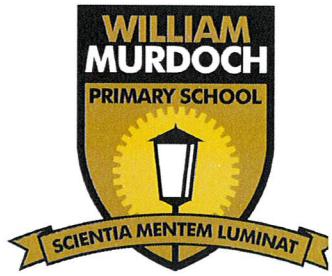
On Friday 10 October 2025 it is World Mental Health Day. World Mental Health Day is a chance for us all to talk about mental health in general, how we need to look after it, and how important it is to talk about things and get help if you are struggling.

Below are links to more information about Mental Health Day and ideas of things you can do with your children to help them feel good.

<https://www.annafreud.org/>

<https://mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/media/1822/poster-pupils-wmhd.pdf>





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:

Monday 17 November 2025 at 9.30am

Monday 1 December 2025 at 9.30am

Thursday 8 January 2026 at 9.30am



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

Year 6 Pupils with SEND

This QR code (for parents of Year 6 pupils with SEND) is great for families who are attending open days/evenings for secondary school transition. It gives suggestions of what questions to ask the SEND department.

<https://www.senschoolsguide.com/post/what-to-ask-a-senco>



Children's Oral Health

Colgate® cares about the future of Children's Oral Health which is why our Bright Smiles, Bright Futures programme will reach approximately 3.2 million children in the UK this year, ensuring that every young person has equal access to fundamental Oral Health products'.

To help facilitate outstanding oral hygiene we are inviting parents/carers to access our digital pack via the following link: <https://bsbf-getinvolved.uk/parents/>

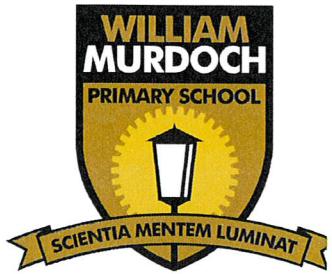
By completing the short form you'll:

- Have access to educational materials to help guide your child
- Receive a coupon for Oral Care products (redeemable one per person)
- Boost your child's confidence

Measles Information & Advice

There has been a recent increase in Measles cases across the West Midlands. Measles is highly infectious and can lead to serious health complications, especially in children under 1, pregnant women, and people with a weakened immune system. Outbreaks can happen when not enough people have been immunised.

To find out further information on the signs, symptoms and actions to take if you think that you or your child might have measles, visit <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/measles/>



School Aged Immunisations

The NHS has developed a leaflet that offers advice and explains immunisations that all children are offered during their time at school. For further information see the attached leaflet or visit, [BCHC website](#)

Nasal Flu Vaccine

A reminder that Flu Vaccine Forms are to be returned to the class teacher on **Friday 10 October 2025**.

UNICEF Article of the Week



International Day of Peace

This week's article of the week has focused on International Day of Peace. Peace Day provides a globally shared date for all humanity to commit to peace above all differences and to contribute to building a culture of peace. Peace, human rights and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are all closely connected because building a peaceful world needs all people everywhere to have their rights protected and respected, to have the resources they need and to live and thrive in a clean, safe environment. For this to happen, we need stable, caring governments making decisions and working together to ensure the safety of people and the planet.

Pupils across the school have looked at **article 38** which is war and armed conflicts and focuses on how governments must not allow children under the age of 15 to take part in war or join the armed forces. Governments must do everything they can to protect and care for children affected by war and armed conflict.



Article 39 which is recovery from trauma and reintegration and focuses on children who have experienced neglect, abuse, exploitation, torture or who are victims of war must receive special support to help them recover their health, dignity, self-respect and social life.

Attendance

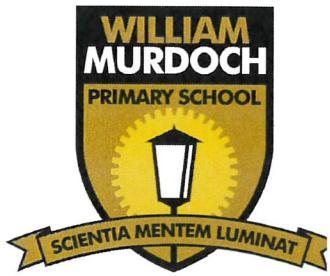
Attendance has been very good so far this term. Thank you for your help in making sure that your children attend school and arrive on time. Although we continue to maintain a soft start to the day, punctuality is vitally important. All school doors close at 8.50am. Any children arriving after that time will need to enter via the Main Office and will be signed in as late. Children undertake important learning first thing in the morning and it can be unsettling for children who arrive late. If your child is unable to attend school, it is extremely important that you inform the school of this before 9.00am on the day of absence. Please either email the school at enquiry@williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk or leave a message on the absence line, giving your child's name, class and a brief reason for absence. If we are not informed of a reason for an absence, it will be recorded as unauthorised.

Please also arrive promptly to collect your child(ren) at the end of the day.

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If your child is booked on a club and will not be attending for any reason, it is really important that you, and not your child, speak to a member of the office staff before the club is due to start. This is for safeguarding reasons. Thank you in advance for your cooperation and support.

Nursery/Reception Places for September 2025

There remain a limited number of Nursery and Reception places for this academic year. If you have a child (or know of a friend or family member who has a child) who is born between 1/09/2021 and 31/08/2022 (Nursery) or 1/09/2020 and 31/08/2021 (Reception), we strongly encourage you to apply as spaces are strictly limited. Please register your interest by either telephoning the Main Office on 0121 554 0999 or via email on enquiry@williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk. We are more than happy to help with completing the application process.



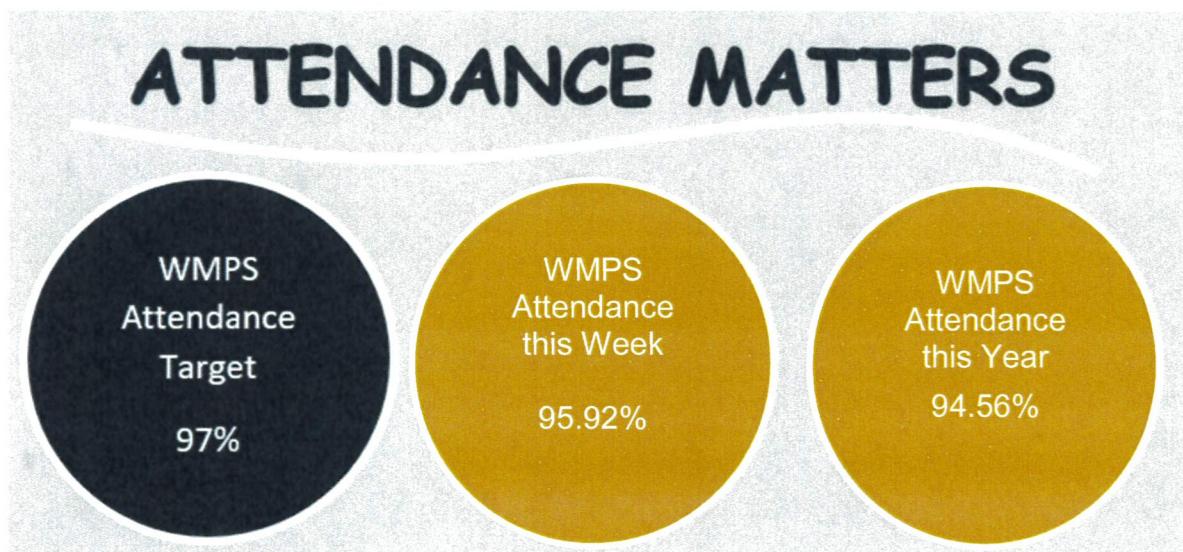
Year 6 Parents - Secondary Transfer

You will be aware that your child is due to transfer to secondary school in September 2026. The school has shared an information letter from the Local Authority for parents/carers on how to apply online.

Please refer to the website <http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/schooladmissions> where you can find further information. Your application must be submitted by **Wednesday 31 October 2025**.

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.

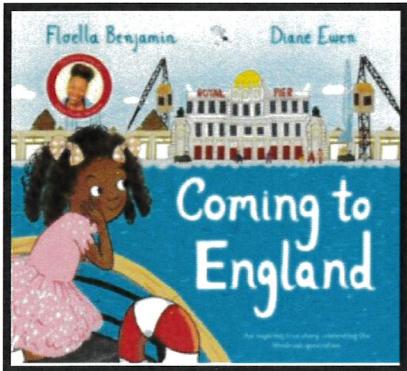


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Mr Panichi's Book of the Week

Lower School

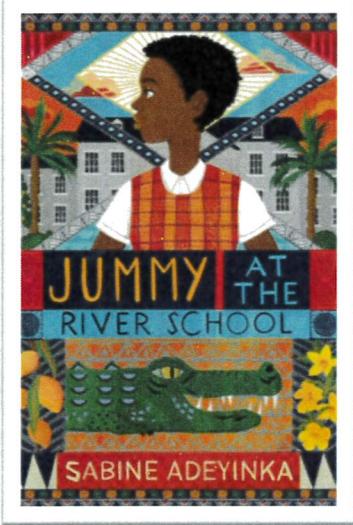


Coming to England - Floella Benjamin Diane Ewen (illustrator)

Baroness Floella Benjamin turns her autobiography, of the same name, into a book for children. Filled with optimism and joy, yet deeply personal and relevant, young children will follow Floella's experiences of moving home and making friends. Alongside vibrant illustrations by Diane Ewen, this powerful story shows little people how courage and determination can always overcome adversity.



Upper School



Jummy at the River School - Sabine Adeyinka

Jummy at the River School is an immersive introduction to life at boarding school in 1990s Nigeria. Many of the themes of friendship and bravery and justice are universal, but the vividly described River School setting, and Jummy's own unique voice, make the story sing. Jumoke has always dreamed of being accepted to Nigeria's best girls boarding school, and the reality is everything she hoped for. The grounds are beautiful, her dorm mates take her under their wing, and before long she is caught up in a whirlwind of midnight feasts, picnics, school songs and working hard to win the house prize. Everything seems perfect, the only fly in the ointment stuck-up Bolaji who thinks she is better than everyone else. However, it is not long before Jummy finds that, to her surprise, her best friend from back home, Caro, is also at the River School. Jummy's initial elation turns to confusion when she realises that Caro; brave, funny, clever Caro; is there as a maid to the matron, to work not

learn. Jummy decides that everyone deserves the opportunities she has, and with the help of her new friends, resolves that there must be a way to help Caro join them at school....

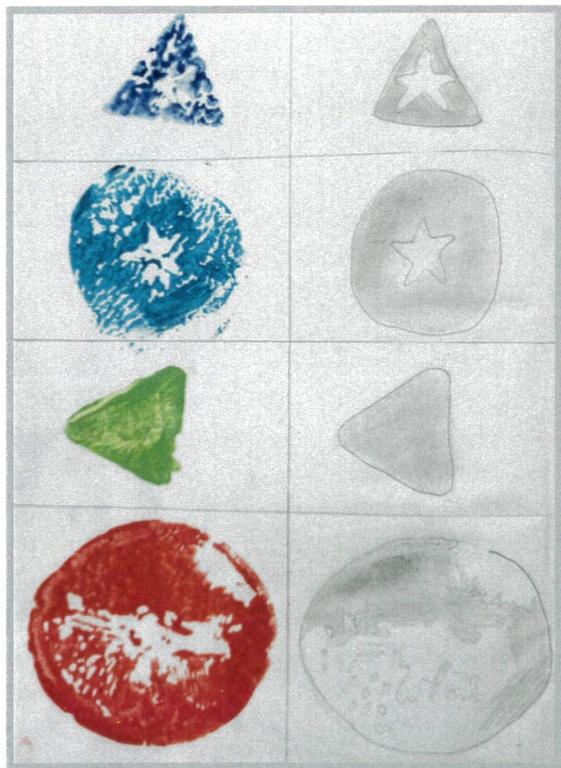
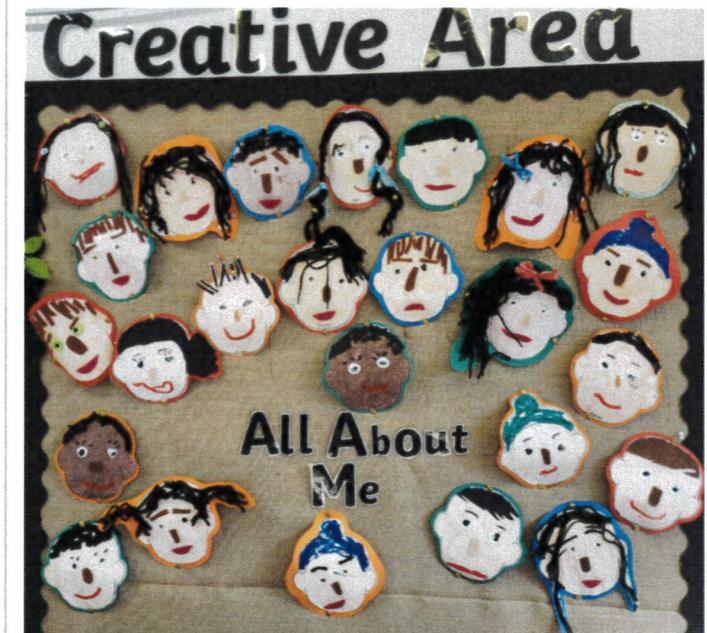
Suitable across the Key Stage 2 age range, Jummy at the River School is very accessibly written, with short chapters averaging 8 pages and large, well-spaced text that is easy on the eye. The underlying poverty and class differences affecting Jummy, Caro and Bolaji are never shied away from but also never overwhelm the joyful nature of the story and the light-footed writing that keep you wanting to turn the next page. Perfect for fans of school stories linked to Africa, Jummy at the River School is as juicy and sweet and captivating as Caro's favourite agbalumo fruit.



Mr Slinn's Artist of the Week

Nursery

In Nursery the children have been thinking about their identities and the special characteristics that they have in the 'All About Me' unit. The children created self portraits and used lots of materials in a very creative way! The work that was produced was then put on display and the outcomes were excellent!



Jiya – Y6.1

During the start of Year 6 the children have been finding out about different types of printmaking and how many artists work in this area. The children had a go at creating their own prints using pieces of fruit and the final results were excellent. The children even had the opportunity to replicate the prints in the form of pencil sketches. Jiya put a lot of effort into her work and added a great amount of detail.



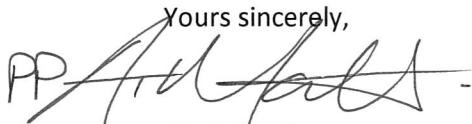
Pupil of the Week

Well done to our Year 4 pupils, Marwan, Musa and Antony for their hard work and effort this week. Keep it up!



Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,


Mr M Singh
Headteacher

Dates

6 October 2025	Lower School Parents' Evening
7 & 8 October 2025	Year 4 visit to Jethavana Buddhist Temple
8 October 2025	Upper School Parents' Evening
10 October 2025	Y6.1 Class Assembly, 8.55am-9.15am
10 October 2025	Year 1 Good Work Assembly, 2.50pm-3.10pm
15 & 16 October 2025	Year 3 visit to Birmingham City centre
17 October 2025	Year 2 Good Work Assembly, 8.55am-9.15am
17 October 2025	Y5.2 Class Assembly, 2.50pm-3.10pm
20-22 October 2025	Autumn Book Fair
23 October 2025	Year 4 Diwali Festival Assembly, 9.00am-9.45am
23 October 2025	Pupils break up for Half-Term
24 October 2025	Staff Training Day
3 November 2025	Pupils return to School