

10 October 2025

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,



Parents' Evening

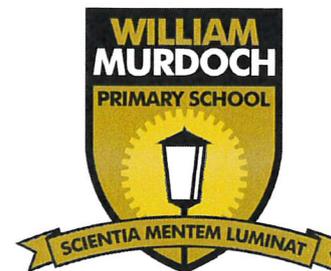
It was wonderful to see so many parents on Monday and Wednesday of this week for Lower School and Upper School Parents' Evenings respectively. I would like to pass on my thanks to all the staff who supported the parents' evenings.

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:

- 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!**

KNOWLEDGE LIGHTS UP THE MIND



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 7 November 2025 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>

Year 4 Visit to Jethavana Buddhist Viharaya Temple

On Tuesday and Wednesday this week, our Year 4 pupils had the enriching opportunity to visit the Jethavana Buddhist Viharaya Temple as part of their R.E. lessons, learning about world beliefs and cultures. The visit was a valuable chance to deepen their understanding of Buddhism in a real-world setting.

During the visit, the children were warmly welcomed by a resident monk who shared insights into his daily responsibilities and the spiritual practices observed at the temple. He also told the story of Siddhartha Gautama, who became known as the Buddha, and explained the core principles of Buddhism. One particularly interesting point discussed was that Buddhism is often considered more a philosophy or way of life than a religion, focusing on mindfulness, compassion, and personal growth.

The pupils engaged thoughtfully, asking insightful questions about the temple's history, the symbolism of its architecture and statues, and the teachings of the Buddha. Their curiosity and respectful demeanor were truly commendable.

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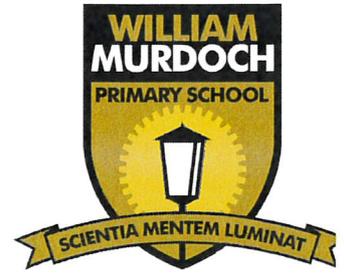


Parents of Year 6 Pupils - Open Mornings at King Edward VI Handsworth Grammar School for Boys
King Edward VI Handsworth Grammar School are holding Open Mornings which are aimed at boys who have already sat their 11+ and still considering their secondary school options. Please see the attached leaflet for more information.

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Harvest Donations

I would like to express my heartfelt thanks for the very generous donations that we have received in school, this week and last. Your continued support, as always, is very much appreciated.

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).

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>



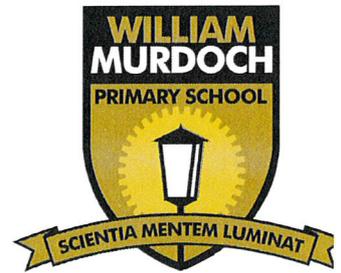
Children's Oral Health

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'.

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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



Free Bus Travel for Parents this October Half Term

Funded by the UK Government, West Midlands Bus are offering parents, guardians and carers all day, unlimited travel from 27 October until 2 November 2025. Applications are now open until **15 October 2025**. For more details on how to claim, please see the attached leaflet.

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](#)

UNICEF Article of the Week



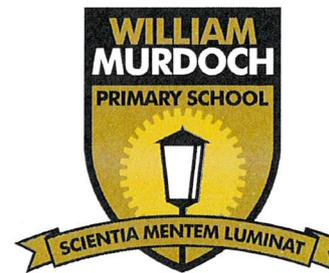
Black History Month

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.

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There is a different theme every year. The theme for 2025, is 'Standing Firm in Power and Pride,' which celebrates the strength and resilience of Black communities, recognising the ways in which Black people have resisted oppression, discrimination and prejudice throughout history. This year's theme is about correcting historical inaccuracies and telling the untold stories of the achievements of black people in the UK and around the world.

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.



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.

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.

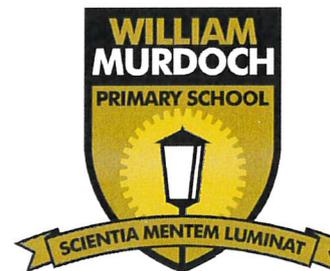
Nursery/Reception Places for September 2025

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.



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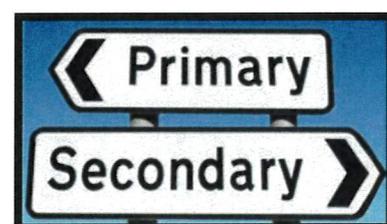


Year 6 Parents - Secondary Transfer

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.

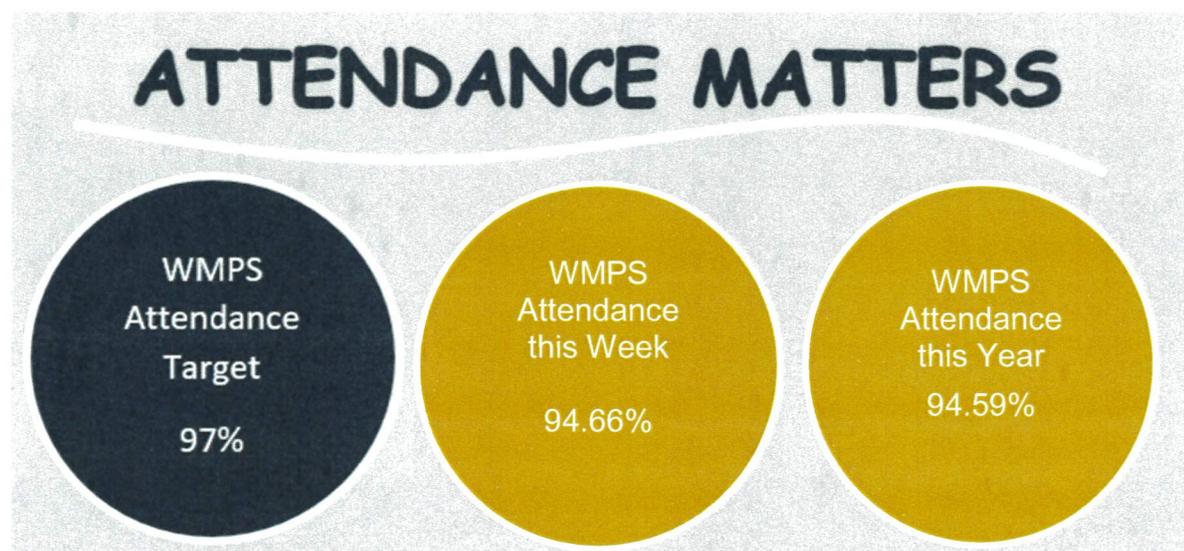
Please refer to the website

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



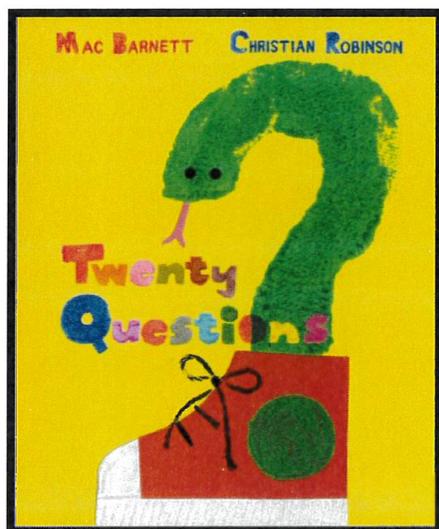
WMPS Attendance Stats

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.



Mr Panichi's Book of the Week

Lower School

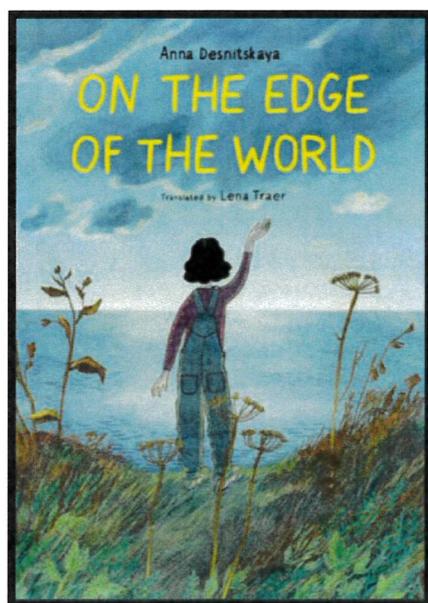


Twenty Questions – Mac Barnett & Christian Robinson (Illustrator)

Twenty Questions is an ideal book for sparking children's curiosity and encouraging them to think creatively. With twenty open-ended questions, it invites young readers to explore their imagination, offering endless possibilities for answers. In true Mac Barnett style, some pages will have readers laughing out loud, while others will inspire wonder and reflection.

The stunning illustrations by Christian Robinson bring each page to life, with vibrant colours and a story behind every image. This is a book children will want to return to again and again, sparking lively discussions and imaginative responses. Its simple yet brilliant concept means there are no wrong answers, making it perfect for the Foundation Stage and beyond.

Upper School



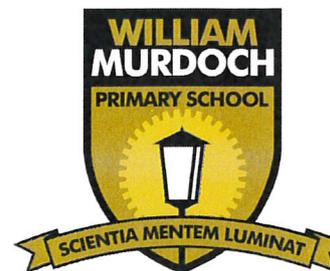
On the Edge of the World – Ben Brooks

On the Edge of the World is a beautifully crafted story that will capture both children's imaginations and hearts. It follows two lonely children. A girl from Russia and a boy from Chile who each feel as though they live on the very edge of the world, struggling to find connection.

What makes this book truly special is its interactive format: children can start reading from the front or the back, experiencing two parallel stories that meet in the middle when both children visit the beach and use their flashlights to send morse code messages across the ocean. This unique approach encourages curiosity, empathy, and thoughtful discussion about friendship and human connection.

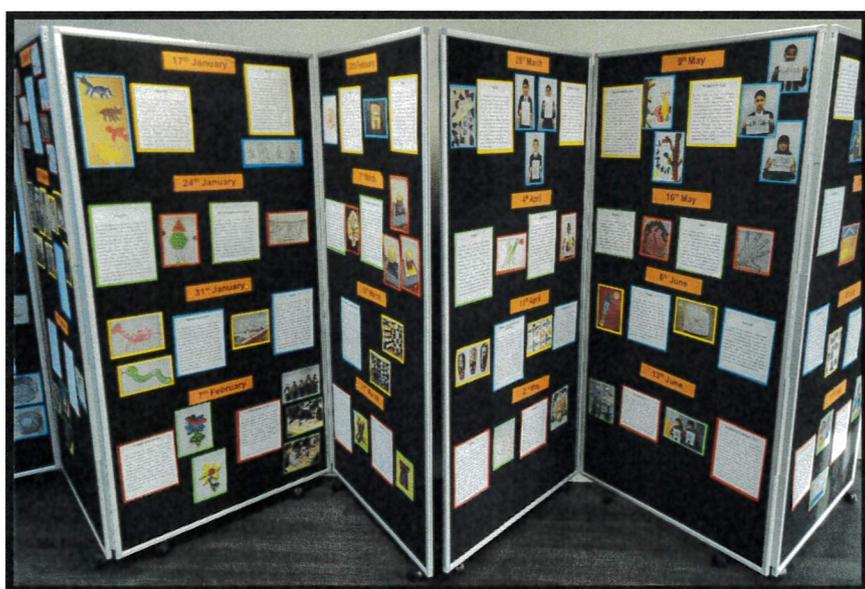
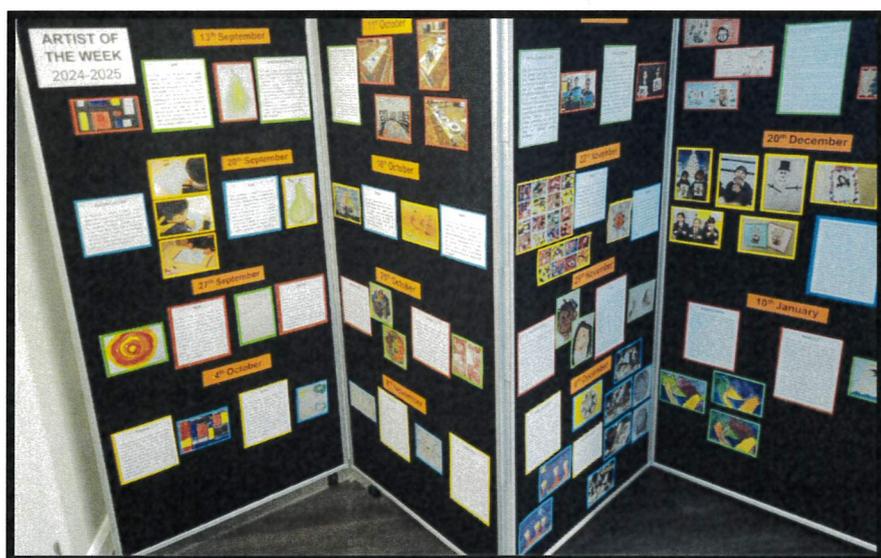
With its picture book format and graphic novel feel, the striking illustrations bring the story to life, making it visually engaging as well as emotionally resonant. It is a story filled with hope and the promise of connection—a comforting and inspiring read that parents will be proud to share. Perfect for Key Stage 2, On the Edge of the World is a must-have addition to any child's bookshelf, offering a tale that will be treasured.

KNOWLEDGE LIGHTS UP THE MIND



Mr Slinn's Artist Exhibition

At the start of the week a large scale art exhibition was set up in school ahead of the Lower School and Upper School Parents' Evenings. The display showcased lots of the incredible work that the children have been producing during the last twelve months. Every 'Artist of the Week' from the 2024-2025 academic year, from both Lower School and Upper School, had their work on display and it was wonderful to see the work being received so positively. The work on show was varied in nature, with paintings, prints, sculptures, sketches and many other art styles on display.



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Pupil of the Week

Well done to our Year 1 pupils, Leena, Noah and Tabassum for their hard work and effort this week.
Keep it up!



Leena – Y1.1



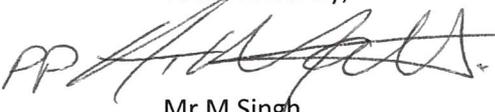
Noah – Y1.2



Tabassum – Y1.3

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,


Mr M Singh
Headteacher

Dates

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