

24 October 2025

MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

"Autumn is a second spring when every leaf is a flower." – Albert Camus

Dear Parents/Carers,

We have somehow raced to the end of the half-term. It has gone at a blistering pace and autumn is well and truly here, so it is the perfect time to go on a local family walk and enjoy the abundance of wildlife in our local parks during the half-term break. If you would like to stretch further afield, the following link to the National Trust website will provide you with places to visit in the Midlands. Please make sure you check web pages for individual places before you travel for booking details and the most up to date information about visiting.

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/birmingham-west-midlands>



Miss A Virdi will sadly be leaving us at the end of this half-term. Miss Virdi joined the school as an ECT in September 2022 and has developed into an exceptional teacher; the pupils she has taught in Year 5 over the past three years have been very lucky to have such a dedicated and talented teacher. Everyone at William Murdoch wishes her the very best with the next chapter in her life and career.

Diwali Assembly

Year 4 led a wonderful assembly this morning to celebrate Diwali, the Festival of Lights. The children retold the epic story of Rama and Sita, capturing the audience with their portrayal of the 14-year exile, the dramatic battle against the demon king Ravana, and the joyful return to Ayodhya. Their performance was full of adventure, emotion, and excitement, with plenty of singing, expressive storytelling, and lively battle scenes.

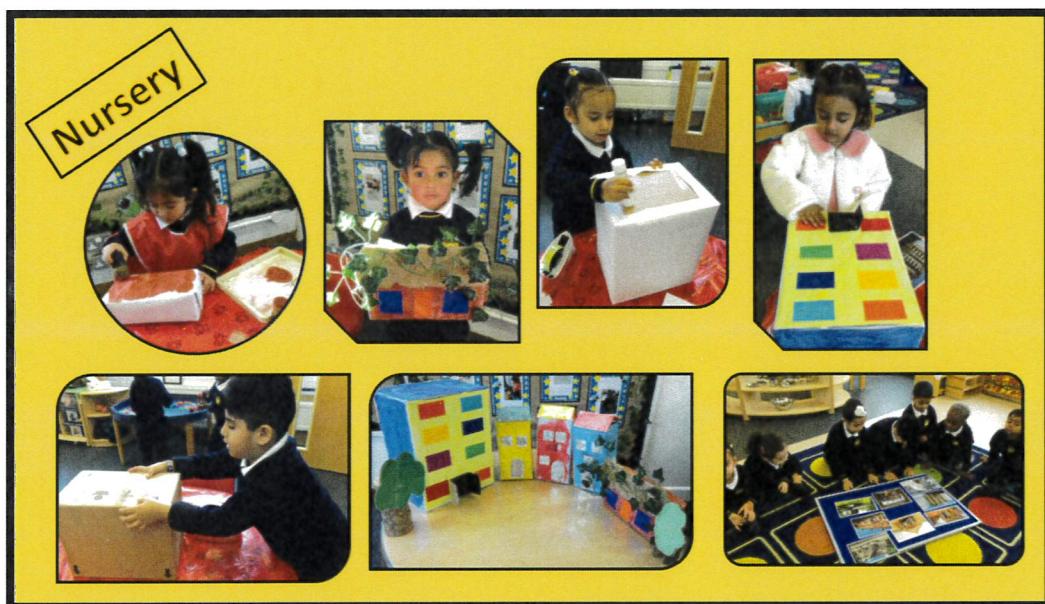
The assembly concluded with a traditional Indian stick dance, performed with great enthusiasm and coordination, followed by the symbolic lighting of lamps to mark the triumph of light over darkness. It was a joyful and memorable celebration that showcased the creativity and cultural appreciation of our Year 4 pupils.

Preparing children for a festival assembly is not an easy job, and it requires a lot of patience from the staff. Many thanks to Mr Panichi, Miss Begum, Mr Cooke, Mr Harris and Mrs Gaddu for all of their hard work organising and coordinating such a brilliant assembly!



DT Day

Our topic in **Nursery** this half term is 'All About Me'. We have been learning all about ourselves, our families and the area in which we live. We have been learning about different kinds of houses. For DT day, we used junk materials to create houses.



The children in **Reception** have designed and made pumpkin soup for DT day. They learnt the importance of what ingredients were and developed their fine motor skills by cutting a range of different vegetables for their soup. All the children enjoyed eating their pumpkin soup: "it was delicious"!



Year 1



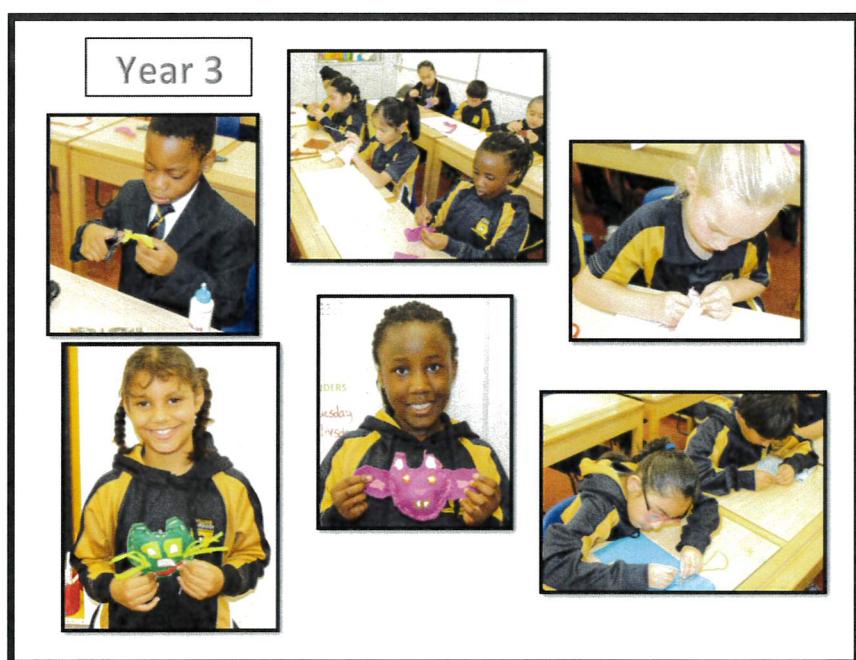
During DT day, **Year 1** made jam tarts. The children discussed the recipe and designed their jam tarts before making them. They all worked as a team to sort, measure and prepare the ingredients. Each child had the opportunity to mix, roll and cut their dough before adding jam to their tarts. Once the jam tarts were cooked the children tasted and evaluated them. The children enjoyed the day and were all very excited to have the chance at becoming a chef for the day. The jam tarts were very tasty, and all the children should be very proud of themselves.

Run, run as fast as you can... you can't catch me I'm the ginger bread man... but Year 2 did!

Year 2 became bakers for the day... The children got stuck in and began their day researching about the origin of gingerbread and understanding that ginger is a spice. The fun began when the fingers came out to pour the flour and mix the ingredients together; the flour was everywhere but so were the smiles. The smell of the gingerbread lingered throughout the corridors, which left mouths watering. The children thoroughly enjoyed icing their gingerbread friends and adding many sweet treats. The gingerbread was scrumptious and the day was sweet!



In **Year 3**, the children honed their sewing skills by designing and creating beautiful stuffed bauble decorations. Whether for a Christmas gift or a personal keepsake, each child worked hard to bring their designs to life. Though the task was tricky at times, everyone enjoyed the challenge and got to practice this invaluable skill while having lots of fun!



Our **Year 4** pupils had a blast on their Design and Technology day, turning their imaginations into reality! After researching various cushion designs and purposes, the children embarked on a creative journey using appliquéd. They skilfully added their designs or patterns to their cushions using a whipstitch, showcasing their artistic flair. Next, they expertly sewed the front and back pieces together using a running stitch. Before filling their cushions with soft stuffing. They finished their creations with a backstitch, ensuring a neat and professional look. This hands-on activity not only fostered creativity but also enhanced the children's fine motor skills and provided a therapeutic end to the half-term.

Year 4



Year 5



The children in **Year 5** have been creating bags as their DT task for this half-term. Time was spent researching different types of bags and considering the differing properties of each. Once the children had done some research they then created a design for a bag of their own. Year 5 thought about how materials could be used in an effective way to produce their bag. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed making their bags and the final results were great. Materials were used thoughtfully and the children ensured that their bags would be fit for purpose.

Year 6 worked in groups to make a water wall. They carefully looked at each other's designs and decided which elements to take from each of them to make the wall. The containers that were used were attached to a plastic mesh which was tied/suspended from another structure such as a fence/wall. The water travelled downwards through the tubes and was collected at the bottom. We were all so proud of our purposeful water walls!

Year 6



WMPS Book Fair

It was time once again for a much-loved tradition at our school, the arrival of the Book Fair. After the huge success of last year's event, which was a hit with pupils, families, and staff, we invited Primary Books to return. Again this year, we recreated a full-scale Book Event that lasted over three days.

During these days, children took part in engaging storytelling workshops inspired by the cultures of Africa. They sang, chatted, and dressed in traditional outfits before listening to stories from these regions. The excitement was clear, with long lines of children eagerly waiting after school each day to buy new books. We're incredibly thankful to everyone who helped make this event possible. It was a fantastic experience for the children and the school as a whole. Thanks to your support, we've been able to purchase over £600 worth of books, which will now be used to enrich lessons and learning for all pupils.



Aston Villa Mixed Football League Event

On Tuesday this week, Mr Walker took 8 members of the school football team to a mixed league event at Aston Villa Football Club's inner-city academy. The team performed very well in all of their fixtures, securing one win, three draws and one defeat. Goals from Cairo, Elijah and Mikesh helped them on their way to 6 points, with the second round of league fixtures coming up after half-term.



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. The donations have been shared with the Handsworth Association of Schools.



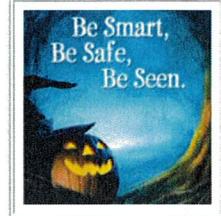


Clocks Go Back

Clocks will go back an hour in the United Kingdom in the early hours of Sunday 26 October. This will mark the end of British Summer Time.

Trick or Treating

We have been asked by the Police to encourage parents and carers not to allow their children to go Trick or Treating unsupervised. This can cause unnecessary stress and can be very frightening to members of the community. Thank you for your support.



School Meals

We ask that parents settle all outstanding balances on ParentPay. We will continue to chase any outstanding payments until they have been paid in full. Once outstanding balances are cleared please ensure the account remains in credit.

Non-payment of school meals affects the quality of service we are able to offer to the children; therefore, we need to ensure that all accounts are up-to-date.

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.

Please find attached information regarding the Measles Mumps and Rubella (MMR) and Winter Immunisations. Further information can be found at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/measles/>

UK Health Security Agency

Norovirus, also called the "winter vomiting bug", is a stomach bug that causes vomiting and diarrhoea. It can be very unpleasant, but usually goes away in about 2 days.

The main symptoms of norovirus are:

- feeling sick (nausea)
- diarrhoea
- being sick (vomiting)

You may also have:

- a high temperature
- a headache
- aching arms and legs

The symptoms start suddenly within 1 to 2 days of being infected.

You can usually treat yourself or your child at home. The most important thing is to rest and have lots of fluids to avoid dehydration. You will usually start to feel better in 2 to 3 days.

Protect others from norovirus by washing your hands regularly with soap and warm water, especially before preparing food and after going to the toilet. Alcohol gels do not kill norovirus, so it is important to wash hands regularly.



SMART Internet Rules

Over half term, it is likely children will be spending more time than usual on their tablets and other devices. Do help them to stay safe when using the internet and technology by making sure they are showing you what they are doing. We teach children to stay safe by never sharing any information with people they don't know, even if they say they are another child and always telling an adult about anything that makes them feel uncomfortable. If you would like any support with setting up child locks or firewalls to prevent children accessing adult material, do let us know. There is further helpful information and guidance on a range of key online safety topics which can be accessed using the following link: [Helping make the internet a great and safe place for children and young people - Childnet](https://www.childnet.com/parents-and-carers/keeping-children-safe/online-safety-topics)

Please see the attached SMART rules poster for using the online space.



Half-Term Holiday

Please note that school will close for pupils on **Thursday 23 October 2025** at 3.20pm/3.25pm for the half-term holiday. The school will re-open again for pupils on **Monday 3 November 2025** from 8.30am for morning Nursery and from 8.40am for all other pupils.

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>

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.

Be Empowered Workshops

Parents/carers of children and young people with additional needs, with or without a diagnosis, are invited to attend a series of workshops that have been written by and are led by trainers who are parents/carers of a child with additional needs themselves. The sessions run over a period of 6 weeks. Please see attached leaflet for further information.



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).



School Photographs

You will have received your child's proof of school photographs. The photographs can only be ordered online. On the proof you will see the website address: www.starvisionphotography.co.uk and a personal access code which is to be entered when ordering the photographs.

Star Vision Photography have confirmed that all parents and carers who have more than one child in school will be able to mix between access codes when ordering any pack. They have also introduced three download packs where different access codes can be mixed as well. This means that this term their photo packs are even better value than ever!

Star Vision Photography have also included a £5 discount for a minimum purchase of £35. This offer is valid until **9 November 2025**.



SEND Multi-Agency Coffee Morning

Parent/Carer's are invited to a coffee morning on Wednesday 12 November 2025, 9.00am to 10.00am.

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.



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

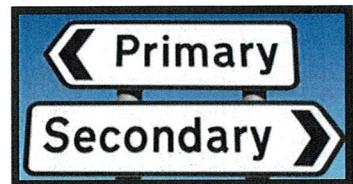
Thursday 8 January 2026 at 9.30am

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



Year 6 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**.

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>



Parents of Nursery Pupils

Applications are now open for the 2025 Reception intake. The application must be made online, directly with the local authority and **must** be submitted by **Sunday 15 January 2026**. 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.



UNICEF Article of the Week

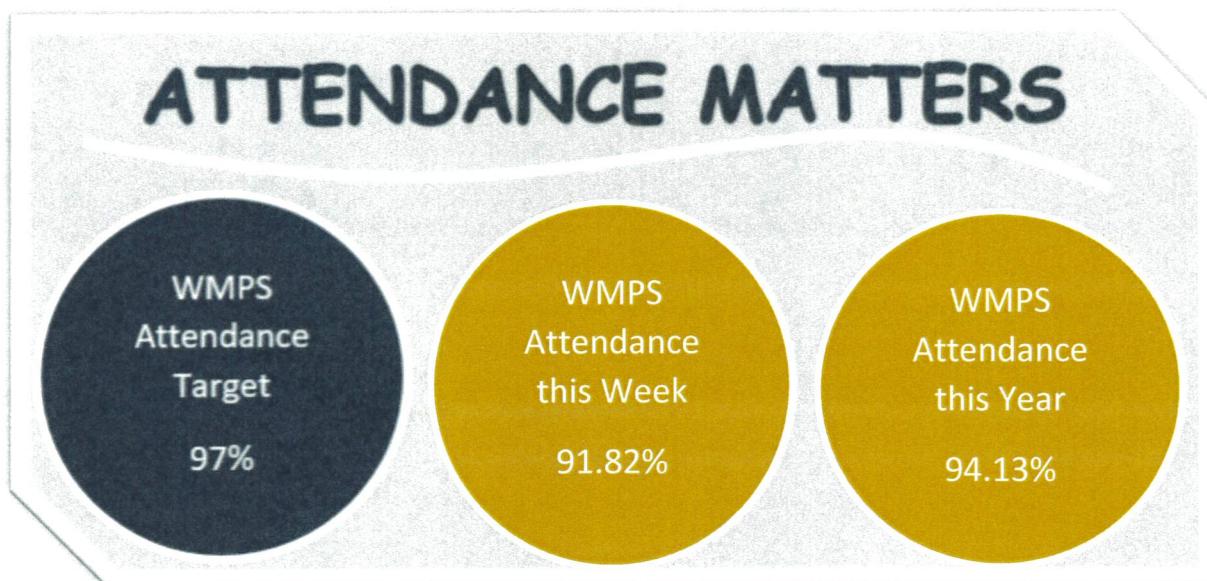
This week pupils across the school have focused on Article 6 which is life, survival and development. Every child has the right to life. Governments must do all they can to ensure that children survive and develop to their full potential.



Pupils across the school focused on the question, 'What are all the things that you need to survive and to develop?' Staff and pupils have discussed all the things they need to flourish, thrive and develop to their full potential. This includes good health –physical and mental, education, people to look after them, protection so they are safe from abuse and neglect and a good standard of living. We also looked at all the things they are looking forward to learning and experiencing in the future.

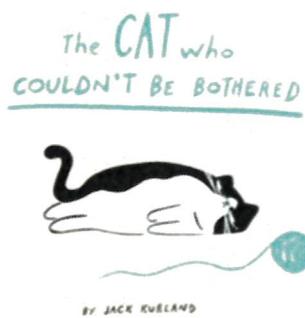
WMPS Attendance Stats

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



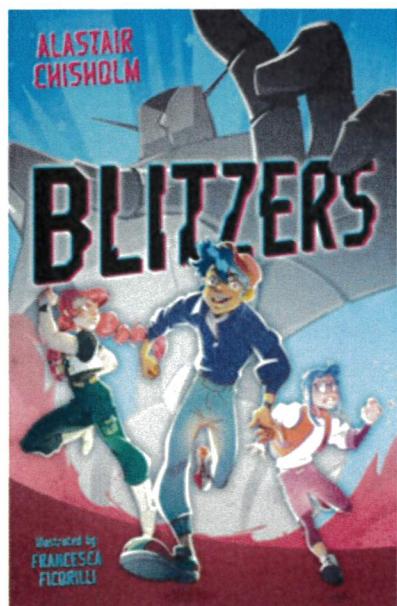
The Cat Who Couldn't Be Bothered – Jack Kurland

Discover a heart-warming story that gently tackles big feelings. Looking for a book that's both entertaining and emotionally enriching for your child? This charming tale of a cat who has lost his spark is the perfect pick for young readers. With warmth, humour, and beautifully expressive illustrations, it opens up gentle conversations around worry, sadness, and the power of friendship.

Ideal for bedtime reading, this story is not only fun and engaging, it is also a thoughtful way to help children understand and navigate their emotions.

Funny, kind, unforgettable. A must-have addition to your child's bookshelf.

Upper School



Blitzers – Alastair Chisholm & Francesca Ficorilli (Illustrator)

This story is a brilliant addition to the gaming genre and is sure to capture the imagination of children who love video games. With relatable characters and a fast-paced plot, it's perfect for readers who enjoy stories inspired by popular gaming platforms.

Blitzers are the latest craze. Handheld game characters that battle when screens are connected. Danny is eager to join in, and when his brother brings home a Blitzer, he begins training it to become a champion. But Danny's Blitzer, Chew Lip, is different. He doesn't want to fight. Instead of resetting him, Danny chooses to listen, and what follows is a surprising and heartfelt journey.

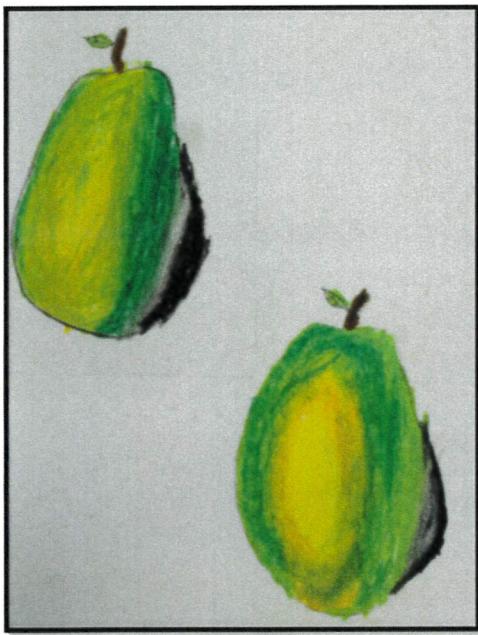
This story explores important themes like friendship, self-esteem, and embracing differences, while also raising thoughtful questions about technology and its impact. It's funny, touching, and full of moments that will make young readers think deeply while enjoying the ride.

A great choice for children aged 8 and up, especially those who love gaming and stories with heart.

Mr Slinn's Artist of the Week

Nursery

In Nursery the children have been looking at a book entitled 'Once There Were Giants'. The book explores the cycle of a family life and how there can be many generations of people within a family. Nursery discussed the different people in a family and how each person may have different characteristics and appearances. The children produced images of different members of a family within a range of generations and the final results were excellent.

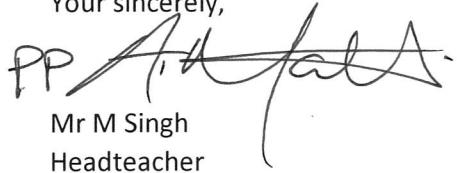


David Y5.2

In Year 5 this term the children have been drawing three dimensional forms, including pieces of fruit. The children have explored how light and shade can be used to create areas of reflection and shadow in art work. This half term has provided Year 5 with the opportunity to further develop a range of sketching skills and the children have made lots of good progress in this area. David produced two detailed images of a pear and added light and dark tones effectively.

Have a wonderful half term break and we will see you back in school on Monday 3 November 2025.

Your sincerely,


PPA
Mr M Singh
Headteacher

Dates

3 November 2025

Pupils return to school

5 November 2025

Year 4 West Midlands Fire Service Visit

6 November 2025

Reception Parent Workshop