



Autumn term CARE values:

Every term we focused on 4 of our CARE values across school. I mention these in assemblies and the children and staff try to use these values throughout the term.

Our new CARE values are; COMPASSION, ACTIONS, RESPONSIBILITY AND ENDEAVOUR

KEY DATES

JANUARY

- 21st Y3 Pedestrian training
- 26th to 29th Y5 Bikeability
- 30th Y4 Bikeability
- 30th Class 3 Parent assembly 2pm

FEBRUARY

- 3rd Class 4 Reading Stay and Play (pm)
- 4th Class 6 Parent Assembly 2pm
- 5th Class 2 Reading Stay and Play (pm)
- 6th Class 1 Reading Stay and Play (pm)
- 9th Class 3 Reading Stay and Play (pm)
- 9th Class 5 Reading Stay and Play (am)
- 9th – 15th Children’s mental health week
- 10th Energy futures workshops
- 11th School Photographs
- 12th Class 6 Reading Stay and Play (am)
- 12th Year 1 Multiskills @ edc
- 13th Special menu – valentines
- 13th Class 7 Parent assembly 2pm
- 17th Special menu pancake day
- 18th Classes 8 and 9 Reading Stay and Play (am)
- 19th Class 7 Reading Stay and Play (am)

half term holiday break up 20th return 2nd March

MARCH – CAREERS MONTH

- 3rd wellbeing festival
- 5th World book day
- 10th Basketball competition and festival tbc
- 11th Class 4 parent assembly 2pm
- 18th Nursery ladies day
- Week of 23rd March – Open Nights and egg competition
- 26th class 5 parent assembly 2pm
- 27th When I grow up day

APRIL

2ND April – Colour run AM
Easter holiday – break up Thursday 2nd return 20th

Week of 27th Mock SATs Y6

Hello Everyone,

At Westlea Primary School, our CARE values are instrumental in helping us educate and understand the world and help all pupils create positive contributions and impacts on society.

COMPASSION, ACTIONS, RESPONSIBILITY AND ENDEAVOUR:

Compassion means, **ca**ring for others but creating **action and purpose** towards this feeling. Creating a **positive impact on society**. This week, it has been heart-warming to be able to show the compassion we all share in our community towards each other through two acts of kindness. The school were the recipient of a kind act by Seaham Town Council and councillor Arran Coxon by thinking of our pupils and gifting £1115 towards sensory resources and enhancing our mental health and well-being environments.

Westlea pupils also displayed compassion towards a community member by sending a very special lady in our community birthday wishes and cards on her 100th birthday. Her family have thanked the children on her behalf.

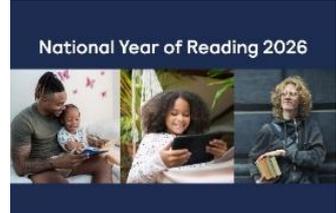
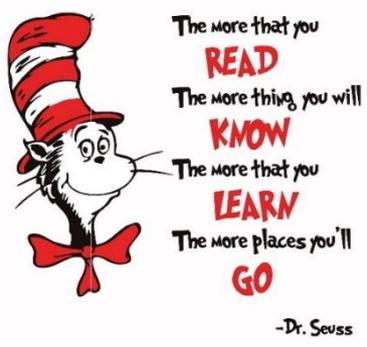
In a world that can appear very uncertain from time to time, it is always best to show kindness and compassion towards each another.

SUBJECT SPOTLIGHT

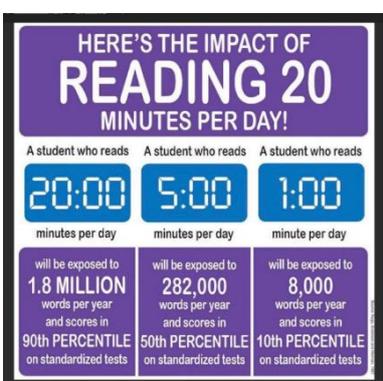
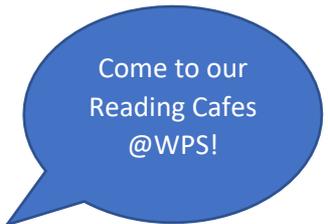
As with other newsletters, we have created a subject spotlight through the pupil’s work, this week’s spotlight is Science. Find more about the Science curriculum across school and see what Year 3 pupils have learnt through their science topic- Forces and Magnets.

This weeks’ newsletter also contains; Year 5 NHS decider skills, Subject focus: Science, Club focus: Games club, a visit from the police to Year 5, Year 3’s second week of pedestrian training and some lovely community news.

Mrs Scothern

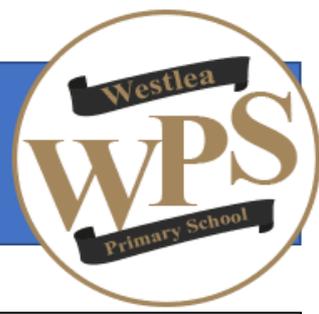


[Our book recommendations | BookTrust](#)



2026 NATIONAL YEAR OF READING
What was your favourite book to read at school or home?
In this week’s newsletter, read more about our strategies to instil a love of reading and books with pupils at Westlea.

THIS WEEK'S ATTENDANCE



	WE 23/01/26
Class 1	95%
Class 2	100%
Class 3	94.6%
Class 4	99.2%
Class 5	94.4%
Class 6	96%
Class 7	95.8%
Class 8/9	99.5%

Attendance Update

We will continue to use our Attendopoly board with the classes to encourage great class attendance. Your child's class rolls the dice if they collectively have an attendance over 96% (which is our school target).

The pupils really enjoy participating with the game and finding out what space they will land on and what extra treat that might be for the class!

This week 4 classes reached 96% or above.

Keep up the great work!

Our whole school attendance for WE 23/01/26 is 96.8%

Our attendance for the year to date is 95.4%

Our target for this half term is **96%** we are currently at 95.6%



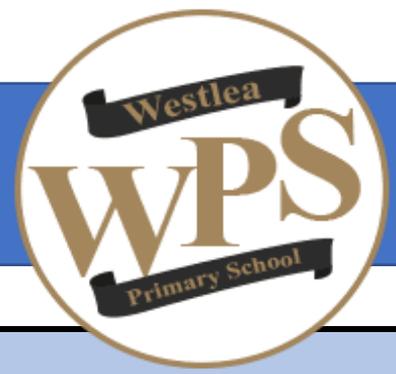
SAFE GUARDING AND ATTENDANCE TEAM:

Mrs Scothern is our Designated Safe Guarding Lead with Mrs Davey and Mrs Simmons as Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads. Please get in touch with any queries or concerns.

ATTENDOPOLY OUTCOMES THIS WEEK

Classes who rolled the dice this week won;
 Class 2 – Cookery Class 6 – Fruit platter
 Class 4 – Extra PE
 Year 6 - Cookery

THIS WEEK'S AWARDS



Head Teacher's Award

Finley (Y5): Finley produced a wonderfully detailed power point about the solar system and the planets. He was able to explain his research and his thinking of how he created and presented the information. A fabulous example of showing your learning in a creative way.

INDIVIDUAL CLASS STAR OF THE WEEK AWARDS

	WE 23/01/26
Class 1	Reuben
Class 2	Tyson
Class 3	Jackson
Class 4	Amber
Class 5	Amelia
Class 6	Troy
Class 7	Millie
Class 8 and 9	Averlyn and Oscar

RIGHTS RESPECTING AWARDS

	WE 23/01/26
Class 1	Ollie C
Class 2	Archie
Class 3	Ayla
Class 4	Parker
Class 5	Esmee
Class 6	Jaylen
Class 7	Hugo
Class 8 and 9	Eden and Gracie

Next week's Right of the week - Article 19 – We have the right to be safe

Character values: CARE

Autumn Term	Spring Term	Summer Term
Community	Compassion	Cooperation
Ambition	Actions	Achievement
Respect	Responsibility	Resilience
Enjoyment	Endeavour	Empowerment

Pupil discussions: Focus: Pupils from Reception-Y6 were present for pupils' discussion. We discussed areas of school we enjoyed. What we liked about different parts of school. The yard was mentioned as a place where lots of fun and enjoyment took place. The pupils were very pleased with the impact of the MUGA, netball court and our trim trail. We also discussed places in the world we would like to travel to and visit. The pupils had some amazing ideas from Disney land Paris, Egypt, Antarctic and the Great Barrier Reef!



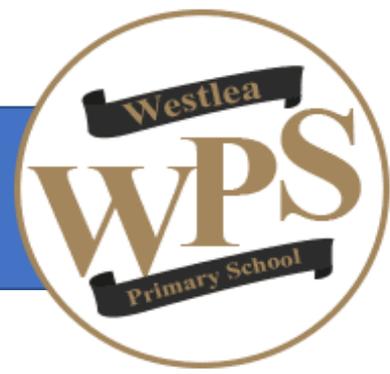
CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Head teachers awards: Our CARE values this term are... COMPASSION, ACTIONS, RESPONSIBILITY AND ENDEAVOUR

These are given to pupils in school who have shone outside of the classroom. It maybe they have shown excellent manners and held a door for a visitor or a friend or have shown our WESTLEA CARE values in some way. Perhaps they have cooperated with each other to play a game or complete a group activity or shown resilience to keep going when a task or a learning activity has been a challenge. Visitors and other members of staff can nominate these students so it is very special if you are recognised for your efforts or for just being you!

In other news...

Reader, Writer and Mathematician of the week



Well done to these students. They will all be entered into the end of term draw.

Keep up your great learning attitude.

Reader of the week:

Class 1 – DJ
Class2 - Indy
Class3 - Annabelle
Class4 - Eliza
Class5 - Grace
Class6 – Harvey-Jack
Class7 - Sophiya
Year6 – Lilly R + Isla D

Writer of the week:

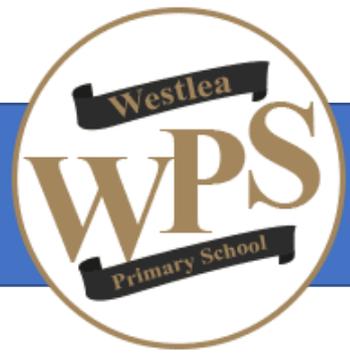
Class 1 - Paisley
Class2 – Arlo
Class3 - Rayne
Class4 - Jayden
Class5 - Bowie
Class6 - Magnus
Class7 – Ella-Grace
Year6 – Lewis + Ava

Mathematician of the week:

Class 1 – Otis
Class2 - Denny
Class3 - Imogen
Class4 – Holly E
Class5 - Elliot
Class6 -Layla B
Class7 - Chris
Year6 – Zuzanna + Malaya

Year 5

NHS Decider Skills



Decider skills are techniques used in the NHS to help individuals recognise and manage their thoughts, feelings and behaviours. This is aimed at Year 5 pupils to help them by promoting better mental health and emotional resilience.

Each week the pupils will be introduced to a different tool/strategy to help Year 5 build a useful emotional toolkit that will equip them for now and the future.

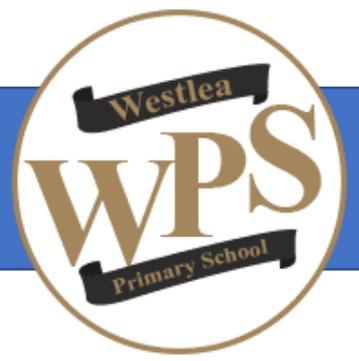


Impact:

The impact of the decider skills training will be pupils exposed to a skill set to help them as they grow older. It will allow them to build a sense of self and build self-confidence and resilience.

In other news...

Class 1- Mindfulness session
Class 4-Attendopoly activity



Class 1 and 4, when gaining over 96% attendance in previous weeks, rolled the dice on our Attendopoly Game and landed on a mindfulness session and also an extra Forest School activity.

Two lovely experiences to enhance any one's week. Class 1 tried a mindfulness activity. Class 4 got to spend some time in nature and enjoy the outdoors.



In other news...

Quality of Education



Every month we will be sharing information about recognised artists, musicians, and scientists through our newsletter and also during lessons and assemblies. This is one of many strategies used to enrich the curriculum and broaden student horizons, building cultural capital and representation.

Artist of the
Month

January



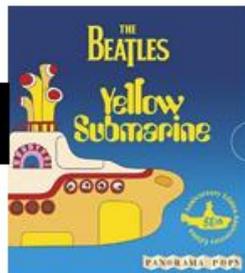
Wassily Kandinsky

Wassily Kandinsky (born December 16, 1866 – died December 13, 1944) was a famous Russian painter and art thinker. Many people see him as one of the first artists to create **abstract art**. Abstract art does not show things that look real. Instead, it uses shapes, colours, and lines to express feelings or ideas.

Musician of the
Month

January

The Beatles



The Beatles were a famous English **rock** band. They started in **Liverpool, England** in 1960. The main members were **John Lennon**, **Paul McCartney**, **George Harrison**, and **Ringo Starr**. Many people believe they are the most successful and important band in **popular music** history. They helped shape the **1960s counterculture**.

The band began by playing skiffle and beat music. They were inspired by American **rock and roll** from the 1950s. Later, they added sounds from **classical music** and **Indian music** to their songs. John Lennon and Paul McCartney wrote most of their hit songs together.

Top hits included:
Twist and Shout
Help!
Live and Let Die
All you need is Love



Scientist of the
Month

January

Mae Jemison

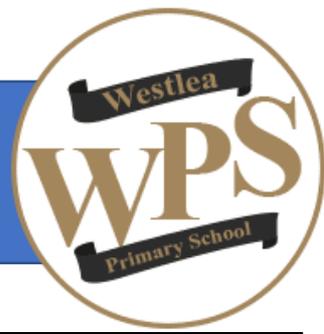


Mae Carol Jemison (born October 17, 1956) is an amazing American **engineer**, **doctor**, and former **NASA astronaut**. She made history by becoming the first **Black** woman to travel into space! She flew as a mission specialist aboard the **Space Shuttle Endeavour**. Mae Jemison joined NASA's astronaut team in 1987. She was chosen for the **STS-47** mission, where she orbited Earth for almost eight days, from September 12 to 20, 1992.



In other news...

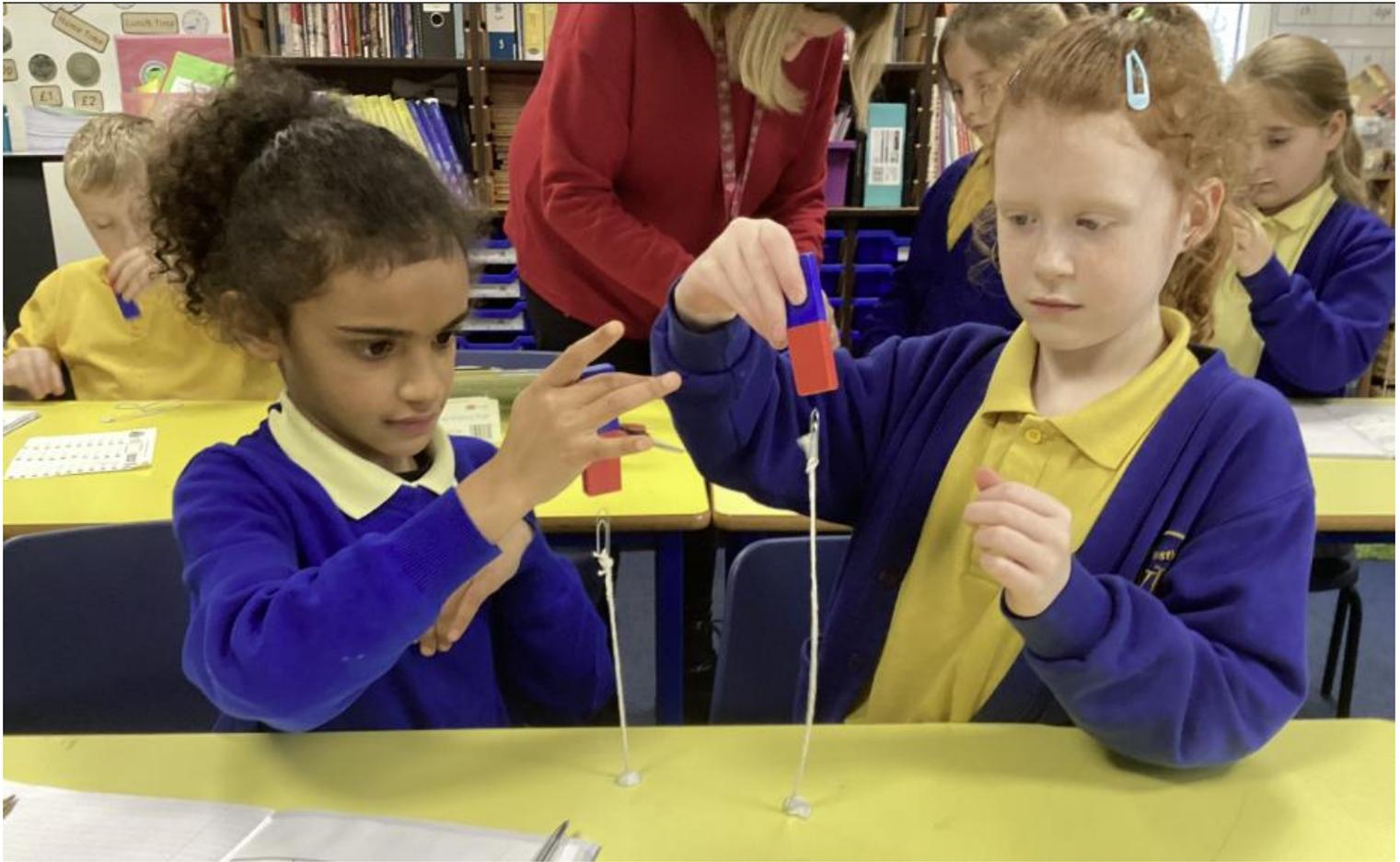
Quality of Education: Subject spotlight... Science



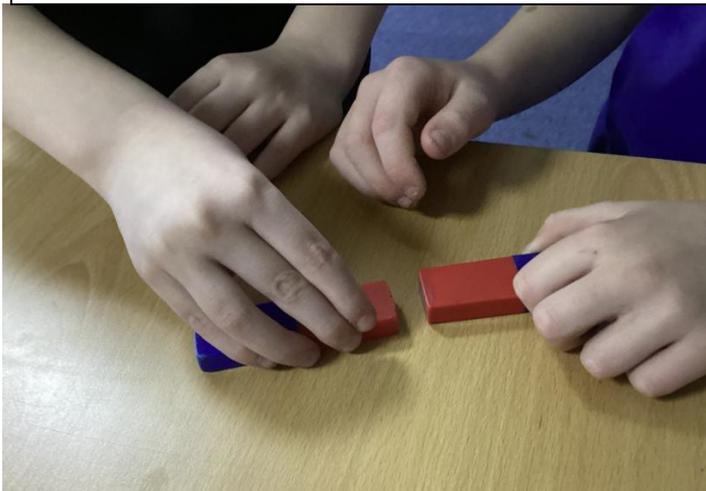
What skills do pupils learn through the subject of science?

Science plays an important role in the primary education curriculum because it helps children understand the world around them and builds a strong foundation for lifelong learning.

At an early age, pupils are naturally curious, and science nurtures this curiosity by encouraging them to ask questions, explore, and make sense of everyday phenomena.



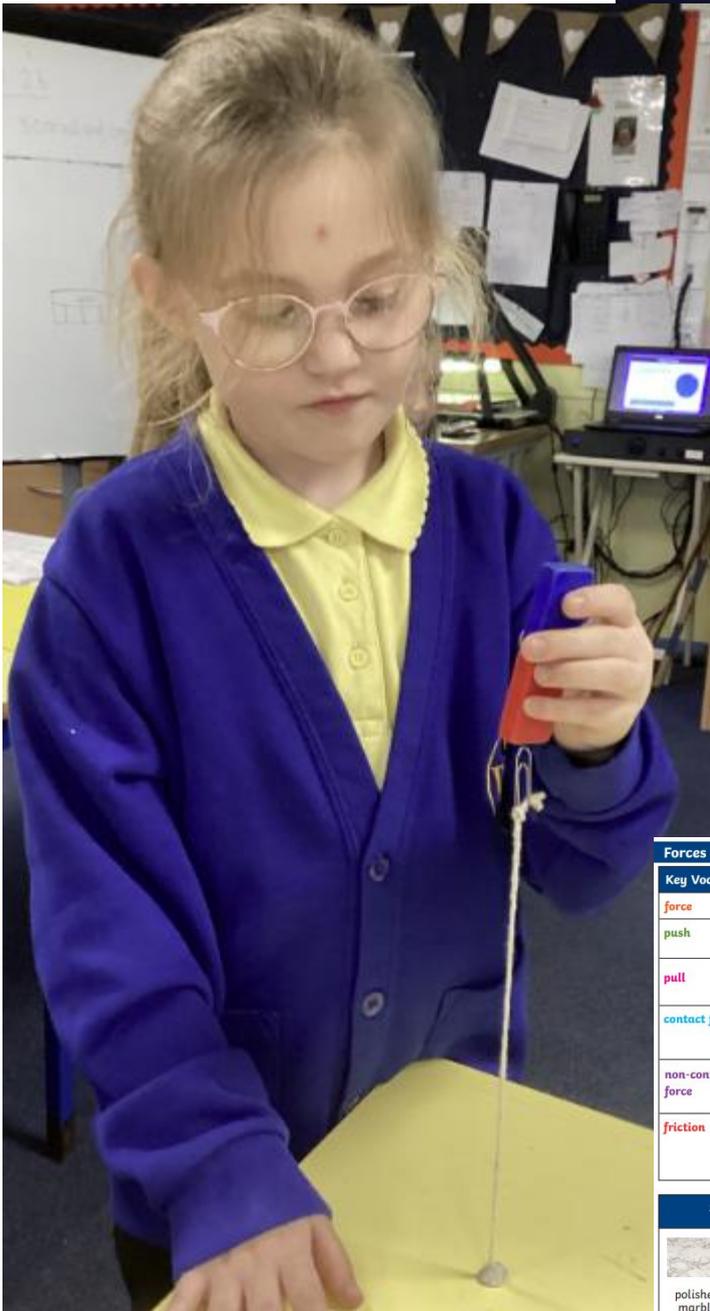
Through science lessons, pupils develop key skills such as observation, questioning, predicting, measuring, experimenting, and recording results.

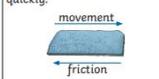
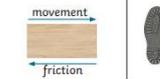


Key Vocabulary	Magnetic Materials	Non-Magnetic Materials
<p>magnet A magnet is a material that can sometimes attract (pull) and sometimes repel (push) other magnetic materials.</p>	<p>Magnetic objects are most often made of iron, steel (which contains iron), nickel and cobalt.</p>	<p>Plastic, wood, rubber and wool are not magnetic. Some metals, such as aluminium, are not magnetic.</p>
<p>magnetic If a material is magnetic, it can be attracted or repelled by a magnet.</p>	<p>Names of Magnets</p>	<p>Like Poles Repel</p>
<p>magnetic force A magnetic force is a non-contact force produced by a magnet.</p>	<p>Uses of Magnets</p>	<p>Opposite Poles Attract</p>
<p>poles The poles of a magnet are the two points where the magnetic force is strongest: the north pole and south pole.</p>		<p>A magnetic force is a non-contact force because the magnet and the object do not need to touch for the force to happen.</p>
<p>attract If a magnet attracts an object, it causes the object to move towards it.</p>		
<p>repel If a magnet repels an object, it causes the object to move away from it.</p>		

Working in groups helps them build communication and collaboration skills, while hands-on activities improve fine motor skills and confidence in using simple tools and materials.

They learn problem-solving, critical thinking, and basic scientific reasoning.



Forces and Magnets		Contact Forces: Examples of Pushes and Pulls		
Key Vocabulary		Pushes		
force	A force is a push or pull .			Pulls
push	A push is a force that often moves an object further away.	The foot pushes against the ground, causing the scooter to move forwards.	The hands push on the trolley handle, causing the trolley to move forwards.	
pull	A pull is a force that often moves an object closer.			
contact force	A contact force is a type of force that occurs between two or more objects that are touching.			The hand pulls on the cord, causing the blind to lift up.
non-contact force	A non-contact force is a type of force that occurs between objects that are not touching.	Forces can make objects start or stop moving, change speed, change direction or change shape.		
friction	Friction is a type of contact force . It occurs between two touching surfaces that are either trying to move or are already moving across each other.	Moving on Rough Surfaces	Moving on Smooth Surfaces	Helpful Friction
		Objects move differently on different surfaces because of a force called friction . Friction can be high on rough surfaces, causing objects to slow down more quickly.	An object will travel further on a smooth surface because there are fewer bumps; therefore, there is less friction to slow it down.	Bumpy surfaces, such as tyres or the soles of shoes, help to reduce the risk of sliding or skidding.
				
		Smooth: polished marble, laminate floor		
		Rough: artificial grass, sandpaper		

The positive impact of science on pupils is significant. It promotes curiosity, creativity, and independent thinking, helping children become active learners rather than passive recipients of information. Science also supports literacy and numeracy through reading, writing, data handling, and simple calculations. Most importantly, it helps pupils develop a positive attitude toward learning, environmental awareness, and an early understanding of how science and technology affect their daily lives and future opportunities.

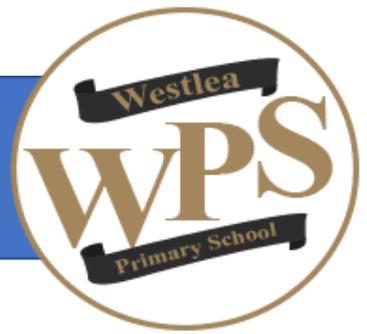
In other news...

Reading focus: English Cafes

We are a
Ruth Miskin

Read Write Inc.

school
2025-26

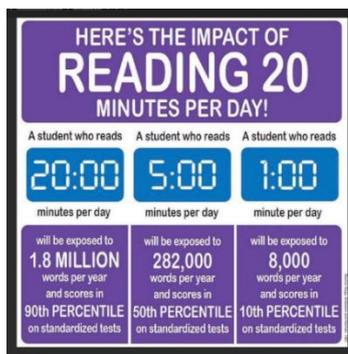


[Our book recommendations](#) | [BookTrust](#)

In February we are hoping to welcome all parents/carers in to school to work with your children to explore reading. The school is running a **Stay and Play reading workshop for every class** - quite similar to the maths cafés last year but without the outside agency running it and unfortunately no vouchers. The aim is to show you how to see reading opportunities in games, online reading platforms and fun five-minute activities that you can play with your child to support their learning. Focusing on reading and spelling in particular.

Reading with your child is crucial for the development of language skills, emotional intelligence, and a strong parent-child bond. It lays a foundation for academic success and lifelong learning by boosting vocabulary, imagination, empathy, focus, and providing comforting, distraction-free connection time.

We hope to see you there.



SAVE THE DATE		
Class	Date of cafe	Time
Class 1	6 th Feb	1:30-3PM
Class 2	5 th Feb	1:30-3PM
Class 3	9 th Feb	1:30-3PM
Class 4	3 rd Feb	1:30-3PM
Class 5	9 th Feb	9-10:30AM
Class 6	12 th Feb	9-10:30AM
Class 7	19 th Feb	9-10:30AM
Class 8 & 9	18 th Feb	9-10:30AM

How do I help my son, daughter, grandchild read?

What can I do to help them learn their spellings?

How can I instil a love of reading?

Come to the Westlea English Cafes for your child's class and find out some top tips and games/activities you can try at home.

Dear Parents & carers,

We are delighted to invite you to a Class 1 *Reading Stay & Play!*



Join us as we celebrate the National Year of Reading together.

This will be a lovely opportunity for you to come into school and spend time with your child enjoying a range of fun, hands-on, reading activities together.

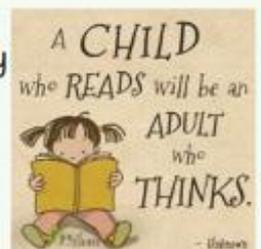
There will be stories to share, games to play and many chances to see how we support early reading in Reception.



Date: **Friday 6th February**

Time: **1.30pm**

Location: **Sports Hall**



We hope you can join us to celebrate the children's love of books and reading. Your involvement makes a huge difference, and the children are always so excited to share their learning with you!

We look forward to seeing you then.

The children and staff of Class 1



"Reading is to the mind what exercise is to the body."
- Richard Steele



National
Year of
Reading
2026



2026

book missions



January

Read a book that makes you laugh!

February

Tell someone about a book you love

March

Join the World Book Day celebrations

April

Read a book because you love its pictures

May

Read a poetry book or a verse novel

June

It's a summer of sport! Read a sporty book

July

7 July: A new Children's Laureate is here! Read one of their books

August

Read a book outside! What's the most unusual place you can find?

September

Send a letter or a drawing to your favourite author or illustrator

October

Read a scary book for Halloween!

November

Read a non-fiction book and tell a friend a cool fact

December

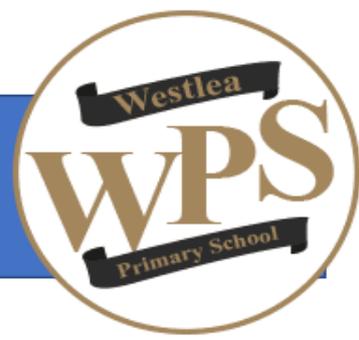
Swap your favourite book with your friends



My favourite books of the year are...

In other news...

Year 5: Police Drone experience



Due to Class 7 entering the Seaham Police Drone competition before Christmas and then successfully Ella E winning, Class 7 were in for a special treat this week. The police visited school to explain about the importance of drones, the amazing capacities of their drone, now called 'The Watcher' and they were also able to see what the drone was capable of doing.



Cutting edge technology can be extremely useful and this will help Police keep our community safer.



The drone can be operated and work up to 120m up into the air!

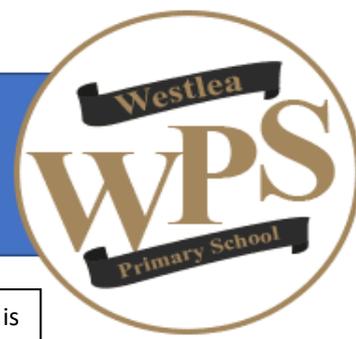
Drones are now being used in many different industries, farming, emergency services, football and sports, filming and even Amazon are now delivering parcels using drones.



We learnt that night vision, speakers and lights can also be added to The Watcher to help assist the Police.



In other news... Year 3 Pedestrian training session 2



Crossing the road and being sensible around roads is a valuable lesson to learn to help pupils keep safe.



THE GREEN CROSS CODE

Learn and follow these simple instructions to ensure you always remain safe when crossing the road.

<p>FIND A SAFE PLACE TO CROSS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The safest place to cross the road are junction crossings, zebra crossings, subways, footbridges or where there is a traffic warden or school patrol to assist you. It is worth walking a little further to find one of these places. If some of these are available find a section of road with no obstructions. Never cross next to or between parked cars. 	<p>STOP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not stand too close to the edge of the kerb. If there is no pavement, stand back from the edge of the road. Make sure you still have a good view up and down the road. 	<p>LOOK & LISTEN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traffic may approach from any direction, be especially careful at road junctions. Sometimes you can hear traffic before seeing it, so make sure you listen carefully as well. 	<p>LET TRAFFIC PASS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once the traffic has passed, look around and listen again. If you are not sure, don't cross. Better safe than sorry! 	<p>DO NOT RUN!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When you are sure it is safe, cross carefully. Don't dawdle or chat to friends as you cross. Continue to look and listen until you are safely on the other side of the road.
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This week's pedestrian session surrounded using safe places to cross roads.

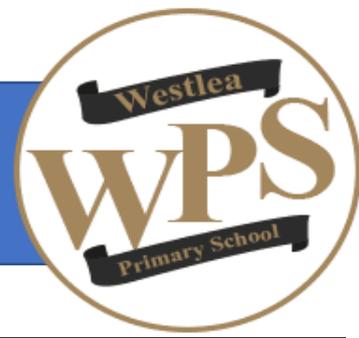


Pupils built upon their knowledge of crossing a road using The Green Cross Code.



In other news...

After-school club focus: Games Club



Games Club is attended by pupils from KS1. It is held in Class 5 purposefully to ensure that pupils experience different Key Stage classrooms to help with transitioning into KS2 when the time comes. The adults involved in the club come from many different roles in school.



Promoting opportunities to negotiate with others and share ideas.

Increasing concentration and focus on a task.



Teachers and adults love to take the time to play games. Turn taking, speaking and listening, problem solving and patience/focus are ALL skills that are developed through attending the club.

Supporting listening and communication skills

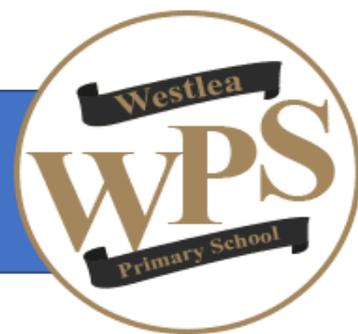
Improving mental strategy, problem solving and thinking ahead.



KS1 pupils begin to create positive relationships with lots of other staff. This supports our enhanced transitions and fosters positive relationships with staff across our school setting.



In other news... Community News



Many thanks to Arran Coxon of Seaham Town Council for the kind money donation. This donation will be used to build upon our SEND resources and buy resources towards improving mental health and well-being areas in school. In particular, improving access for all, to our Westlea Woods provision and our new well-being garden development.



I would like to say a big thank you to all the pupils at Westlea Primary School who created beautiful birthday cards for my mum Jenny's 100th birthday on 28th December. She was thrilled to receive so many cards. She had a lovely day celebrating her 100th birthday. Thank you to the staff for organising this.

Can you please pass this message of thanks on to everyone.

Thank you

Carol, daughter of Jenny Dickeson

At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one of many issues which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit www.nationalonlinesafety.com for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

Top Tips for SETTING BOUNDARIES AROUND GAMING

If your child loves video games, then you'll probably be aware that how long they spend gaming – and what they're actually playing – can occasionally become a source of concern or conflict. The UK's trade body for interactive entertainment, Ukie, has recently launched a campaign to promote safer and more responsible gaming among young people – with parents and carers helping by setting sensible and fair boundaries. Our guide has tips on key areas where you could agree some healthy ground rules for your child's gaming activity.

PROMOTE SAFER GAME CHOICES

Deciding which online games are OK – and which should be avoided – is tricky. Some titles allow children to cooperate or compete with strangers, which creates potential risks. Watching your child play online for a while could provide more insight into a particular game, while the parental controls on most consoles allow you to limit who can chat to your child or send them friend requests. Remind your child of the hazards around strangers online when you discuss this boundary with them.

ENCOURAGE REGULAR BREAKS

Help your child understand the need to take regular breaks, playing in shorter bursts rather than marathon sessions. Bear in mind that some games (such as role-playing games) require time investment from the player, while others (online team games, for example) can't be stopped or paused at a moment's notice. A quick break every hour or so is good practice, and you could suggest some things to do in these breaks, such as having a drink of water or getting some fresh air.

AGREE SPENDING LIMITS

There's no doubt that gaming can be expensive, and younger players often don't realise how much paying for digital items and subscriptions can add up to. Many young gamers love to buy new skins or upgrades for their character, so you could settle on a fixed amount that your child is allowed to spend on in-game items each week or month. This sort of boundary will not only help your child to manage their expectations but will also make you more aware of the price of these items.

DISCUSS AGE RATINGS

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CENSORED

Children often ignore the age ratings on games – or are unaware they even exist. If you're happy with your child playing a particular game even though it's rated above their age, then establish that as a boundary; emphasise that you've made an exception, and talk about what age ratings mean and why they're important. You could add context to this boundary by browsing games' boxes together while shopping, discussing why some games might have earned certain age ratings.

FACTOR IN FRIENDS

If your child is a keen video gamer, the chances are that they'll have other gamers among their social circle, too. When friends visit, do they instantly dash to their console or computer? You could put boundaries in place before their guests arrive by agreeing on a length of gaming time. Bear in mind, though, that they may try to extend this once they're together. Try coming up with activities or challenges for them during screen breaks – if they join in, they earn a little extra time on their game.

ENJOY GAMING TOGETHER

Setting time aside to play video games together can be an enjoyable bonding exercise. Undeniably, some young gamers may be less enthusiastic about a parent or carer joining in, but it can be a productive way of encouraging them to share their hobby with you. Setting goals or tasks might be useful if they love Minecraft, choose something to build together; if Fortnite's their favourite, ask to try out some of the fun game modes, like Prop Hunt, which don't require high skill levels.

TALK ABOUT EMOTIONS

Help your child to monitor their emotions as they play. Discuss what is (and isn't) an acceptable level of competitiveness to show while gaming. Are they allowed to trash talk other players, for example? Can they notice when they get angry if they lose? Do they think these emotions are healthy? Some games can provoke anger, but others can bring joy, humour and the thrill of overcoming a challenge. Try to steer your child towards games that tend to produce these more positive feelings.

BE PREPARED FOR TROLLS

A frequent problem when gaming online is other players who are deliberately troublesome. Make sure your child knows how to report and block someone who makes their experience a negative one. Between you, decide if or how they should deal with these online trolls. Talk about where your child's boundaries are in terms of what they think is acceptable: what behaviour by other users is merely frustrating, and what crosses the line to become upsetting or abusive.

Meet Our Expert

Daniel Upscombe is a writer specialising in technology, video gaming, virtual reality and Web3. He has also written 15 guidebooks for children, covering games such as Fortnite, Apex Legends, Valorant, Roblox and Minecraft. With work published by the likes of PC Gamer, Kotaku, Pocket Gamer and VG247, he has reviewed more than 50 games and products over the past year.



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