



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

FEBRUARY

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,

Learning, Growing and Creating at Westlea Primary School:

It has been another fabulous week at Westlea Primary, filled with inspiring learning opportunities and enriching experiences for our children. We were delighted to welcome back the bikeability team who began cycling safety sessions with Year 4 after Year 5 pupils completed their training. Once again, our pupils, “displayed impeccable behaviour and a willingness to learn”. Year 4 have also had the opportunity this week to present and perform their learning to parents and carers as part of their Class Assembly. A marvellous achievement for everyone involved this week. The theme of giving things a go and putting yourself out of your comfort zone was a fabulous assembly theme. We are so proud of you all.

National Storytelling Week and Reading Cafes:

This week we have celebrated National Story telling week and have also begun our school Reading Cafes. Once again, the support provided from parents, family members and carers from Classes 1, 2 and 4, at these cafes has been brilliant to see.

Also, in school this week, we have all enjoyed sharing stories. Our Key Stage One and Key Stage Two assemblies focused on this theme. In our classrooms, staff and pupils have also paused and shared a story together and learnt about how songs and music can also tell a story. Please note Classes 3, 5 and 6 Reading Cafes are being held next week.

Staff Training and development

‘We learn together to achieve success for all.’

At Westlea, we continuously strive to improve, upskill and develop our skills so that we can provide the BEST education for our pupils. This training and professional development, is linked to our School Development Plan and focuses on the needs of our pupils and our target of providing the broad, supportive and enriching curriculum for ALL, ensuring that every pupil thrives.

January staff training update:

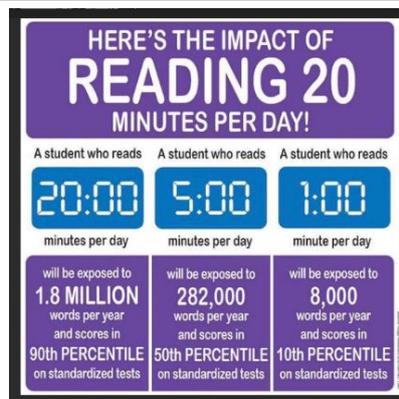
- Staff and our school Governing body, welcomed our Education Development Partner, Mark Watson, to school for an evening of training linked to the new Ofsted framework.
- Whole staff training has also taken place linked to supporting Autistic pupils and those who are Neurodivergent. This training was of excellent quality and deepened our expertise and past training.
- A selection of staff, expanded their knowledge on supporting pupils with school-based anxiety.
- We have also had teaching staff involved in subject network meetings where they attend evening and afternoon training linked to the National Curriculum subject they lead. They share good practise as well as receive national and local updates on their subject.
- 30+ Staff and volunteers, signed up for British Sign Language training.
- Staff have also had coaching training in Flag football- the noncontact version of American Football.

As with other newsletters, we have created a subject spotlight through the pupil’s work, this week’s spotlight is **History**. Read and find out the stages of the mummification process! Find out about the **five British values** and how these shape our **CARE values** and relationship and behavioural approach at Westlea.

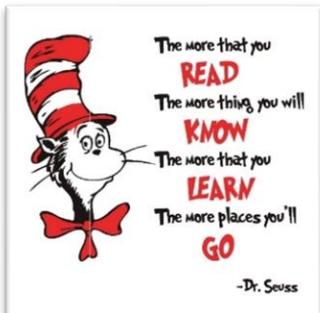
To continue to build on our pupils’ cultural capital, we have our **new Artist of the Month, Musician of the month and Scientist of the month** for February and also celebrate the pupils who took part in the art experience linked to Kandinsky (January’s artist of the month).

Reminder that next week mental health week.
 Mrs Scothern

[Our book recommendations | BookTrust](#)

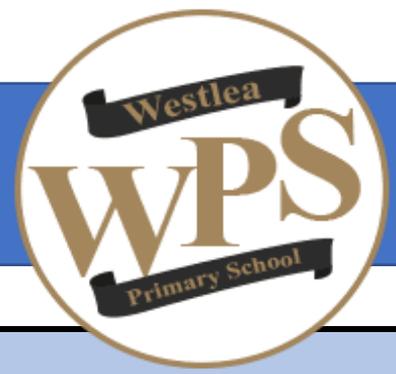


Come to our Reading Cafes @WPS!



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 AWARDS



Head Teacher's Award

Jacob and Seth (Y6) for their amazing support in Class 4's reading café. They were a credit to the school and showed our care values through their actions and interactions with parents and children.

INDIVIDUAL CLASS STAR OF THE WEEK AWARDS

	WE 06/02/26
Class 1	Annie
Class 2	Albie
Class 3	Brock
Class 4	Heidi
Class 5	Harper
Class 6	Harvey-Jack
Class 7	Sophiya
Class 8 and 9	Abbi and Kenzi

RIGHTS RESPECTING AWARDS

	WE 06/02/26
Class 1	DJ
Class 2	Riah-Daisy
Class 3	Rayne
Class 4	Sidney
Class 5	Alex
Class 6	India
Class 7	Eva
Class 8 and 9	Darcie and Kobe

Next week's Right of the week - Article 24 – We have the right to good food and water.

Character values: CARE

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



Pupil discussions:

British values: We discussed the different parts of British values and connected them to how we treat each other at school. The pupils were very responsive to this discussion. We held the discussion in the staff room and the pupils enjoyed seeing where the staff spend their break times.



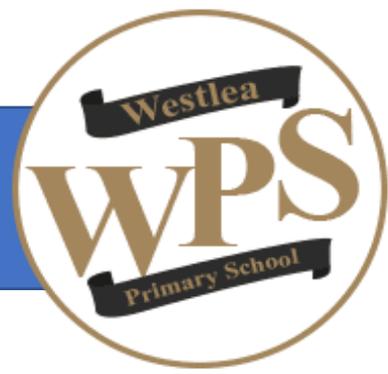
CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

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



And Mrs Reed's Artist of the month

Reader of the week:

Class 1 – Skye
Class2 - Arlo
Class3 - Alma
Class4 - Estelle
Class5 - Esmee
Class6 - Jaylen
Class7 - Carter
Year6 – Averlyn + Carson

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

Keep up your great learning attitude.

Writer of the week:

Class 1 - Willow
Class2 – Elliot
Class3 - Annie
Class4 - Noah
Class5 – Amelia B
Class6 - Ijaz
Class7 - Luka
Year6 – Penelope + Bronson

Mathematician of the week:

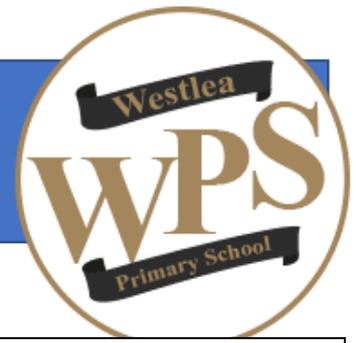
Class 1 - Rosie
Class2 - Archie
Class3 - Ria
Class4 – Charlie
Class5 - George
Class6 – Layla C
Class7 - Luna
Year6 – Archie + Taylor



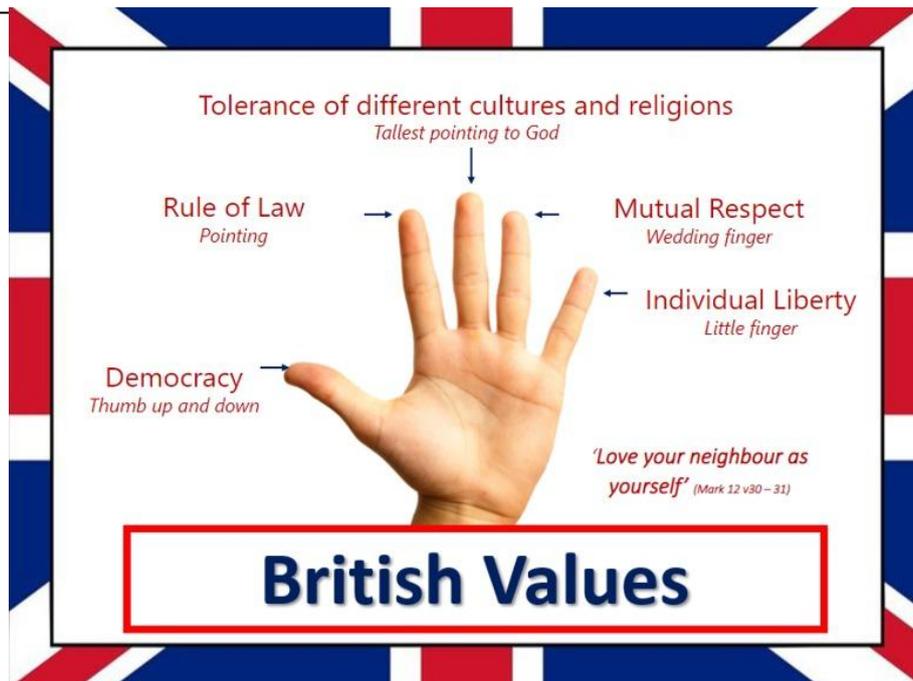
Well done to Class 1 for their wonderful art work inspired by Kandinsky

In other news...

Personal Development and quality of education: British Values



British values are fundamental principles that shape the identity and social fabric of the United Kingdom, encompassing democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect, and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We teach and follow these guidelines to help shape and mould our pupils into young people who can contribute positivity to their communities ensuring that they are 'ready for the next step'.

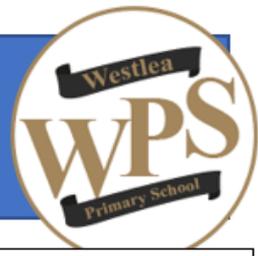


British Values

 Rule of the law Rules and Laws are set by the government and apply to the whole country. They are designed to be fair and keep us safe.	 Individual Liberty Individual liberty is the freedom to express an opinion and be yourself. We all have the right to be accepted and protected.	 Tolerance Tolerance is accepting, respecting others and learning from everyone's differences, religion, beliefs and faiths.	 Democracy Democracy means freedom and equality for all. Everybody has a voice and can be part of decisions that affect us.	 Mutual respect Mutual respect is celebrating diversity and being kind to others regardless of their differences.
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In other news...

Quality of Education

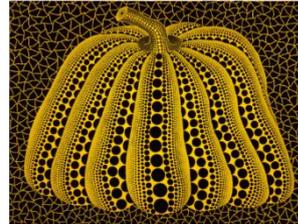


Every month we will be sharing information about recognised artists, musicians, and scientists through our newsletter and also during lessons and assemblies. This is one of many strategies used to enrich the curriculum and broaden student horizons, building cultural capital and representation.



Yayoi Kusama (草間 彌生, Kusama Yayoi, born 22 March 1929) is a Japanese [modern artist](#). She mostly creates [sculpture](#) and [installation art](#). She also works in [painting](#), [performance](#), [video art](#), [fashion](#), [poetry](#), and writing. Yayoi Kusama is known as one of the most important living artists from [Japan](#). She is also one of the world's most famous and successful living artists. Her unique art style influenced other well-known artists like [Andy Warhol](#)

Yayoi Kusama (1929- to present)



Don't adjust your screens or rub your eyes...the dots you are about to experience are art! Welcome to the weird and wonderful world of Yayoi Kusam!

Find out more?
[Who is Yayoi Kusama? | Tate Kids](#)

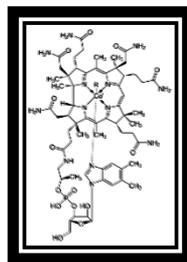
Artist of the Month

February

Dorothy Hodgkin was a brilliant British chemist. She won the [Nobel Prize in Chemistry](#) for her amazing work. She made a special technique called [X-ray crystallography](#) much better. This helped her figure out the exact shapes of important molecules in living things. This was very important for understanding how living things work.

She discovered and confirmed;

- The structure of [penicillin](#)
- The structure of [vitamin B₁₂](#) (see diagram)
- The structure of [insulin](#).



All of these are very important for medicine even today.



Dorothy Hodgkin (1910-1994)

February

Scientist of the Month

Musician of the Month



Will Smith and Hip Hop

February

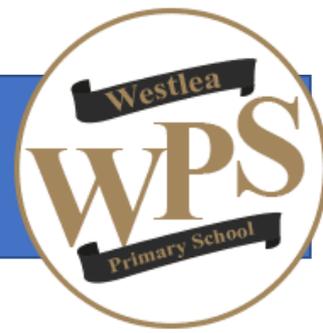
Willard Smith, born 25th September 1968 in USA. He is known for being an actor, rapper and producer.

He started his music career as part of the hip-hop duo DJ Jazzy Jeff and The Fresh Prince. Their hit song; "Parents just don't understand" won a Grammy Award in 1989.



In other news...

Quality of Education: History



At Westlea Primary School, History is much more than a collection of dates and famous names. It's a vibrant part of learning that helps children understand *who they are, where they come from, and how the world around them has been shaped over time*. The curriculum is taught in a carefully sequenced way so that knowledge and skills build year by year, deepening children's understanding of the past and their place in the future.

First their brains were pulled out with a hook through the nose.

Critical Thinking and Enquiry

Children are taught to look closely at evidence, ask perceptive questions, and form reasoned conclusions. This strengthens their confidence in *analysis and judgement*, useful in writing, discussion, and future studies.

Chronological Understanding

By building a mental timeline, pupils learn how periods and events connect. This sense of *sequence and change over time* helps them understand how the past impacts the present.

Then all of the organs were pulled out and placed in canopic jars.

Next, the body was stuffed.

The arms and legs were bound together.

Interpretation and Perspective

Children learn that there is often more than one way to view the past, and that sources and stories can be interpreted differently. This promotes *open-minded thinking* and empathy.

The body was then wrapped alongside their jewels.

Communication Skills

History lessons give pupils chances to express ideas clearly, in writing, discussion and presentations therefore strengthening our pupils' vocabulary and confidence.

What History Teaching Looks Like at Westlea

The school's History curriculum places children at the heart of their learning. Through engaging lessons, artefacts, timelines, visits, stories, and enquiry tasks, pupils are encouraged to explore historical events and ideas. The curriculum:

- Builds a **secure sense of chronology**, helping pupils understand how people and events link across time. Picture of our school history timeline.
- Encourages students to **ask questions**, compare evidence, and think about *how and why* things happened which are skills central to historical thinking.
- Combines **substantive knowledge** (facts about people, places, events) with **historical processes** such as cause and consequence and multiple interpretations of the past.
- Supports *local history learning* and wider cultural contexts, helping children connect what they learn to their community and the wider world.

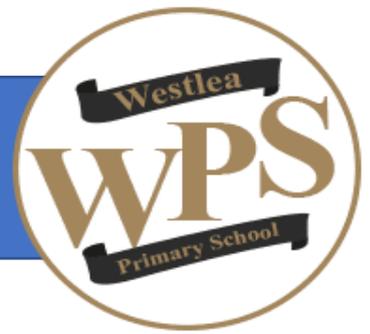
These approaches reflect the school's commitment to making history a meaningful, enjoyable, and memorable part of pupils' education.

Finally, a death mask was placed over the head.



In other news...

Reading focus: English Cafes



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

Across February we are welcoming 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.



Wide range of activities to do on and offline



Nothing to improve – Enjoyed activities with the kids, I love doing these sessions to spend this one on one time in the school environment.

Lovely how interactive the session was, playing with their friends at the same time. Lot of great ideas to do at home. Laughing while learning is so beautiful to watch.

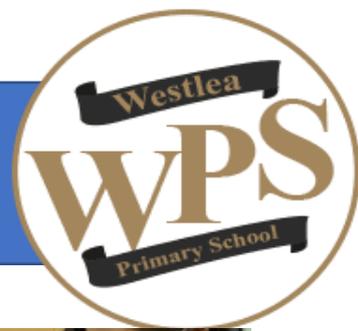
Lovely to see the children so confident with reading



SAVE THE DATE

Class	Date of cafe	Time
Class 3	9 th 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

In other news... Classes 2 and 4 Reading Cafes



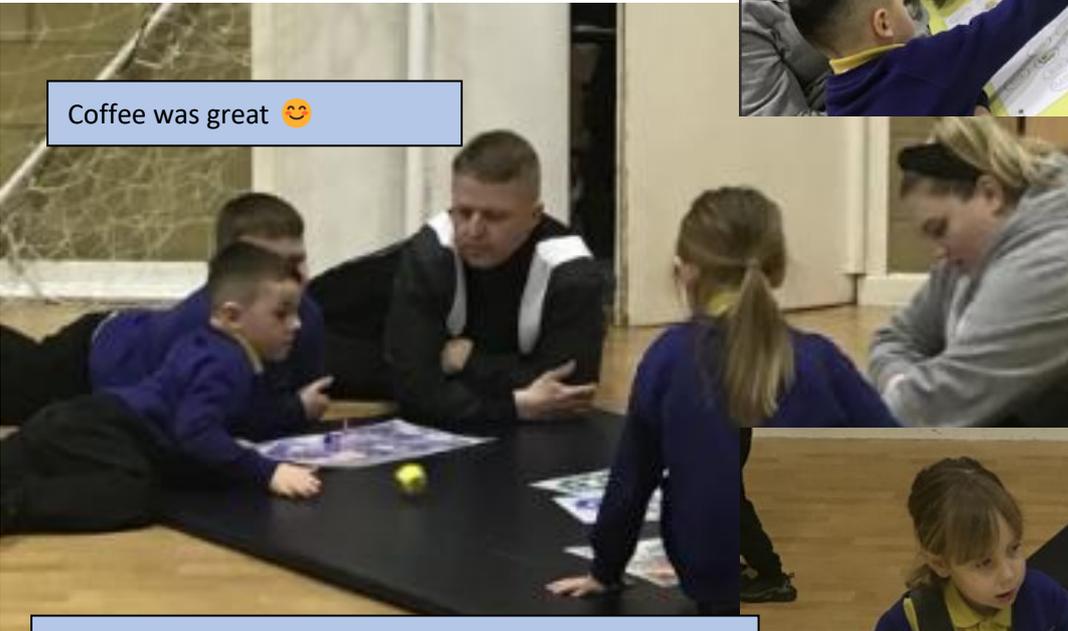
All of the tasks were brilliant to do and I can do some at home. Lots of space to move around and joy ourselves



Enjoyed family time and the opportunity to join in the fun.



Coffee was great 😊



Good to see the activities and to be able to do it with your child.



Riah-Daisy is getting really good with her letters and reading words



I liked how you take your own time to move onto activities. More interactive – kids enjoyed it more.

Our Reading Cafés, taking place in National Story telling week. More Reading Cafés next week!

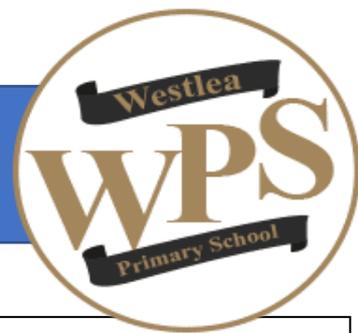


Fun afternoon seeing children interacting with their peers. I've found out how to support my child's reading.



In other news...

Understanding each other



This articulate and joyful Year 2 pupil took to the front of the class to explain some extra lessons that she undertakes in School. Ruby, has a visual impairment called LCA Leber Congenital Amaurosis Nystagmus and she explained in her words what that means to her. She was supported in doing this by Sarah from the Visual Impairment team and also Mrs Mordue and her teachers, who in school, support Ruby with the daily lessons she needs to undertake for her to continue to be confident and independent in school and life. Ruby is being taught how to use a cane and also touch typing. Ruby embraces life and takes on everything in her own unique style. Keep being YOU Ruby!

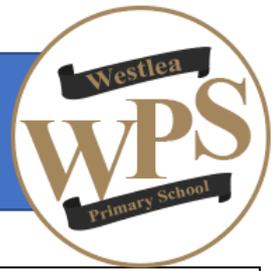


diversity
IS HAVING A SEAT AT THE TABLE.
inclusion
IS HAVING A VOICE, AND
belonging
IS HAVING THAT VOICE BE HEARD.
-LIZ FOSSLIE



In other news...

CARE values... **positive ACTION**



Watch out WORLD! We have some highly motivated, sharp and enthusiastic business people at Westlea Primary.

These Year 5 pupils worked together as a team to create a fabulous 'pop-up' shop.

Ella, Robyn, Eva, Ella-Grace and Veronica asked for a meeting with me a few weeks ago and pitched an idea they had to raise funds for school.



We discussed the project and decided that I would match fund profits raised. This in hindsight wasn't the best business move on my part! These business people set to work producing bracelets and crafts. They announced their stall in assembly and started their business venture on Friday.

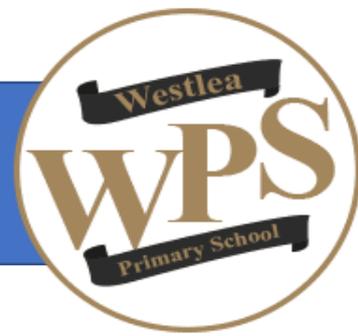
So far, they have raised £60 and intend to keep going. The money raised and match funded until £100 will then go towards these pupils personally selecting books for our school library.

We intend to place a sticker in these books so that if a pupil reads one, they will know who thought about them and helped with their learning.



What super stars and thoughtful pupils we have!

After-school club focus: Basketball CARE values... **ENDEAVOUR**



Pupil power created this club! Year 6 experienced Basketball coaching with Mr Appleby from the SSP and they LOVED IT! So much so that they asked Mr Unsworth if they could have an after-schools basketball club!

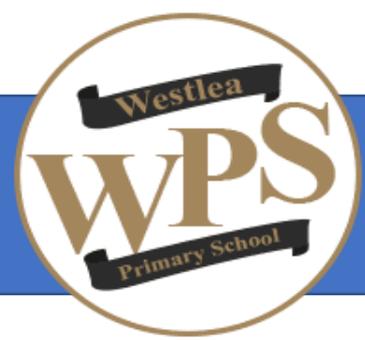
Mr Unsworth, began the club and the interest and enthusiasm for attending has been amazing. Year 6 are now focused on a tournament that school will take part in at East Durham Collage in March. We are hoping to enter two teams into the Year 6 competition.

Year 4 whole class of pupils will also attend a basketball festival on the same day. Take your opportunities to try new things. Get outside of your comfort zone and give it a go!

We wish them luck in their endeavours.



In other news... Class 6 Assembly



What a performance! Take a bow Class 6.

These talented and energetic pupils have performed their assembly which was all about being positive and having a go at trying new things. All children challenged themselves to sing, dance and act, and inspired others to do the same. There wasn't a dry eye in the house after a spectacular show. Class 6 you should be so proud of yourselves. You shone today as always! Thank you to all of the parents, carers and family members who came to support the children.



Thank you for all of our parents, carers, family and friends who came to support Class 6.



In other news...

Class 6 Bikeability



What a week for Class 6! They took part in Bikeability sessions and enjoyed trying something new, improving their cycling skills and safety knowledge. This is what Class 6 cyclists thought of their experience.

Reuben, "I liked the slow races."

Look at the focus and concentration from these great cyclists.



Olivia and Charlotte said, "We learned how to ride with one hand, so we could signal."

"10/10, I really enjoyed everything about it." Troy

What did Class 6 pupils learn?

SESSION FOCUS: Slow cycling and staying balanced. Fast cycling and stopping quickly but in control. Cycling with one hand on the handle so that they can use this hand to signal. Awareness of other cyclists in the same area and staying safe around them. Red light, green light and their meaning.

SOFT SKILLS: Focus, determination, concentration, listening to instructions, following instructions. Communication, team work, resilience.



"10/10, I had a really good morning." Emily

Grayson said, "I liked playing the red light/green light game."



At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

SNAP STREAK
97
DAYS

SNAPCHAT

AGE RESTRICTION
13+

Snapchat is a messaging app which allows users to send images, videos and texts to others. Its best-known feature is that anything sent 'disappears' 24 hours after it's been viewed; however, users are known to take screenshots or use another device to obtain a photo of their screen. In 2023, Snapchat added a chatbot function called 'My AI'.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

My AI is Snapchat's new chatbot, which replies to questions in a human-like manner. However, the software is still in its infancy and has significant drawbacks, such as biased, incorrect or misleading responses. There have already been numerous reports of young users turning to AI for medical help and diagnoses, which could be inaccurate and therefore potentially dangerous.

PREDATORS AND SCAMS

Predators can exploit Snapchat's disappearing messages by, for example, telling a user they have naked photos of them and will post them unless they're paid. Snapchat's own research found that 65% of teenagers had experienced this – on this app or others. This likely isn't helped by 'SnapMaps' – a feature which highlights your exact position in real-time. This is meant to help friends keep track of each other, but could be used for more sinister reasons.

MY EYES ONLY

Snapchat has a hidden photo vault called 'My Eyes Only'. Teens can conceal sensitive photos and videos from parents and carers in this folder, which is protected by a PIN. You can check for this by clicking on the icon which looks like two playing cards. This takes you to the 'Memories' folder which stores photos, stories and the My Eyes Only folder.

SCREEN TIME ADDICTION

Snapchat prioritises user engagement, with features like streaks (messaging the same person every day to build up a high score). The app also has sections called 'Discover' and 'Spotlight', which show tailored content to each user. However, this could also be seen as an attempt to hook users into watching videos endlessly. Furthermore, constant notifications can lure people into using the app.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Some content on Snapchat simply isn't suitable for children. The hashtags used to group content are determined by the poster, so even an innocent search term could still yield age-inappropriate results. The app's 'disappearing messages' feature also makes it easy for young people to share explicit images on impulse – so sexting continues to be a risk associated with Snapchat.

ONLINE PRESSURES

Although many of Snapchat's filters are designed to entertain or amuse, the 'beautify' effects on photos can set unrealistic body image expectations – creating feelings of inadequacy in younger users. Snapchat now also has 'priority' notifications (which still get displayed even if a device is in 'do not disturb' mode), increasing the pressure on users to log back in and interact.

Advice for Parents & Educators

UTILISE PARENTAL CONTROLS

Snapchat's 'Family Centre' lets you view the details of the child's account – their friends list and who they've spoken to in the last week – and report any concerns. You must invite a child to the Family Centre for them to join. To keep the child's location hidden on the app, go into settings and turn on 'Ghost Mode' and 'Hide Live Location', and ensure they know not to share their location with anyone.

BLOCK AND REPORT

If a stranger does connect with a child on Snapchat and begins to make them feel uncomfortable through bullying, pressure to send explicit images or by sending sexual images to them, the child can tap the three dots on that person's profile and report or block them. There are options to state why they're reporting that user – such as annoying or malicious messages, spam or masquerading as someone else.

FAMILIARISE YOURSELF

Before you allow a child to download Snapchat, download it yourself and familiarise yourself with the app. Snapchat has produced a parents' guide to the app to help you understand how it works and any protections they have in place. A link for this can be found in the sources below.

ENCOURAGE OPEN DISCUSSIONS

Snapchat's risks can be easier to handle if you nurture an open dialogue. For example, discuss My AI's responses to questions and how reliable they are. Talk about scams and blackmail before letting children sign up. If they're lured into a scam, encourage them to tell you immediately. Talk openly and non-judgementally about sexting, emphasising its inherent risks. Furthermore, explain how popular 'challenges' on the platform can have harmful consequences.

Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/snapchat-2021>