

Summer 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; **Cooperation, Achievement, Resilience and Empowerment**

KEY DATES

JUNE

12th – SCHOOL CLOSED – INSET

Week of 15th – Sports week

17th-19th – Y6 Residential trip

22nd – Sports Day

JULY

1st – Y1/2/3/4 Athletics

2nd – Welcome to Y6 meeting

3rd Moving up day

3rd – Welcome to R+Y1 meeting

6th Enterprise Day

7th – Welcome to Y4+Y5 meeting

8th - Summer Run

9th -Welcome to Y2+Y3 meeting

10th – Class 1 Assembly

15th – Y6 Bowling and silent disco

16th – Leavers Assembly

17th – Break up for Summer

It has been a very busy and engaging second week back, with lots of activities and events happening across the week. Unfortunately, the weather has disrupted some of our plans. Well done to our Year 4 and Year1/2 pupils who have undertaken assessments this week.

Monday, Year 5 and Year 6 pupils were invited to Seaham High School for their talented pupils to perform Oliver. It was a wonderful opportunity for our pupils and they were impressed with the performance. It was lovely to see past Westlea pupils on the stage.

Tuesday, our Year 6 basketball team took part in the County Finals held at Bishop Auckland College. They remain unbeaten all year, coming second in the whole of the county. At school, we welcomed parents and carers into school for our Reception cohort for 2026-2027. An exciting first step in beginning to settle the children into Westlea and the exciting journey ahead. We look forward to building strong relationships, working together and supporting your child in the years ahead in their educational journey.

Tuesday afternoon, Mrs Morrow and the Rights Respecting Team (Y1-Y6 pupils) held a pop in session with interactive activities. The aim of the carousel was to explain that we are a Right Respecting School and this is an integral part of all that we do at Westlea. Thank you to those parents, carers and Governors who attended the event and supported our children.

Wednesday, Class 5, as part of their history learning visited Christ Church for an immersive mining experience and to see real artefacts from the 1808 Seaham mining explosion.

Thursday, we were delighted for Class 2 to share some learning and performing with their parents and carers. These pupils performed beautifully, showing their growing confidence and their talents. These moments across the year show the caring, talented and happy pupils in every class.

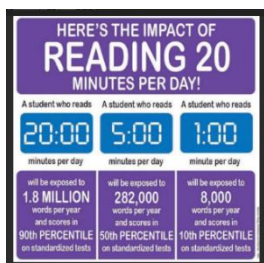
Friday, school is closed to pupils due to a staff training day. School will reopen on Monday 15th June.

Finally, I am very pleased to share that we have more improvements and developments planned across the school, with our outdoor wooden furniture and Class 2 area completing next steps in projects.

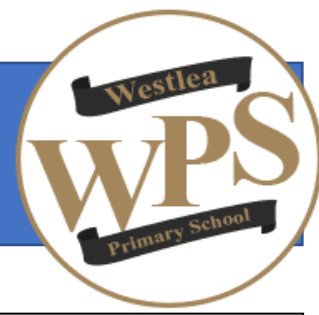
Have a lovely weekend.
Mrs Scothern



Rights Respecting Team: Find out about their special event that was held this week.



THIS WEEK'S ATTENDANCE



	WE 12/06/26
Class 1	96.4%
Class 2	89.7%
Class 3	88%
Class 4	97.1%
Class 5	86.1%
Class 6	96.2%
Class 7	95.3%
Class 8/9	94.7%

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 3 classes reached 96% or above.

Keep up the great work!

Our whole school attendance for WE 12/06/26 is 93.5%

Our attendance for the year to date is 94.8%

Our target for this half term is **96%** we are currently at 95.3%



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 1 – Art session
- Class 4 – Forest school in Westlea woods
- Class 6 – Field/ninja track time

THIS WEEK'S AWARDS



Head Teacher's Award

Zainab, Amelia and Isla D (Y6) for welcoming new parents/carers to school. Being great role models for other pupils across school.

INDIVIDUAL CLASS STAR OF THE WEEK AWARDS

	WE 12/06/26
Class 1	Paisley
Class 2	Arlo
Class 3	Arthur
Class 4	Ruby
Class 5	Dakota
Class 6	Jaylen
Class 7	Aria
Class 8 and 9	Harper and Malaya

RIGHTS RESPECTING AWARDS

	WE 12/06/26
Class 1	Eleanor
Class 2	Kayden
Class 3	Ria
Class 4	Ruby
Class 5	Kataleiya
Class 6	Emily
Class 7	Ivery
Class 8 and 9	Eden and Kenzi

**Next Week's Right of the week-
Article 12 – we have the right to be listened to.**

Character values: CARE

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

Pupil discussions:

Mrs Scothern spoke to the Rights Respecting Group this week. They were keen to share all of the preparation involved in the Rights Respecting Carousel and enjoyed showing her all of the planned activities. The pupils were articulate and engaged in their tasks and roles. They displayed our CARE values for the term and were a credit to themselves and their families.



Head teachers awards: Our CARE values this term are... Cooperation, Achievement, Resilience and Empowerment

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



Reader of the week:

Class 1 – Miller
Class2 - Nevaeh
Class3 – Whole class
Class4 - Lydia
Class5 – Alex
Class6 - Autumn
Class7 - Paisley
Year6 – Abbi + Blake

Writer of the week:

Class 1 – Arthur
Class2 – Indy
Class3 - Laynee
Class4 - Charlie
Class5 - George
Class6 - Jaylen
Class7 – Carson
Year6 – Isla C + Gracie

Mathematician of the week:

Class 1 - Shanai
Class2 - Archie
Class3 – Danni-Leigh
Class4 - Mailarni
Class5 - Esmee
Class6 - Archie
Class7 - Zak
Year6 – Nirvana + Ava

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

Keep up your great learning
attitude.

In other news... Class 2 Assembly

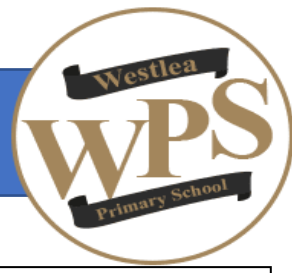


There was some great speakers
and you all followed your adults'
directions really well.

This week it was the pupils in Class 2's turn to shine in their class assembly.
They sang and signed many songs with many different helpful messages.

Class 2 children showed a building confidence for speaking and singing in
front of others and performed to the whole school on Wednesday. It was
beautiful!

Summer Term CARE values



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

Every term we focus on four of our school **CARE values**. These values have been carefully selected to reflect, nurture, inspire and equip our pupils towards having a **strong personal character**. They are linked to **personal characteristics** and **British values** and will provide them with solid foundations to move onto the next steps of their learning and life's challenges.

The Summer term **CARE values** typically mean and how we help shape behaviour, character and the culture of our school community.

Cooperation

What it means: Working together and helping each other. It's about combining effort, sharing responsibilities and helping one another out.

At Westlea it looks like;

- Teamwork: Joining in with others to get something done.
- Mutual support: It means listening, sharing ideas, taking turns, and being kind even when you don't agree.
- Cooperating; Everyone feels included and the job gets done faster and better.

Achievement

What it means: Doing your best and being proud of what you accomplish.

At Westlea it looks like;

Achievement isn't just about getting everything right.

- Trying hard.
- Learning new things.
- Noticing how much you've improved.
- Every time you learn a new skill, finish a task, or reach a goal, that's an achievement.

Resilience

What it means: Keeping going, even when something is hard. Resilience is your inner strength.

At Westlea it looks like;

- It's what helps you bounce back when things don't go your way.
- Being resilient means you don't give up straight away—you try again.
- Ask for help, and believe you can get better with practice.

Empowerment

What it means: Feeling confident, capable, and ready to make good choices.

At Westlea it looks like;

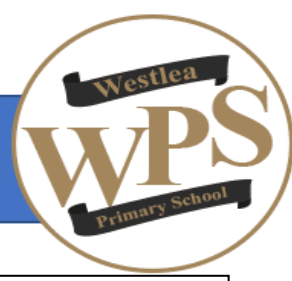
- You believe in yourself.
- Know that your voice matters.
- Having the courage to share your ideas, make decisions, and take responsibility for your actions.
- When you feel empowered, you know you can make a positive difference.

Why These Values Matter at Westlea Primary School

Together, these CARE values help build a **positive school culture** where children learn not just academically but also socially and morally. Westlea Primary use such values to:

- Support **behaviour expectations** and shape how pupils treat one another.
- Promote **character development**, preparing students for life beyond school.
- Create a sense of **community and shared purpose** among pupils.

'Head Teacher's chat'



Pupils who receive Star of the week for their class are invited to have a hot chocolate, a sweet treat and a chat with Mrs Scothern.

This week's chat focused on memories and memorable moments from this year. What have the pupils enjoyed, what have they found enjoyable about coming to school this year.

These weekly discussions, give pupils a moment to reflect and talk about topics that matter to them and us at school. They share news and mix with other aged pupils and this forges a sense of community and promotes our CARE values.



Paisley: **Egg Jarping at Easter!**

Poppy: **Reading the Stick man book**- everyone agreed it was a great story!

Arlo: Playing in the **reading area** and **making things** in class. **I like my classroom.**

Addison: I like playing **football** outside in the **MUGA.**

Parker: When I completed a full page of **writing.** I can do more than that now too!

Ruby: I enjoy lots of **writing** in my class. We are doing writing about our **history** topic. I write a lot.

Olivia: Maths work- I have enjoyed practising for our **times tables** and have gotten really good at them. I also love being in the **Rights Respecting Group.** We did a special event this week in school.

Jaylen: The **head teacher's chat** is fun to do and I also like **English a lot.**

Aria: I loved it when Jess (Sports coach) came in and Class 7 did the **Blaze Pods game.** It was very competitive. I've enjoyed the **NHS decider skills** and the **Artist we have in school.** We are learning about the Ocean.

William: The **police visit with Jet** (police dog). I also really enjoyed the **visit with the drone** and we got to go outside and see how it operates!

Swimming and Bike ability: All of the pupils who completed these experiences and lessons thought they were excellent and are looking forward to more next year.

Maggie: **All of the subjects we learn.** I am really enjoying **post SATs activities.** We are still learning but now practising for our **end of year performance** as well.

I have also enjoyed all of the **sports competitions** that I have been to this year.

Harper: I am enjoying the **athletics** at this minute.

Ava: **Practising for the play** at the end of year. It's giving us all a different focus. We also went down to see **Seaham High School's performance** last week which has inspired us.

Isla C: I Enjoyed the **careers visit** where we were project managers and had to plan where the water was going to be lay on a map. That was really engaging. I have loved all of the **sporting opportunities- cricket** has been the most memorable.

Lilly C: I enjoyed the **Northern girl careers experience** and I loved the **colour run.**

Everyone remember the **'When I grow up day'** careers event and love all the experiences linked to **careers and learning.**

There were **lots to talk about** and **lots to choose from!**

What would be your most memorable moment this year?

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.



Look

What colours stand out to you?

What shape do you see repeated in

this painting? Can you count the

number of times it appears?

Does it look like anything to you?

Imagine you could step inside the

painting. What would it feel like?

Alma Thomas loved to explore colour—which she did as an artist and art teacher, teaching in Washington, DC, USA public schools for over thirty-five years. Many of her paintings include only one colour or a few colours. Her paintings show her love of nature and music.

Alma Thomas
(1891 –1978)



Abstract Art

Artist of the Month

June

Sir Isaac Newton
(1643-1727)

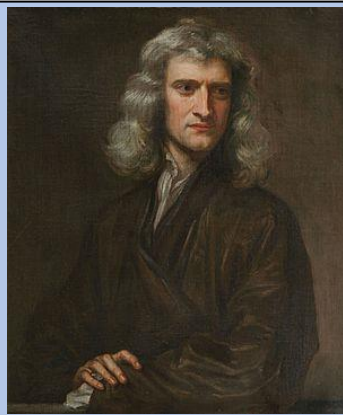
Newton's Amazing Discoveries

Newton used [mathematics](#) to explain how the [universe](#) works. He created laws of motion and gravity. These laws are like math rules that explain how objects move when a force pushes or pulls them.

In 1687, Isaac published his most famous book, *Principia*. In this book, he explained three basic [laws of motion](#). He also shared his idea, or theory, about [gravity](#). Gravity is the force that makes things fall down. For example, if a [pencil](#) falls off a desk, it lands on the floor, not the ceiling.

Newton also used his laws to show that [planets](#) orbit the [sun](#) in oval shapes, not perfect circles. He also discovered [diffraction](#), which is how light spreads out. This led him to make big discoveries in physics.

Isaac Newton was a brilliant scientist and inventor. He made huge contributions to physics, mathematics, and optics.



Scientist of the Month



June

June

Musician of the Month

Oasis

Rock band

Oasis is an English rock band formed in Manchester in 1991. The band is known for its catchy songs and energetic performances. They gained many fans around the world with hits like "Wonderwall" and "Champagne Supernova." The band had two main brothers, Noel and Liam Gallagher, who wrote most of their songs. Oasis helped shape the 1990s music scene so much that many people still listen to their music today!



In other news... Attendopoly prizes



Congratulations to classes 1, 2, 4, 6. They collectively achieved our target attendance figure of 96% or above for a week's attendance. They then rolled the dice and landed on some exciting enrichment activities.

Class 1 enjoyed a fruit platter with an extra special chocolate treat for getting an amazing 100% attendance!



Class 6 - enjoyed a mindfulness session



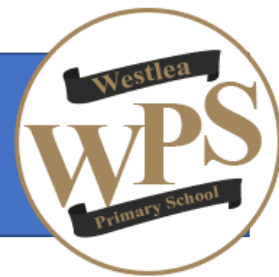
Class 4 got £10 to spend – they have decided on ice lollies for the whole class.



Class 2 - had an extra PE session after their sing-a-long rehearsal for key stage two.



In other news... County Basketball



Our year 6 basketball team remain unbeaten and have come away with a well-deserved silver medal at the County finals. In a league of 8 teams who had all won their district competitions they behaved wonderfully and supported each other. The format was different to our previous competitions and the pupils coped with the changes very well, coping with a different court lay out and a different size ball too!



In other news... Sports Day and Y5/6 Athletics

Weather disrupts planned Sporting Events



Unfortunately, EYFS and Year5/6 Athletics have been cancelled events this week. Disappointing for our youngest children as well as the Y5/6 Westlea Athletics Team.

Y5/6 Athletics update:

In the Y5/6 Athletics event, the competition winners secure a place in the county team. The sports partnership are working hard in the background to try and get the event reorganised or have suggested a possible solution.

The selection process for County Finals:

The SSP will visit schools in the coming days to complete mini athletic events where they will record scores (times and distances) and then compare them to the other schools. The athletes with the fastest times and longest throws will then be selected.

Good luck to our athletes!

In other news... Seaham High Shine!



Year 5 and 6 received an invite from Seaham High School to attend their brilliant production of Oliver Twist. It was an amazing show and incredibly professional –it was a delight to see some of our previous pupils shine and their talents developed by such an outstanding drama and theatre team.

Year 6 are now looking forward to experiencing this when they join Seaham High in September. Some of the pupils even danced their way back up to school singing the songs.

It was a great experience for all and a lovely way to add to the transition experience of moving up to secondary school for both Year 5 and Year 6.

The lighting is so cool – it really adds to the atmosphere.

Please can we have 'Consider yourself' on in breakfast club to sing to?

That was amazing – they have such good voices!

I can't wait to do this when I come to this school.



In other news...

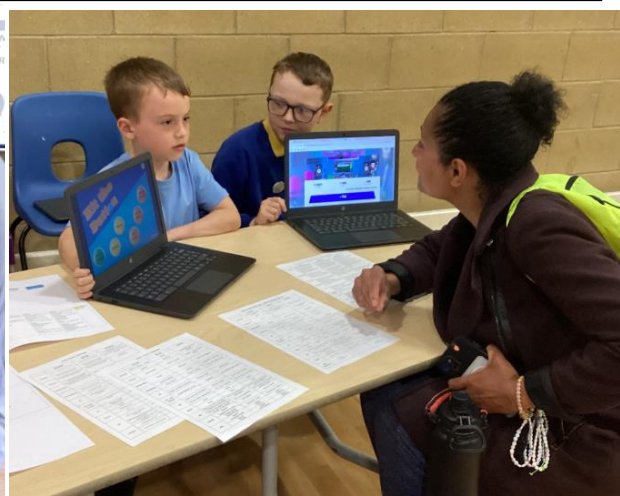
Rights Respecting Carousel

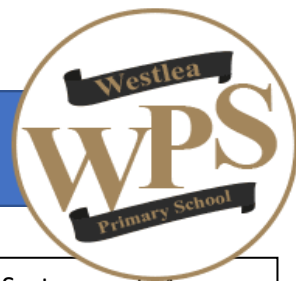
Our rights respecting committee held a wonderful event for parents and carers. They worked hard behind the scenes making displays and resources to showcase some of the rights we celebrate and discuss in school.

Adults chatted to the children about what the rights meant to them and what they would like to see happen in our school.

We had some great feedback and the pupils were very confident and proud of their special role in school.

Thank you to everyone who supported the children, we really appreciate the time spent with us.





In other news...

Reception new starters meeting

Mrs Scothern shared what makes Westlea Primary a special place to learn and some of our key messages.

On Tuesday morning Mrs Robson, Miss Surtees and Mrs Scothern, welcomed our Reception Cohort 2026-2027 parents and carers into school.

It was lovely to welcome new families to our school community as well as parents/carers already within our school community.



Mrs Robson shared the information pack and parents/carers were able to visit some of the EYFS areas that will be used for teaching and learning.

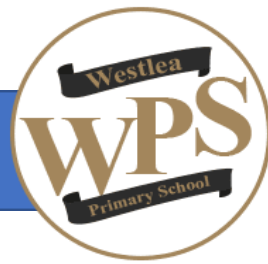


Character values: CARE

Autumn Term	Spring Term	Summer Term
C ommunity	C ompassion	C ooperation
A mbition	A ctions	A chievement
R espect	R esponsibility	R esilience
E njoyment	E ndeavour	E mpowerment

In other news...

TT Check Y4



This week All of the Year 4 pupils across England have taken part in a Timetable multiplication check. Well done to our Year 4 pupils. Here is some information about the test and why knowing your tables is a key part of your maths learning.

What is the Multiplication Tables Check (MTC)?

The **Multiplication Tables Check** is a national assessment for pupils in **Year 4** in England. It helps schools check whether children know their multiplication tables up to **12 × 12**.

How does it work?

- Completed on a computer or tablet.
- Contains **25 multiplication questions**.
- Children have **6 seconds** to answer each question.
- The test usually takes less than **5 minutes**.
- Answers are entered using a keyboard or on-screen keypad.

MULTIPLICATION TABLE			
1x	2x	3x	4x
1 × 1 = 1	1 × 2 = 2	1 × 3 = 3	1 × 4 = 4
2 × 1 = 2	2 × 2 = 4	2 × 3 = 6	2 × 4 = 8
3 × 1 = 3	3 × 2 = 6	3 × 3 = 9	3 × 4 = 12
4 × 1 = 4	4 × 2 = 8	4 × 3 = 12	4 × 4 = 16
5 × 1 = 5	5 × 2 = 10	5 × 3 = 15	5 × 4 = 20
6 × 1 = 6	6 × 2 = 12	6 × 3 = 18	6 × 4 = 24
7 × 1 = 7	7 × 2 = 14	7 × 3 = 21	7 × 4 = 28
8 × 1 = 8	8 × 2 = 16	8 × 3 = 24	8 × 4 = 32
9 × 1 = 9	9 × 2 = 18	9 × 3 = 27	9 × 4 = 36
10 × 1 = 10	10 × 2 = 20	10 × 3 = 30	10 × 4 = 40
11 × 1 = 11	11 × 2 = 22	11 × 3 = 33	11 × 4 = 44
12 × 1 = 12	12 × 2 = 24	12 × 3 = 36	12 × 4 = 48
5x	6x	7x	8x
1 × 5 = 5	1 × 6 = 6	1 × 7 = 7	1 × 8 = 8
2 × 5 = 10	2 × 6 = 12	2 × 7 = 14	2 × 8 = 16
3 × 5 = 15	3 × 6 = 18	3 × 7 = 21	3 × 8 = 24
4 × 5 = 20	4 × 6 = 24	4 × 7 = 28	4 × 8 = 32
5 × 5 = 25	5 × 6 = 30	5 × 7 = 35	5 × 8 = 40
6 × 5 = 30	6 × 6 = 36	6 × 7 = 42	6 × 8 = 48
7 × 5 = 35	7 × 6 = 42	7 × 7 = 49	7 × 8 = 56
8 × 5 = 40	8 × 6 = 48	8 × 7 = 56	8 × 8 = 64
9 × 5 = 45	9 × 6 = 54	9 × 7 = 63	9 × 8 = 72
10 × 5 = 50	10 × 6 = 60	10 × 7 = 70	10 × 8 = 80
11 × 5 = 55	11 × 6 = 66	11 × 7 = 77	11 × 8 = 88
12 × 5 = 60	12 × 6 = 72	12 × 7 = 84	12 × 8 = 96
9x	10x	11x	12x
1 × 9 = 9	1 × 10 = 10	1 × 11 = 11	1 × 12 = 12
2 × 9 = 18	2 × 10 = 20	2 × 11 = 22	2 × 12 = 24
3 × 9 = 27	3 × 10 = 30	3 × 11 = 33	3 × 12 = 36
4 × 9 = 36	4 × 10 = 40	4 × 11 = 44	4 × 12 = 48
5 × 9 = 45	5 × 10 = 50	5 × 11 = 55	5 × 12 = 60
6 × 9 = 54	6 × 10 = 60	6 × 11 = 66	6 × 12 = 72
7 × 9 = 63	7 × 10 = 70	7 × 11 = 77	7 × 12 = 84
8 × 9 = 72	8 × 10 = 80	8 × 11 = 88	8 × 12 = 96
9 × 9 = 81	9 × 10 = 90	9 × 11 = 99	9 × 12 = 108
10 × 9 = 90	10 × 10 = 100	10 × 11 = 110	10 × 12 = 120
11 × 9 = 99	11 × 10 = 110	11 × 11 = 121	11 × 12 = 132
12 × 9 = 108	12 × 10 = 120	12 × 11 = 132	12 × 12 = 144

What do children need to know?

All multiplication facts up to **12 × 12**, including:

- 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 times tables.
- Related division facts can also help understanding.

Example Questions

- $7 \times 8 = 56$
- $12 \times 4 = 48$
- $9 \times 6 = 54$
- $11 \times 7 = 77$
- $8 \times 12 = 96$

How to Prepare

- Practise times tables regularly.
- Use quick-fire recall games.
- Focus on tables that are harder to remember (such as 6, 7, 8, and 12).
- Try online multiplication check practice tests.

Why is it Important?

Knowing times tables helps with:

- Division
- Fractions
- Problem solving
- More advanced maths in later years

A score of **25 out of 25** is the maximum score, but the main aim is to build confidence and fluency with multiplication facts.

MULTIPLICATION CHART												
x	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
2	2	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24
3	3	6	9	12	15	18	21	24	27	30	33	36
4	4	8	12	16	20	24	28	32	36	40	44	48
5	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60
6	6	12	18	24	30	36	42	48	54	60	66	72
7	7	14	21	28	35	42	49	56	63	70	77	84
8	8	16	24	32	40	48	56	64	72	80	88	96
9	9	18	27	36	45	54	63	72	81	90	99	108
10	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100	110	120
11	11	22	33	44	55	66	77	88	99	110	121	132
12	12	24	36	48	60	72	84	96	108	120	132	144

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How can I help my child learn their timetables?

Children begin learning their tables in EYFS and KS1

Engagement and joining in is the key!

Practise counting in 2s, 5s, 10s- Journey's in the car or on the bus are great moments for counting.

Take turns in counting or begin counting in a set number- stop and ask your child what the next number is. Take turns.

NUMBOTS and TTRS are both great apps to use for Timetables

Pencil and paper- good old-fashioned writing them down, again, and again and again.

In other news...

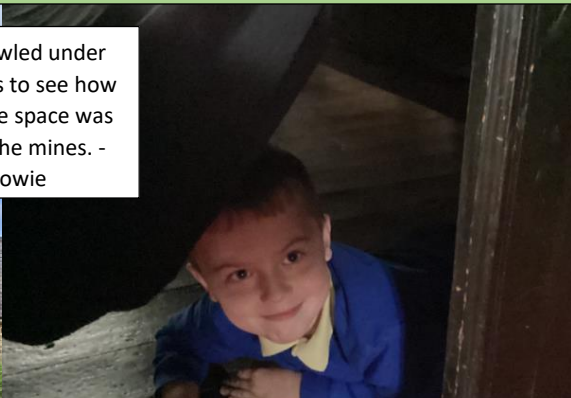
Class 5: Heritage visit to Christ Church

On Wednesday Class 5 had an enrichment visit focused on our local heritage. As part of the history curriculum, the Year3 pupils have a local history topic linked to our mining past which then helps the children understand the rich mining past in Seaham and our local area. In particular, the Seaham mining explosion in 1880. Christ Church has artefacts from this event that enable the children to have a deeper connection to this part of history.

The pupils were able to pause and remember: They lit a candle to remember the men and boys who lost their lives, especially Ric Cole and the 7 men with whose bodies were found underground beside 'the plank' bearing their last message to their families. We also appreciated Rev Scott (1st Vicar at Christ Church) who supported the community in the aftermath of the disaster.

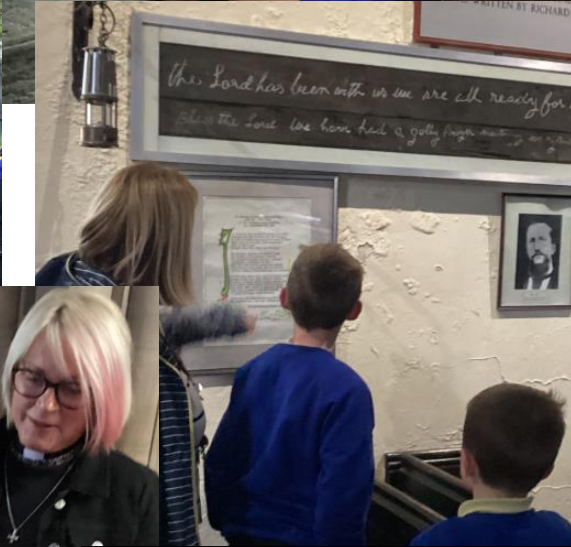


We crawled under the seats to see how small the space was inside the mines. - Bowie



We got to see a real miner's lamp and a bird like in the mines. - Amelia B

We saw the memorial of the miners that died in the 1880 explosion. - Morgan



The pupils held a miners' lamp and appreciated the physical fitness and strength the miners needed to do their job. They also held fossilised molluscs and muscles that had been found down the mines and lastly climbed through makeshift mining shafts under the pews to appreciate the confined spaces these brave men worked in. A great immersive experience!

We saw the message left by one of the miners. - Archie



We went to Christ Church to learn about the coal mines. We saw the memorials outside. - George

12 Top Tips for Parents and Educators USING GENERATIVE AI IN THE CLASSROOM

Since the launch of ChatGPT in late 2022, the education sector has already seen the potential of generative AI as a tool for planning, content creation and learning support. However, this technology is accelerating so quickly that some teachers aren't sure how to make the most of it. This guide offers some tips for implementing generative AI in your classroom.

ASK WHAT IT NEEDS

With ChatGPT, you could begin by asking what it needs you to input to provide the best response. You could say something like: "I want you to act as a [subject] teacher. I will provide the syllabus and you will provide me with a scheme of work. First, tell me what you need to know from me to create an excellent, differentiated scheme of work."

WHAT IS GENERATIVE AI?

Generative AI encompasses the family of artificial intelligences capable of creating content. This includes large language models such as ChatGPT and Google Bard, text-to-image models including Midjourney and Stable Diffusion, the newer crop of apps which can create videos from text, like RunwayML, and music-focused software such as Google's MusicLM.

THINK BEYOND 'THE NORM'

Gamma is an app which uses AI to plan presentations, while Notion software employs AI to change the tone and length of text and explore ideas. Even without the AI elements, however, both can be worthwhile additions for any school as online alternatives to applications such as Word and PowerPoint. Furthermore, they are free to use, with free AI credits included.

START BROAD AND ZOOM IN

If you ask ChatGPT to give you a fully differentiated and resourced scheme of work or lesson plan from just one prompt, you'll probably be disappointed. Instead, begin by requesting a weekly outline; then a daily breakdown; then a single lesson; then the resources. That way, you'll get a lot more detail and can tweak the output if it's not quite right.

SPECIFIC ROLES CAN BE HELPFUL

Because language models like ChatGPT are trained on human data, they're good at roleplaying. Asking it to assume a specific role – and telling it the tone you wish it to take – will likely make its output closer to what you're looking for. For example: "You will take the role of an expert AQA GCSE maths teacher. Write a syllabus guide for AQA GCSE maths in a friendly, reassuring tone."

CREATE 'CHARACTER' BOTS

You can create your own chat bots, granting students free access to ChatGPT without the need to log in. On zapier.com, choose 'Interfaces' then select 'Chatbot'. Filling in the fields allows you to customise the chatbot's persona – 'helpful teacher' or 'literary analyst', for example – and create an action that copies its response to the clipboard. You can then make this available to your students.

AVOID PLAGIARISM DETECTORS

We advise caution in using AI plagiarism checkers as they aren't reliable yet: they're easy to fool and often give false positives. Some students have already been wrongly accused of cheating, which can damage their relationship with their teacher. It's often better to use your own judgement (if you know your own students' style well enough) or consider other options, such as controlled assessments.

TRY THE OPEN AI PLAYGROUND

On platform.openai.com, click the 'Playground' option. Choose the chat function from the drop-down menu, then select the 16K model. This will quadruple the token size – meaning the programme's memory – meaning that you can paste in an entire chapter of a novel, an act from a play, or a section of a textbook, and ask the AI questions about it. This can make the GPT model much more useful.

DIFFERENT TOOLS FOR DIFFERENT JOBS

ChatGPT is impressive, but it's not the only tool in the box. Perplexity is a user-friendly, web-enabled AI that runs the most up-to-date version of ChatGPT in the background – while Pi is a friendlier-sounding chatbot that students can get into discussions with on almost any subject. They both encourage learners to go deeper by asking probing questions or suggesting ways to explore a topic.

SET UP AN 'ASK THE AI' STATION

It can be difficult for school-age children to effectively engage with ChatGPT, as signing in requires a phone number and two-factor authentication. It can also be problematic regarding data protection in many countries. Instead, you could set up one or two laptops in the classroom as 'Ask ChatGPT Workstations', which you can direct your students to use at appropriate moments.

BE CRITICAL USERS

Because they sound so convincing, generative AI's occasional missteps can cause problems. Teach your students to think critically about what AI tells them and fact check its responses, particularly those that cite references. Models like Google Bard, while good for providing prompts, have already garnered a reputation for confidently making up references and even website URLs.

GENERATE LOTS OF IDEAS

When exploring a topic with ChatGPT, ask it to generate ten, twenty, or even fifty ideas around the theme. For example: "Give me ten interesting and unusual lesson starters to hook my Year 6 class into the water cycle." You can then overlay your human intelligence and choose the best option for your class. Chances are, some won't be suitable, but you only need one to fit your needs!

TAILOR YOUR RESOURCES

ChatGPT is excellent for differentiating resources to fit specific audiences, as it can rewrite any resource to better suit a different age or ability range. You could also ask it for alternative ways to present information, such as explaining a complex concept in the style of a movie scene or giving three simpler analogies that a much younger pupil would be more likely to understand. t

Meet Our Expert

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