



Hello Everyone,

What a wonderful and busy week we have had at Westlea Primary School!

Our **Harvest Festival assemblies** for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 were a real highlight. The quality of speaking, singing and performances across the school was fantastic, with every class helping to share an important message about harvest, gratitude and looking after others. It was wonderful to see the maturity, enjoyment and confidence of our pupils as they took to the stage. Every performance showed children who were proud to share their learning and eager to communicate an important message with our school community.

Our **Reception children also had a very special first visit to Christ Church**, where they met the Curate, Rev Sue Cooke. They enjoyed exploring this beautiful and special building and learning more about the church. This visit marks the beginning of what we hope will become a strong and meaningful partnership between Westlea Primary School and Christ Church for our youngest pupils.

Reading and enjoying books together has also been a lovely focus this week, with our EYFS *Stay and Read* sessions giving families the opportunity to share the joy of reading alongside their children. Thank you to everyone who came along and helped us celebrate the importance of reading.

Handwriting has been in the spotlight! As a staff team, we have been reflecting on the teaching, support and progression of handwriting from EYFS through to Year 6. This week, we are sharing our **Handwriting Progression Grid**. We hope this will give parents and carers a clear picture of the expectations at each stage and some useful ideas for supporting handwriting at home.

CARE Value Passport – Enjoying Our Westlea Woodland

Our Year 6 pupils have been embracing this term's CARE Value Passport challenges. One activity they have ticked off was **climbing a tree and enjoying the outdoors in our Westlea Woodland!**

It was wonderful to hear the children's responses afterwards and to see the enjoyment and sense of achievement they experienced. Sometimes the simplest childhood experiences create the biggest smiles – and our pupils certainly embraced this opportunity to get outdoors, take a few risks, explore and have fun. We hope you enjoy reading their reflections and seeing the photographs of their adventure.

World Mental Health Day

On Friday, the whole school came together wearing **yellow** to recognise World Mental Health Day. Our pupils took part in a special **Happiness Assembly**, where we thought about the things we can do to support our own happiness and wellbeing.

We explored the idea that happiness is something we can actively nurture. The more we make time for positive activities, connect with others, get outdoors, try new things and practise activities that bring us joy, the more opportunities we create to experience happiness. Just as with learning a new skill, **the more we practise something, the better we can become at it.**

It has been a week full of **community, creativity, learning, connection and enjoyment**, and we are incredibly proud of the enthusiasm and positive attitudes shown by our pupils.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support in helping us make Westlea such a vibrant and caring school community.

Have a wonderful weekend!

Mrs Scothern

KEY DATES

Week of 19th October – Healthy week
23rd of October – Glow in the dark disco

HALF TERM – break up 24th October return 3rd November
2nd November – INSET school closed

Week of 24th November – Book fair and open nights

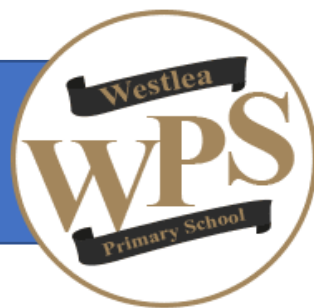
2nd December – Festive Run AM

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; **Community, Ambition, Respect and Enjoyment**

THIS WEEK'S ATTENDANCE



Attendance is one of the key indicators of success for children. Being at school every day - on time- ready to learn- really does make that much of a difference. Let's work together to make this happen. Please contact school if you have any attendance queries or concerns. Regards, Mrs Scothern, Mrs Davey and Mrs Simmons

	WE 09/10/26
Reception	94.8
Year 1	98.2
Year 2	99.3
Year 3	91.8
Year 4	97.9
Year 5	97.6
Year 6	93.5

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!

Keep up the great work!

Our whole school attendance for WE 09/10/26 is **95.4**

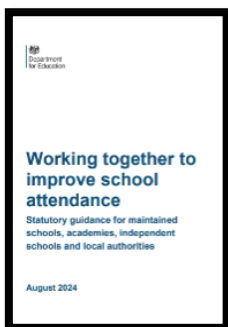
Our attendance for the year to date is **95.5**

Our target for this half term is **96%** we are currently at **95.5**

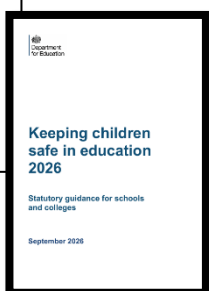
Ever wondered where school gets guidance for supporting families with attendance?

We use statutory guidance.

As a school we are also supported by the Local Authority and this week we met with a member of the Attendance Improvement Team to discuss the schools' attendance.



All Staff received updated training regarding updates to Keeping Children Safe In Education, that became statutory 1st September.



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 winners:

Year 1 – £10 spend

Year 2 – Extra cookie club

Year 4 – Ice lollies

Year 5 – Extra cookie club

THIS WEEK'S AWARDS



Head Teacher's Award

Tyler R – for excellent manners and being polite to staff members in school.

Layla C – for showing support and kindness to a friend this week.

INDIVIDUAL CLASS STAR OF THE WEEK AWARDS

	WB 09.10.26
Reception	Maeve
Year 1	Willow
Year 2	Reuben
Year 3	Frankie
Year 4	Kataleiya
Year 5	Winter
Year 6	Sophiya

RIGHTS RESPECTING AWARDS

	WB 09.10.26
Reception	Essa
Year 1	Evalyn
Year 2	Riah-daisy
Year 3	Violet
Year 4	Amelia B
Year 5	India
Year 6	Finely

Right of the week- Article 6 – The right to life and be healthy

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



Pupil discussions: Reading

A selection of pupils from across Year R to Y6 read with Mrs Scothern this week. They discussed the class texts they are reading and the author of the term.

What is a favourite story? Why?

How often do you read at home? What do you read?



CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Head teachers awards: Our CARE values this term are...Community, Ambition, Respect and Enjoyment

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:

Reception - Sarah

Year 1 - Theo

Year 2 - Oscar

Year 3 - James

Year 4- Archie

Year 5 – Olivia

Year 6 - Robyn

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:

Reception - Charlotte

Year 1 – Ollie F

Year 2 - Annie

Year 3 - Hallie

Year 4- Elliot

Year 5 - Harvey

Year 6 - Archie

Mathematician of the week:

Reception - Theo

Year 1 - Shanai

Year 2 - Koen

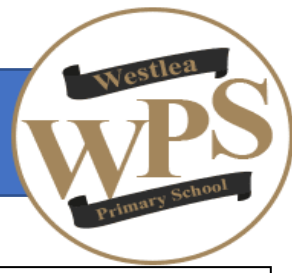
Year 3 - Mailarni

Year 4- George

Year 5 - Rueben

Year 6 - Evan

Autumn 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.

Community

What it means: We believe that everyone is an important part of our school community. Pupils learn the importance of working together, supporting others, and celebrating each other's successes. Through developing a strong sense of belonging, children learn empathy, teamwork, and how to make a positive contribution to the world around them.

How this helps our pupils:

- Builds positive relationships.
- Encourages kindness and inclusion.
- Develops teamwork and cooperation.
- Creates a sense of belonging and responsibility.

Ambition

What it means: We encourage all pupils to aim high and believe in their potential. Ambition means being willing to challenge yourself, work hard, and never give up when things become difficult. We want our children to have confidence in their abilities and aspirations for the future.

How this helps our pupils:

- Develops resilience and determination.
- Encourages a growth mindset.
- Increases confidence and self-belief.
- Inspires children to achieve their personal best.

Respect

What it means: Respect is fundamental to a happy and successful school. We teach our pupils to value themselves, others, and the environment. Children learn to listen carefully, accept differences, and treat everyone with kindness and consideration.

How this helps our pupils:

- Promotes positive behaviour.
- Develops understanding and tolerance.
- Encourages responsibility for actions.
- Builds strong and respectful relationships.

Enjoyment

What it means: Learning should be engaging, inspiring, and enjoyable. We want our pupils to be curious, enthusiastic, and excited about discovering new things. When children enjoy learning, they are more confident, motivated, and willing to take on new challenges.

How this helps our pupils:

- Develops a love of learning.
- Increases motivation and engagement.
- Encourages creativity and curiosity.
- Supports positive wellbeing and happiness.

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.

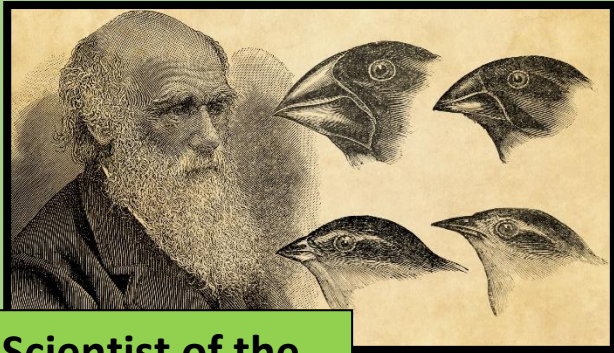
In other news...

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.

Charles Darwin (1809-1882)



Scientist of the Month

October

Charles Darwin

Charles Darwin was an important scientist who studied nature.

Early Life

Charles was born in England in 1809. He had five brothers and sisters. Charles's mother died when he was eight years old. His father was a doctor.

Becoming a Scientist

Charles went to University at Edinburgh and Cambridge. He became very interested in natural history.

Charles went on a journey on a ship called HMS Beagle in 1831. The voyage was to study creatures all around the world. He visited the Galapagos islands. Charles noticed the birds on the islands had differences to help them survive in their different habitats.



Theory of Evolution

Charles published a book called 'On the Origin of Species' in 1859. He described an idea called natural selection. This meant that creatures change over a long period of time to survive. Charles noticed that creatures with the best features to survive in their environment would pass these on to their young. Charles's ideas were known as the theory of evolution.

Later Life

Charles and his wife had 10 children. He died in 1882.

Fun Fact

A type of frog from Chile is called Darwin's frog after he discovered it.



Musician of the Month

Elvis Presley

October

Elvis Presley's top hits:

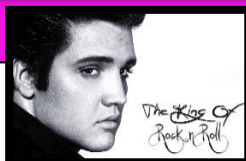
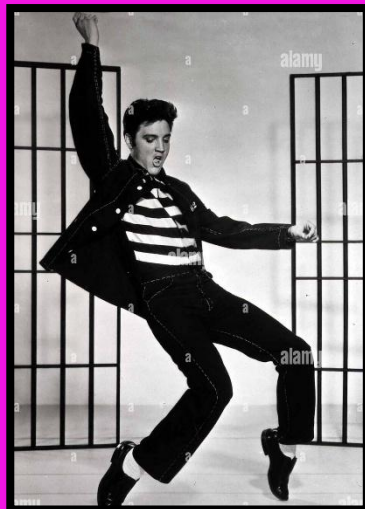
Suspicious Minds

Jailhouse Rock

Hound Dog

Can't Help Falling in Love

Heartbreak Hotel

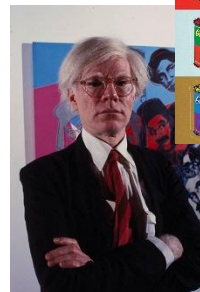


Fun Facts about Elvis

- **Name:** Elvis Presley
- **Profession:** Actor, Singer and Musician
- **Born:** January 8th, 1935 in Tupelo, Mississippi, United States
- **Died:** August 16th, 1977 in Memphis, Tennessee, United States
- **Resting Place:** Graceland Mansion Estates
- **Legacy:** Famous for being known as the king of rock and roll

October

Artist of the Month



**POP
ART**

Andy Warhol

Who is Andy Warhol?

Andy Warhol is one of the most famous artists, ever. From his soup to his hair, he is an art legend

Andy Warhol was an American pop artist.

He was born in 1928 and died in 1987.

One of Andy Warhol's most famous pieces of work is a print of the well-known actress Marilyn Monroe.

Pop artists also made art about popular things. For example, Warhol is famous for his print of a can of soup.

Andy Warhol often repeated his prints many times.

He used a method called *screen printing* to make many of his artworks.

In other news...

Overview of handwriting



Growing great hand writers at Westlea Primary.

From first marks to fluent, confident handwriting

As a staff, we have been reflecting on how we **teach, support and develop handwriting from EYFS through to Year 6**. We want every child to develop a handwriting style that is **fluent, legible, accurate and increasingly automatic**, so that they can concentrate on what they want to write rather than how they form their letters.

To help us achieve this, we have developed broad expectations for each year group. Sharing these with you means that **school and home can work together** to support your child's handwriting journey.

Our handwriting journey...

Grouping letters in to letter families help each learner to build upon familiar movements:

Curly Caterpillar family: c a o, d, g, q, s, e, f

Ladder family: l, i, t, j, u, y

One-armed robot: r, n, m, h, b, p, k

Zig-zag family: v, w, x, z



Year group	Handwriting Focus		
	Area of focus	Activities	End of year expectations
Reception	Gross motor control and correct formation	Daily fine and gross motor activities Posture and pencil grip explicitly taught Letter formation taught alongside phonics Letters revisited in families once most sounds are introduced Capital Letters introduced (names, labels, start of sentences) Emphasis on: - Starting points - Direction - Size in relation to others	By the end of reception: Printed script -Pupils sit correctly at a table with correct pencil grip Pupils use correct letter formation for the 26 <u>lower-case</u> letters. Begin to form some CAPITAL LETTERS (e.g. in commonly-used names, places) Begin to understand letter families and practise these with adult support.
Year 1	Consistency and automaticity	Daily focused handwriting practise Letter families systematically revisited Capital letters retaught methodically - formation - size and difference from lower case - when to use them	Printed script Pupils understand which letter belongs to which family and practise these (letters are formed in similar way) Pupils use correct letter formation for 26 lower case letters Pupils use correct letter formation for the 26 upper case letters Pupils leave word spaces Pupils use correct formation for numbers 0-9
Year 2	Consistency and automaticity- sizing, relation to other letters, sitting on line	Begin ensuring - Letters sit on the line - Consistent size - Correct spacing between words Children to form letters correctly and consistently-joining can then be taught. Targeted intervention for pupils not meeting standard.	Pupils position letters correctly in relation to the line (E.G. p not P) Pupils show consistency in size in lower case letters in relation to each other (tall and short letters, length of descenders etc) Pupils use consistent word spaces Pupils show consistency in size in writing Capital Letters Pupils show consistency in size in writing numbers

Year group	Handwriting Focus		
	Area of focus	Activities	End of year expectations
Year 3	Introduction of joins	Children to form letters correctly and consistently- joining can then be taught - Horizontal joins to letters without ascenders (e.g. oo, ow) - Horizontal letters with ascenders (e.g. ol, ot) - Diagonal joins to letters without ascenders (e.g. ai, ar, un) - Diagnoal joins to letters with ascenders (e.g. ul, it) - Tricky joins- see appendix Children learn: - When letters join - When do not join - How joins should not disort letter shapes Handwriting sessions continue alongside English lessons, as well as this being a focus embedded within English lessons themselves. Targeted intervention for pupils not meeting standard.	Pupils position letters correctly in relation to the line (E.G. p not P) Pupils show consistency in size in lower case letters in relation to each other (tall and short letters, length of descenders etc) Pupils use consistent word spaces Pupils show consistency in size in writing Capital Letters Pupils show consistency in size in writing numbers Plus: Pupils use horizontal and diagonal joins correctly after teaching/ in independednt work Pupils join/not join (in line with year group outcomes and policy) after teaching in independednt work.
Year 4	Securing joins and fluency	All join types revisted and practised Emphasis on; - Writing at speed - Maintaining legibility - Consistent size and spacing Handwriting expecatuions apply across the curriculum Daily practise of joins Y3 consolidation of all joins/ Y4 increasing speed and stamina Focus on neat presenttation in longer pieces. Targeted intervention for pupils not meeting standard.	Pupils use legible, joined script in independednt work Pupils join/not join, in line with handwriting policy, in independednt work
Year 5	Speed, stamina, consistency and targeted intervention	Handwriting applied in extended writing Fluency and consistency across subjects Common difficulties as noted by teachers in fromataive assessment (e.g. s being too tall) Targeted intervention for pupils not yet automatic: this will be focus during everyday teaching, as well as additional support	Pupils write in a legible and consistent style
Year 6	Speed, stamina, fluency, personal style and targeted intervention	Mature, fluent, joined handwriting Writing at length without loss of legibility Personal style may dvelop once core formation is secure Common difficulties as noted by teacher in fromative assessment (e.g capitals not being larger than lower case letters)	

In other news...

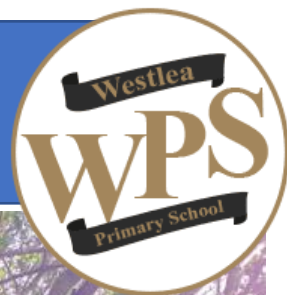
Attendopoly



Year R – Mindfulness session

In other news...

Year 6 Enrichment time



I loved how everyone included each other. – Luka

10/10
afternoon

I challenged myself to go as high as I could and I was really proud of myself.
- Hugo

As part of our enrichment time in Year 6 the children decided that they wanted to complete the Autumn – Enjoyment statement in their Care Values Passport “Learn the rules of Forest School through safe risk taking.”

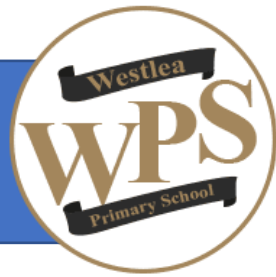
We used our time in the Westlea Woods to explore the area, climb trees and play games.

We can't wait to go back and try den building!



I loved how we all played together. - Cleo

In other news...
Harvest festival assembly
KS1 and KS2



Year 5



Year 3



Year 6





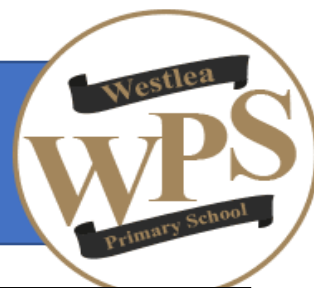
Year 4



Year 1



In other news... Bluebell and Primrose Family library time



Reading together from an early age is one of the most valuable things families can do to support children's learning and development. Sharing books helps children develop their vocabulary, listening and communication skills, imagination and understanding of the world around them. Most importantly, reading together creates special moments where children can enjoy stories, talk about pictures and characters, ask questions and develop a lifelong love of reading.

At **Westlea Primary School**, we believe that reading is a partnership between school and home. Our **Family Reading Time** gives parents, carers and children the opportunity to come into school, share a book together and enjoy the magic of reading in a relaxed and welcoming environment.



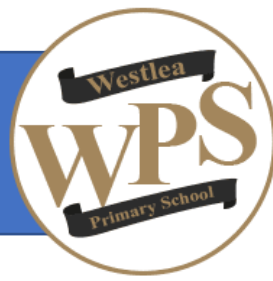
Whether it is listening to a story, talking about pictures, predicting what might happen next or simply enjoying a favourite book together, **every shared reading moment makes a difference.**

We look forward to welcoming you into school and sharing our love of reading with you and your children!

We would love to welcome more of our families to join us for Family Reading Time! Come along, choose a book, snuggle up together and enjoy some special reading time with your child. You don't need to be an expert reader — simply sharing a book, talking together and enjoying the story is what matters most.

In other news...

Christ Church Visit - Reception



Our reception pupils went for their visit to Christ Church this week to find out about Harvest time and what things happen at the church.

We looked at a map of Seaham to plan our route and talked about road safety and how to keep ourselves safe while out of school.

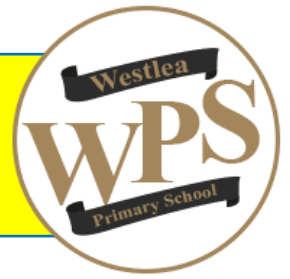
Reverend Eleanor welcomed us to church. We sang a song together, had a treasure hunt, dressed up, baptised some dolls, snuffed out a candle and made a flag to remind us of those who are special to us.

We finished our visit with juice and a biscuit and walked back to school.



In other news...

World Mental Health Day – Wear Yellow



Reception

Year 1



Year 2



Year 3



Year 4



Year 5



Year 6





This
information sheet
provides guidance on
the current laws for
e-scooters in
the UK

PARENT'S GUIDE TO ELECTRIC SCOOTER (E-SCOOTERS)



County Durham and Darlington

ROAD SAFETY PARTNERSHIP
engineering education enforcement

WHAT ARE E-SCOOTERS?

- E-Scooters are classed as "Powered transporters". This term covers a variety of personal transport devices which are powered by a **Motor**.
- You can legally buy an e-scooter but **cannot ride it** on a public road, cycle lane or pavement.
ONLY PRIVATE LAND

THEY ARE NOT TOYS!

DID YOU KNOW?

- E-Scooters are illegal for use in any public space unless rented as part of a government trial
- Riding an e-scooter on the road is against the law as per the Road Traffic Act of 1988 and the Highway Act of 1835
- E-scooters are prohibited from being used on cycle tracks, cycle lanes or other spaces dedicated to pedal cycle use.
- Privately owned e-scooter can only be ridden on private land.



10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

SUPPORTING CHILDREN TO MANAGE CONFLICT EFFECTIVELY

Disagreement is a natural part of human interaction. This can seem particularly true when dealing with the sensitive issues that arise for secondary-aged pupils. This guide brings you 10 top tips which can help prevent conflicts arising or mitigate their impacts when they do.

1 INSPIRE RESPONSIBILITY

The best approaches to conflict resolution are restorative. This means that rather than adults imposing their own solutions on children who have had a disagreement, they should work with them. Allowing them to handle it can feel empowering to young people and will hopefully teach them to manage their own disputes as they move towards adult life.

2 ACTIVELY LISTEN

Remember to give every child the opportunity to voice their opinion, regardless of their age, stage of development, special educational needs, or other individual requirements. This can be done using a variety of different communication methods. For example, some children find it easier to express how they're feeling using pictures and drawings, while some prefer to write their ideas down.

3 BE CURIOUS

Demonstrating how to approach conflicts with a mature and empathetic mindset can set a good example to children, which can prove a useful skill for them later in life. Model this by asking inquisitive-yet-respectful questions about the issue at hand. Really try to understand where all parties are coming from, and share information between them when and where appropriate. This should encourage young people to mirror your behaviour, teaching them to be curious about the other sides of a conflict, and thus being more willing to hear them out.

4 PROMOTE DIFFERENCES

Children and young people may come from a range of different backgrounds and cultures or have protected characteristics which may cause them to see things from various angles. Having a school and community culture which celebrates and embraces diversity in all things – including diversity of opinion – means people are more likely to feel heard and understood.

5 BE SUPPORTIVE

Discussions may be sensitive or, in some cases, even trigger negative emotions. Pupils may have mixed feelings about the issue at hand. They could be nervous or anxious before even coming to the table to talk about it. Try and create a space where all parties feel safe, welcome and comfortable. Allow breaks and time-outs if the conversation gets heated, to prevent anyone from saying something they might later regret.

6 MENTALLY PREPARE

Think of how you can approach the conflict in a calm and regulated manner. Consider taking some extra time to prepare beforehand and finding somewhere quiet to relax. Even if you're not directly involved with the conflict, mediating can be a stressful experience in its own right. Make sure you're hydrated, fed and comfortable, and do the same for the young people involved. These may seem like insignificant factors, but it's important to remember that physical discomfort can trigger dysregulation, which can make it much harder to have a calm, productive conversation.

7 GET YOUR FACTS STRAIGHT

Make sure you have all the facts, figures and timelines of the situation prior to the discussion. This should be done as objectively as possible with the aim of resolving the ongoing issue. You may want to risk assess any problems that may arise and look for possible solutions during your preparation time.

8 STICK TO THE POINT

Make the reason for, and purpose of, any meetings or communications clear prior to setting them up. Provide an agenda. Act as a neutral chairperson who can keep all parties on track. Make sure everyone has a chance to air their concerns about the issue being discussed and try to avoid talking about unrelated incidents. Close off with some action points, detailing what everyone can do to resolve the conflict.

9 BE SOLUTION FOCUSED

It's often said that the art of diplomacy is about giving others ladders to climb down. This means the main aim of any meeting or correspondence should be finding mutually acceptable and amicable solutions. Parents, carers, teachers and pupils should be aware there may need to be a compromise for the common good – and, most importantly, the good of the children you're supporting.

10 DON'T IGNORE OR AVOID CONFLICT

No one benefits from allowing concerns and grievances to fester, as this can lead to further division and mistrust, and ultimately doesn't help the children involved. Use our tips to open meaningful lines of communication. These should help you find a suitable resolution and minimise the number of conflicts you're faced with mediating overall.

Meet Our Expert

Catrina Lawl is a neurodivergent former SENCO and advisory teacher. She founded her company, Neuroteachers, to improve inclusion for neurodivergent people. She works with nurseries, schools, colleges and businesses providing consultancy, training and mentoring to create belonging and understanding for people with the full range of neurotypes.



#WakeUp
Wednesday

The
National
College