

March 2026  
24.03.26



What a wonderful week of sunshine we have had with the spring bringing a sense of hope and rejuvenation! There is definitely the feeling of change in the air as I prepare to move into the position of Executive Headteacher and Mr Thomas steps into the role of Acting Head.

There are a few changes staffing wise too. As we finish for the Easter break, we will be saying goodbye to Mrs Feast who has decided that the time has come for her to retire. Mrs Feast and I arrived at Whitegate on exactly the same day almost ten years ago. Since then, she has given so much love and compassion to so many children and families. She is going to be very much missed.

After May half term, we will be welcoming back Miss Graves. She will be teaching for two days a week in Elder to support Mr Thomas in his leadership role, as well as a morning each week in Oak to cover some of Mr Heathcote's non-contact time. Miss Graves will be providing TA support, along with working with the safeguarding team, for the remainder of each week. We are delighted that she will be returning.

For the first half of the summer term, Mrs Shapland will be working full-time, teaching Elder during the afternoons.

I am delighted that I have been able to organise all class cover with current staff and those who are already known to the children.

#### Safeguarding

In my absence, Mr Fowles will step into the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Any issues surrounding the protection and vulnerability of children, should be raised with him. To this end, we have set up a designated email address: [safeguarding@whitegate.cheshire.sch.uk](mailto:safeguarding@whitegate.cheshire.sch.uk).

#### Support for Families in Receipt of Free School Meals

The Government's Household Support Fund will end on 31 March 2026 and will be replaced by a new Crisis and Resilience Fund from 1 April 2026. You do not need to take any action at this stage. More information will be shared soon. If you need help now, you can find support, advice, and support.

<https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/benefits-and-welfare-help/cost-of-living/crisis-and-resilience-fund>

#### Sporting News

On Tuesday, at Hartford High School, selected children from Whitegate took part in a fantastic cross country event. Across the course, every child showed determination and resilience, with all pupils, including Year 3, running the full mile. The children were incredibly competitive and proud of where they finished, supporting each other throughout. It is always one of the most rewarding events we attend and this year was no exception.

*Mr Fowles*



#### News from Oak

On Wednesday, Oak had the privilege to welcome Mr Winterton in to talk about his father who worked in Antarctica from 1962 to 1964. We were all fascinated by the photos, stories and artefacts that were shared with us. Learning about Martin Winterton made the unit come alive for the first time for many of the class, leading to many really well thought through and considered questions. For many of us, the highlight was getting the chance to try on some real Antarctic clothing, hold a piece of the continent in our hands with the rock samples, and encounter the Emperor Penguin eggs. A huge thanks to Mr Winterton for coming and bringing our unit to life! *Mr Heathcote*

#### Rowan's Education Visit to Weaver Hall Museum

On Friday Rowan visited Weaver Hall Museum and we learnt all about how toys have changed over time. We travelled back 600 years and looked at the artist Peter Bruegel who painted children playing with the toys we were about to explore. First, we looked at Victorian toys and noticed that they were made with wood and clay. After inspecting these toys, we made our very own peg dolls out of wooden dolly pegs. Then, to end our day, we investigated how toys have changed to be made from metal, fabric and plastic. What a busy day filled with history, art, science and even design and technology! *Miss Davies*



### Scholastic Book Fair – Wednesday 25th March

We are delighted to be hosting another Scholastic Book Fair in the school hall straight after school and during Parent Consultation Meetings on **Wednesday 25th March**. There will be a wide range of books available at different price points, helping to inspire a love of reading. Each child can use their **World Book Day token for £1 off** any book at the fair.

For parents who would prefer to pay online and get their books before the 25th, older children have been given a **wish list form** to note any books they would like. Parents can pay online using the **QR code** on the wish list form (and below) or through this portal: <https://bookfairs.scholastic.co.uk/pay>

Gift vouchers can also be bought in advance through Scholastic and exchanged in school. If you pay online, please make sure your child brings their completed wish list back to school so we can give them their books. If you are buying at the fair, please **bring cash** if possible to help make the process as quick as possible. Payments can also be made online using the **QR code**. We will also have one queue for **contactless card/phone payments**, but this tends to get very busy.

We look forward to seeing you there and thank you as always for your support in developing a love of reading in the children. *Mr Thomas*

### Ark News

What a fabulous few weeks we've had in The Ark – our first ever talent show was a huge success, with singers, dancers, musicians, football skills and a comedian!

We've also had our first session of the year on the sports field, burning off some energy and enjoying the sun.

Next half term, we will be offering the following themed sessions:



| Monday               | Tuesday                         | Wednesday | Thursday      | Friday      |
|----------------------|---------------------------------|-----------|---------------|-------------|
| 'Hangout at The Ark' | Roald Dahl Appreciation Society | Parkour   | Looms of fun! | Movie night |

### Governor News

Many thanks to Mr Ellis, Mrs Jones and Mr Spruce who ran for the parent governor role. I am delighted to inform you that Mrs Katie Jones received the most votes and has now been elected as our new parent governor. A reminder that this role is not about representing the parents and so, please refrain from approaching Mrs Jones about any governor issues. You can contact our Board of Governors via our Clerk using the email: [clerk@whitegate.cheshire.sch.uk](mailto:clerk@whitegate.cheshire.sch.uk). Many thanks.

### School Uniform

At the recent governors' meeting, the uniform policy for September was approved. This can be found on our school website. As communicated many months ago, for the new school year, **all children will be required to wear the royal blue polo shirts** rather than white ones. This is the only change to our uniform.

## Dates

|                      |         |   |
|----------------------|---------|---|
| Wednesday 25th March | All Day | Birch's Educational Visit to Manchester Airport Visitors Centre                 |
| Friday 27th March    | All Day | Own clothes day in return for an Easter egg donation for the Joshua Tree        |
| Wednesday 1st April  | 10am    | Easter Service in St Mary's Church (led by Elder Class)<br>All are very welcome |
| Wednesday 1st April  | 3:15pm  | School finishes for the Easter break  |
| Monday 20th April    | 8:45am  | School returns for the summer term  |

*Thank you for your continued support*

*C Mackenzie*