

## **Headteacher's Blog – Week Beginning 6 October**

It's been another lively and purposeful week at Woodlands, full of learning, laughter, and a healthy dose of professional reflection. We're deep into the half term now, and I continue to be impressed by how much our children and staff are achieving together every single week.

### **Specialist support and professional growth**

We began the week with important meetings supporting children across school - from child protection and family team meetings to annual reviews and speech and language therapy sessions. These collaborations make such a difference to individual pupils and show the strength of our inclusive approach.

Staff training has also been front and centre. On Wednesday, colleagues completed our safeguarding "mop-up" session to ensure everyone is fully up to date with statutory responsibilities, while later that evening we held our Twilight INSET with First for Maths - a fantastic opportunity to explore ways to deepen mathematical understanding across the school. Across the week, Miss Skillen, our EYFS lead, has led a series of focused conversations with subject leaders to strengthen the links between EYFS and the wider curriculum - helping ensure that what our youngest children experience lays strong, connected foundations for everything that follows. Finally, Miss Roberts, maths lead, explored maths books across school and gave us all some food for thought!

### **Enrichment and wider learning experiences**

As always, there has been plenty of enrichment throughout the week. Monday began with KS2 Archery Club - a brilliant and focused start to the day. Academic Clubs continued across the week, offering additional support in reading, writing, phonics, and maths for pupils from Year 1 through to Year 6. I cannot stress enough the impact of these sessions on your children. As a school we dedicate elements of our school budget to support children in this way and, if your child is invited to attend, what they are essentially receiving is tailored support that ensures any gaps in their learning are being addressed so they can fulfil their potential – who wouldn't want this for their child?

Year 3 kept up their popular judo sessions, while 4 children from Years 5 and 6 took their learning beyond the classroom with a special orienteering trip to Chester Zoo on Thursday - a wonderful way to combine geography, problem-solving, and teamwork. After-school clubs such as table tennis, football and tag rugby brought the site to life. It's always a joy to see children developing new skills, friendships, and confidence through these opportunities.

### **Life in and around school**

Midweek saw a flurry of excitement with Tempest Photography capturing individual and sibling photos - no small feat given the number of smiles, hair brushes and hair bows involved (and that was just the staff!)? As we continue to grow, we plan to work with Tempest to develop how we conduct this event as our youngest and most vulnerable children struggle with the more formal approach and also crossing the road. We are on this for next year, as ever, no complacency! A big thank you to everyone who helped the day run so smoothly.

On Tuesday, we were delighted to welcome Cheshire Phoenix for a special assembly with Key Stage 2. The children loved hearing from professional athletes and were inspired by the values of teamwork, resilience, and healthy living that they shared – who wouldn't be. Athletes epitomise the essence of hard work, determination, collaboration and the ability to bounce back, no matter what!

### **Leadership, partnerships, and collaboration**

This week also saw colleagues representing Woodlands at a range of external meetings and training sessions - from leadership talks to MFL and Science Lead Training, Attendance Reviews, and SEND network meetings. These partnerships are vital in keeping us connected to the wider educational landscape and ensuring we bring the very best ideas and practices back to our school community.

### **Continuing our culture of care**

Our pastoral and safeguarding work remains at the heart of everything we do. From ELSA support to child protection reviews, and from early help meetings to SEN advisory work, every action reflects our collective commitment to ensuring that every child is known, nurtured and supported to thrive - academically, socially and emotionally.

### **Parent Governor Vacancy**

If you are planning to nominate yourself for our Parent Governor vacancy, please make sure you have submitted your application (sent on previous Parentpay communication emails) by 9am on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> October.

### **Closing thoughts**

This week has been a wonderful reflection of what makes Woodlands special: a strong balance between challenge and care, high expectations and warm relationships, and a culture where staff and children alike keep learning and growing.

As we edge closer to half term, thank you in advance for your continued support - it really does make a difference. With Parent's Evenings to look forward to (please ensure you have booked your appointment by Midnight Friday), Park Hall Farm visits to manage, and the autumn glow discos to get behind and champion, there is just as much fun as there is professionalism to keep us occupied!

Warm regards,  
Dr Victoria Carr  
Headteacher