

Headteacher Blog Week Beginning 3rd November 2025

Well, what a week it's been! I've spent most of it battling the world's most stubborn cold - the sort that makes you sound like you've swallowed a frog and leaves you wondering how many tissues one person can reasonably go through in five days. But as ever, life at Woodlands had carried on at full throttle, sniffles or not!

The week began with our pastoral and SEND teams hard at work reviewing ELSA and other support across school. It's one of those 'behind-the-scenes' jobs that makes a huge difference, ensuring every child's needs are understood and met. I'm so grateful to the staff who put in the extra effort to make sure every voice - and every child - is heard, particularly as we have expanded the team to include Mrs Fuller.

Tuesday brought with it a whole lot of excitement: some of our Year 5 and 6 pupils enjoyed a Tenpin Bowling trip (rumour has it the staff were far more competitive than the children), and we had a brilliant Mental Health Champion Launch Assembly with the ever-inspiring Jaz Pugh. The day ended with our inimitable PTA Fireworks Night, which, despite the drizzle, was an absolute triumph! The 3rd in 3 years, it is rapidly becoming a mainstay of our autumn calendar of events, just like the Astbury Lodge Carol singing in December, and we know we are getting geared up to travel to Bethlehem very soon. The rain did its best to dampen our spirits, but Woodlands parents, pupils, and staff are made of sterner stuff - we simply brought our umbrellas, our enthusiasm, and possibly ate our body weight in burgers and pizza in some cases! Thank you to everyone who made it such a warm, joyful evening - the PTA raised over £2,000!

We also enjoyed several stay and learn/stay and play sessions and been SUPER impressed with the new QR codes our staff have been using to gather feedback from our parents and grandparents about the sessions. We are definitely moving rapidly into the very modern way of doing things and this means us all working in new ways! We will be seeking feedback from a lot of different parental groups in the next few months so watch out for the surveys so that you can have your voice heard.

I really enjoyed welcoming Mrs Edwards into her first SLT meeting on Wednesday (if she gets my cold, I think she will regret it, but otherwise, she seemed pretty happy to be there!). She will take over as Upper Key Stage 2 lead whilst Miss Tyrer is on maternity leave, something which is imminent, and I know they have had a thorough handover to ensure the transition is seamless!

Throughout the week, as ever, we've welcomed a host of visiting professionals - from speech and language therapists to physiotherapists and mental health support workers - all helping us provide the very best care for our pupils. It's a reminder that education is truly a team effort, and we're lucky to have such expertise supporting our children.

We even had a visit from the Cheshire Fire Brigade. They spoke to children in KS1 and Year 5 about fire safety and they even had the opportunity to look at the fire engine. The children asked some brilliant questions and our lovely Miss Hughes even tried on the firefighting suit!

We also finalised our Parent Governor Election! I'm thrilled to announce that Maira Azhar will be joining our Governing Body! Congratulations and welcome to the team! Thanks also to our other candidate, Mr Charlton. It was a very close vote and we are so grateful to have such supportive parents willing to put themselves forward for these important roles. I know they'll bring great energy and insight to our work. On the topic of the governors, we had a budget meeting on Thursday morning and a finance committee meeting on Thursday afternoon when our governors got to see how we spend the funds we have and how we ensure fiscal transparency and robust implementation of pay and performance policies. It is always a joy to share how hard our staff work and Thursday was no different.

As we approach Remembrance Sunday, we take time to reflect and remember those who have served and sacrificed for our country. Next Tuesday, 11th November, our school will be marking this important occasion with a two-minute silence at 11am. We would like to invite any children who are members of groups such as Brownies, Cubs, Scouts, Rainbows, Guides, or similar organisations to wear their uniforms to school on Tuesday as a sign of respect and remembrance.

Before I sign off, a serious note about something we shouldn't have to keep repeating – the staff car park. The gates are locked or shut for a reason. We have children crossing safely, and our RP staff and pupils use the space to move between classrooms. Please, please don't drive in or park there before or after school or for club pick-ups. It's simply not safe, and no matter how much of a rush you're in, it's not worth the risk. Please stop.

As we head into the weekend, I'll be curling up with a mug of something hot and a box of tissues, grateful (and slightly croaky) after another full and fabulous week at Woodlands. Thank you, as always, for your support and good humour - both of which we seem to have in abundance here.