

🌟 Headteacher Blog - Week Beginning 19 January 2026

This week at Woodlands has been one of those impressively full weeks where learning, leadership, support and enrichment have all been running side by side - sometimes quietly, sometimes noisily, but always with children at the heart of it all.

We have continued to host our Wrexham University Y1 Foundation student teachers across the school, alongside our Chester University PGCE Early Years student in Owls. They have settled in confidently, supporting learning, joining in routines and gaining a realistic picture of the pace and richness of school life. Our pupils, as ever, have taken great pride in showing them the Woodlands way.

Monday set the tone for the week with Mad Science assemblies, which brought the Junior Hall to life for pupils from Year 1 right through to Year 6. The combination of curiosity, excitement and scientific thinking was wonderful to see - hands shot up, eyes widened, and plenty of "wows" echoed around the hall. Alongside this, our Maths lead, Miss Roberts, invited Diane Tongue from Maths Hub to spend time in school working with staff to strengthen mathematical practice, while senior leaders were engaged in attendance, budgeting and strategic meetings that ensure the school continues to run smoothly and sustainably.

Across the week, there has been a strong focus on inclusion, wellbeing and safeguarding. Staff have been involved in training around inclusive attendance, safeguarding updates, stammering support and communication development, while a wide range of professionals (including speech and language therapists, physiotherapists and advisory teachers) have been in school working directly with children and staff. These quieter moments often go unseen, but they make a significant difference to children's confidence, progress and sense of security.

One of the highlights of the week was seeing our Year 6 pupils head out on their Eureka trip, followed later in the week by Year 5. These visits offer hands-on, immersive learning that encourages problem-solving, teamwork and curiosity, and pupils returned full of enthusiasm and stories to share.

I received genuinely heart-warming feedback following the Year 6 visit to Eureka. While the pupils were there, a member of the public took the time to approach the Eureka staff to comment on the exceptional behaviour of our children! They spoke about how kind and caring the pupils were, particularly in the way they showed consideration for younger children - stepping aside to make space, offering help without being asked, and speaking politely throughout the day. The member of the public was clearly impressed and felt it was important that the school knew what a credit the children were. Moments like this are incredibly special; seeing our school values lived out so naturally, beyond the school gates, is exactly what we hope for - and yes, it really does make it all feel worthwhile!

For the first time in YEARS we did not go through to the next stage of the Big Maths Quiz – apparently the feedback was that this was the hardest heat the organisers had seen in years which is good! A bit of disappointment just whets the appetite for future!

Sport and enrichment have also been thriving. Our after-school clubs continue to be extremely popular, with children taking part in cheerleading, dodgeball, multiskills and music throughout the week. It has been lovely to see pupils choosing to stay behind after a full school day to challenge themselves, build friendships and enjoy being active together.

Behind the scenes, staff have been just as busy. Subject knowledge development sessions have taken place off-site, staff appraisals have continued, and teams have met after school to plan and reflect - including dedicated meetings for EYFS, the Resource Provision and subject leaders. This professional collaboration is essential in keeping teaching and support consistent, reflective and responsive. A big WELL DONE to Miss Woodland who hosted her first Science meeting!

Friday brought a calmer close to a very busy week, with swimming for Group B, Year 3 library visits (always a favourite), and further attendance and pastoral meetings to ensure children continue to be supported both academically and emotionally.

Our parent questionnaire closed and I will no doubt enjoy reading all of the feedback over the weekend. We usually have *such* a range, the people who are super duper happy or super cross with us tend to complete the feedback, the vast majority of parents who are happy with school tend not to spend too much time on the questionnaires, if any, as they are just satisfied we are professional and do what we are expected to at all times. I will give you all some feedback on the views of the ones who have completed the questionnaire in due course.

Taken together, this week has been a real reminder of how much happens in a primary school beyond the classroom - from strategic planning and professional learning to joyful enrichment and quiet care. Thank you, as always, for your continued support and partnership. Woodlands remains a place where learning, inclusion and community go hand in hand.

Warm regards,

Dr Carr