

Welcome back!

I hope you all had a wonderful half-term break. We were even treated to a little sunshine and slightly warmer weather - surely that means spring is on its way!

Although it's been a shorter, four-day week for the children, it has certainly been a busy one behind the scenes. Staff have been working hard to ensure the children returned ready to learn, with engaging activities planned across all year groups. A reminder that you can find details about this term's learning on the school website. For children in Y1-Y6, knowledge organisers are available in the 'Files to Download' section at the bottom of each year group page. These are a fantastic way to see what your child will be learning in the coming weeks and to support conversations at home.

Some of you may have noticed an exciting new addition to our junior field - a pond! We are delighted to be collaborating with Cheshire Wildlife Trust as part of a project to increase biodiversity across our school grounds and local area.

While we're still at the early stages, Miss Woodland, our science lead, is incredibly excited to begin developing this space with the children. A wooden pond-dipping platform and safety fencing have already been installed. Future plans include planting native pond plants (once the pond has naturally filled with rainwater), creating a flower meadow and even developing an orchard - truly exciting times ahead! We will be teaching the children about water and pond safety during assemblies and lessons, and we kindly ask that you reinforce these important messages at home.

Continuing our focus on active and outdoor learning, our recently appointed Junior Joes have been doing a fantastic job leading fun and interactive games at lunchtimes across both sites. Thank you, Junior Joes - you are making such a positive difference to playtimes!

Mad Science Club launched this week, and it has been wonderful to hear how much children in both KS1 and KS2 are enjoying the hands-on experiments. We can't wait to see what they discover next.

We are also delighted that one of our University of Chester students has started a Makaton Club for some of our Year 1 and Year 2 children. The feedback so far? "Brilliant!"

Staying forward-thinking and informed about developments in education is incredibly important to us. This week:

- Mrs Watts attended EYFS training.
- Our SEND team and Miss Williams (Acorns RP) completed "Steps to Toileting" training.
- Mrs Cotton attended safeguarding training focused on domestic abuse.
- Mr Bowles undertook training linked to wraparound provision.
- All Teachers & Admin team got to grips with our new Arbor system
- All staff participated in whole-school training focused on promoting strong attendance.

Meanwhile, Dr Carr was on the other side of the training experience - delivering educational leadership modules to aspiring leaders. A busy and productive week all round!

Yesterday's 'Crazy Hair Day' was a huge success - we saw some wonderfully creative styles and possibly a few future hairstylists in the making! Thank you to our Y6 Hospice of the Good Shepherd ambassadors for organising the event in support of this worthy cause, and thank you to parents and carers for your generous donations.

The Year 6 team were thrilled with the fantastic turnout at Thursday's SATs information evening. Parents were given a clear overview of what the SATs experience will look and feel like in our

school. Thank you to everyone who attended. If you were unable to join us, Mrs Edwards will upload the presentation to the Y6 page of the website. SATs week will soon be upon us, and knowing that parents and staff are working together to support the children through these May “quizzes” is truly heart-warming.

Next week we celebrate World Book Day, on Thursday 5th March, with the theme:

“When I grow up, I’d like to be...” and children are invited to come into school dressed up as something they would like to be in the future. Mrs Dutton, our English lead is busy sharing some fabulous ideas for staff to do with the children next week and our amazing kitchen staff have created a fabulous menu for the week linked to careers/job roles! We will also have the annual book fair visiting school next week – this will be in the junior hall so please do pop in to browse the books (and hopefully buy a book if you can!) All profits come back into school to allow us to purchase further books for the children!

Please can I remind you about safe parking around the school and the local area. We have received several reports recently from concerned residents who have shared that some of our parents are blocking their drives. This means that for some of the local residents, they themselves are unable to leave home and subsequently it makes them late for work. A reminder that the ‘Street Safe’ initiative remains in place. Eddisbury Road (from Broadland Road to Walnut Grove) is closed to traffic - except for residents and blue badge holders - between 8:30–9:00am and 2:30–2:45pm. This initiative exists to keep your children safe, and we respectfully ask for your full cooperation.

A note for your diaries: our spring term, face-to-face parent evenings will soon be approaching; for parents whose children are in Foxes, Squirrels, Reception-Y6, the booking system has already gone live and appointments can now be booked.

This week we said a sad goodbye to Miss McLellan, who has worked at Woodlands Primary School for over 20 years. During that time, she has supported countless children and families, attended residential and been a valued colleague and friend. We wish Miss McLellan every success as she begins her exciting new role at Chester Zoo. She will be greatly missed by all of us at Woodlands.

In much happier news, we are absolutely delighted to share the wonderful news that Mrs Barrett has welcomed a beautiful baby girl into the world — mother and baby are both doing well, and we send them our warmest congratulations and very best wishes at this special time. 🧡🎀

I wish you all a lovely weekend and hopefully we will see some of that elusive sunshine!

Mrs Liversey