

This week has felt like a year, and yet it has definitely been one of those quintessential Woodlands weeks – a wonderful blend of learning, creativity, music, trips, photographs, training and the countless unseen moments that help our children flourish.

The week began with a real treat for our Year 4 and Year 6 pupils, who travelled to Whitby High School to watch a performance of Matilda. Watching children engage with live theatre is always special. The energy, talent and creativity on display inspired our pupils and, judging by the conversations afterwards, there may well be a few future performers, directors and playwrights sitting in our classrooms already.

Creativity has been a theme running throughout the week. We officially launched our Whole School Refugee Art Project, developed by Mr Barnes. Children from Foxes through to Year 6 were asked to bring in an old shirt to wear whilst creating their artwork and I have been delighted to see them getting paint not just on these old shirts but on the 'canvas' also. This promises to be a powerful project that explores themes of belonging, identity, empathy and humanity through art. We are incredibly excited to see the work develop over the coming weeks and look forward to sharing the finished outcomes with families. Some of the work that the children have already produced is on display from tomorrow (Saturday) until Friday 19<sup>th</sup> June at Theatre Porto, Whitby Park, as part of their 'Through the Eyes of Children' exhibition; we are very proud of this work and we encourage you to pop along to look at the exhibition if you can!

Tuesday brought one of the children's favourite annual events – school photograph day. Whether children arrived with perfectly brushed hair or had somehow managed to create a brand-new hairstyle by playtime, it was lovely to see everyone looking so smart and proud. These photographs inevitably become treasured keepsakes, and even my own children look at theirs and we have a chuckle about changes in fashion and how they have matured, it is always amazing to think how quickly the children change from year to year.

Across the school, learning beyond the classroom has continued to thrive. Year 2 enjoyed visits to Hope Farm Library, helping to nurture their growing love of reading, whilst Year 5 and Year 6 continued to work with colleagues from Whitby High School through the excellent Coding and Micro workshops. These opportunities help children see how the skills they learn in school connect to the wider world and future careers. We have focussed as a staff on, once again, internet safety as predators become more and more sophisticated with their ability to gain access to images and young people. Again, I stress the importance to you all of ensuring your children only access age-appropriate apps, and you monitor their access to groups, chats and the internet carefully. I also engaged with the government changes on AI and its safer use in schools – no mean feat – and have subsequently shared this with all of our staff.

Friday brought another musical highlight as our Year 5 pupils performed their ukulele concert for parents. Opportunities to perform in front of an audience take courage, commitment and confidence, and we know the children will do themselves proud. We very much look forward to hearing the results of all their hard work and commending them. I also wandered in to the Y6 leaver assembly practice and was quickly shoo'd out (each year I have to see it first when they are performance polished and ready, and usually get emotional as a result).

Alongside these more visible events, there has been a huge amount of important work taking place behind the scenes. We have hosted hearing screenings, speech and language reviews, Child in Need meetings, inclusion meetings, SEND workshops and transition planning. Staff have undertaken training in cyber security, county lines awareness, SEND reforms and curriculum development. Whilst these activities rarely make the headlines, they are absolutely central to ensuring that every child receives the support, opportunities and education they deserve.

We have also continued to welcome student teachers and university trainees into school. They bring fresh perspectives, enthusiasm and energy, whilst our pupils continue to be fantastic ambassadors for Woodlands, demonstrating kindness, confidence and maturity in all they do.

As we move deeper into the summer term, there is a real sense of momentum building. The calendar is filling rapidly with performances, sports events, transition activities, trips and celebrations, and it is always one of the most incredibly busy and rewarding periods of the school year. We are, however, only human, and messages can get

confused and lost in the hectic desire to give the children the best school experience we can – bear with us. If we have confused you, give us a call and we will iron it out.

Finally, thank you, as always, for your continued support. The partnership between home and school remains one of our greatest strengths, and we are incredibly grateful for the trust and encouragement you show us, I had a lovely message from one of our dad's recognising that the 6 days it takes me to read and comment on over 600 reports is well worth it and valued by so many of you.

If you would like to join our fabulous team, we will be looking to fill some positions as Midday Assistants in September! If you are interested in this important and rewarding role, please pop in to the junior office and ask for an application form from Sue.

On that note, have a wonderful weekend.

**As per previous communication from the Admin team, Free School Meals will be changing from September. We would urge you to complete your application ASAP if you are in receipt of Universal Credit. The process only takes a few minutes to complete.**