

As we move ever closer towards the end of another academic year, the pace of school life shows absolutely no signs of slowing down, on the contrary, it is picking up! This week has been packed with trips, visitors, performances, sporting opportunities and all the important work that goes on behind the scenes to support our children and families.

One of the highlights of the week was undoubtedly Wednesday's trip to Chester Zoo for our Year 1 and Year 2 pupils. For many children, visits like these create memories that last a lifetime. Seeing animals up close, learning about conservation and the world outside Ellesmere Port, making connections to classroom learning and simply enjoying time with friends in a different environment all contribute to the rich experiences we want our children to have during their time at Woodlands. A huge thank you goes to the staff who organised and accompanied the visit – school trips may look effortless from the outside, but they require an enormous amount of planning, preparation and patience (not to mention worry for staff who have an underpinning knowledge that safety and safeguarding are paramount)!

The week has also been full of opportunities for children to engage with the wider community. Our Year 3 pupils welcomed their Pen Pals from Birkenhead Prep School on Tuesday, spending time together on the school field and building friendships beyond Woodlands – it was lovely. Experiences like this help children develop confidence, communication skills and an appreciation of the wider world around them and the staff of the other school were really impressed with what we do here and the amount of work that goes in for state schools to ensure we comply with significant accountability that they simply do not have. Thank you to our lovely PTA for providing some delicious fruit and ice lollies.

We have also continued our strong partnership with Whitby High School. Year 6 pupils attended their Food Technology sessions earlier in the week, whilst others took part in the increasingly popular Coding and Micro workshops. At the same time, transition work has continued behind the scenes, helping to ensure that our Year 6 pupils feel confident and excited about the move to secondary school.

Our youngest children have been particularly busy too. Throughout the week, we have welcomed families into school for our Sports Games Stay and Play sessions in Acorns, Butterflies and Ladybirds. It has been wonderful to see parents and carers joining in, supporting their children and sharing in those important early experiences of teamwork, physical development and fun. Thank you to everyone who attended and helped make these events such a success.

Reading has remained a strong focus this week. Year 2 visited Hope Farm Library on Monday, whilst Year 4 enjoyed a special visit on Friday to meet a local author. We know that developing a love of reading is one of the most important gifts we can give children, and opportunities like these help books come alive in ways that classroom lessons alone never quite can.

Sporting opportunities have continued throughout the week, with some pupils representing the school at a Year 3/4 Tennis Event, alongside the many clubs that continue to run after school. Whether children are dancing, singing, playing games, learning guitar or developing their sporting skills, it is wonderful to see them embracing opportunities beyond the classroom.

Alongside these visible highlights, there has been a huge amount of important work taking place behind the scenes. Staff have attended safeguarding sessions, SEND reviews, annual reviews, CAMHS consultations, phonics discussions and behaviour training.

One thing that always strikes me at this time of year is how confidently our children represent the school. Whether they are visiting the zoo, welcoming guests onto our site, performing for parents or taking part in sporting events, they consistently demonstrate the values that make Woodlands such a special place. They are kind, polite, resilient and enthusiastic, and the vast majority make us incredibly proud every single day. I have had to do an assembly with Y5 and 6 about some behaviours that are unacceptable and we have had to manage the behaviour of one or two with severe sanctions. I ask that you all remind your children that school is for learning and enjoying time with friends in a safe and respectful way.

Finally, we are looking forward to another busy week ahead, including more transition activities, performances and end-of-year events. The summer term always seems to accelerate at this point, and, before we know it, we will be talking about Sports Days, new classes, reports and moving-up mornings!

Thank you, as always, for your continued support.

Have a wonderful weekend.