

21 March 2025

## MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

*“Open your mind before your mouth” — Aristophanes*

Dear Parents/Carers

Two weeks ago, on Saturday 8 March 2025, a number of colleagues and I attended researchED Birmingham 2025. ResearchED events take place around the world including in London, Amsterdam, Philadelphia, Cape Town, Chile, Dubai, Geneva, Melbourne, Toronto and many more. The goal of researchED is to bridge the gap between research and practice in education. Researchers, teachers, and policy makers come together for a day of information-sharing and learning. One of the key note speakers at researchED Birmingham 2025 was Daisy Christodoulou, one of the most influential thinkers in education today, known for her work on curriculum, assessment, and cognitive science.

One of her most significant contributions is her advocacy for a knowledge-rich curriculum, which she believes is essential for fostering deep thinking and academic success. Christodoulou argues that knowledge and skills are inseparable—like scrambled eggs, they cannot be divided. Without a solid base of knowledge, children find it difficult to develop higher-order thinking skills. Her work has had a profound impact on modern curriculum design, shaping education systems around the world, including here at William Murdoch Primary School. By focusing on providing children with the knowledge they need, we can support them in becoming critical thinkers, problem-solvers, and lifelong learners.

The Spring Term is the engine room of the academic year, where the children have settled in and make the most progress. The Department for Education (DfE) has published a report which examines the link between attendance and attainment of pupils taking SATs and GCSEs. The odds of year 11 pupils achieving a grade 5 in English and maths almost double if their attendance is over 95 per cent, compared to those who miss between 5 and 10 per cent of lessons, government attendance research suggests.

The research also found the odds of year 6 pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and maths were 1.3 times higher among those whose attendance was 95 per cent or higher than those with 90 to 95 per cent attendance. Missing just 10 days of year six reduced the odds of reaching the expected standard by around 25 per cent.

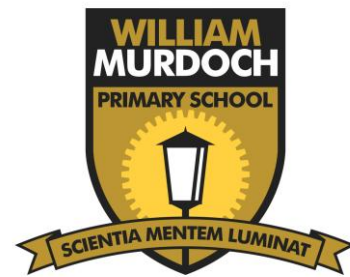
Being punctual is key to being successful at William Murdoch Primary, and every minute of the school day matters. With lessons beginning promptly at 8:50 am, arriving on time ensures that children start their day focused and ready to learn. Lost minutes quickly add up—just a few late arrivals can result in days of missed learning over the course of a year. Being punctual not only supports academic progress but also fosters good habits that last a lifetime. Let's work together to make every school day count!

**MOMENTS  
MATTER,  
ATTENDANCE  
COUNTS.**

**WILLIAM MURDOCH PRIMARY SCHOOL**

ANTROBUS ROAD, HANDSWORTH, BIRMINGHAM, B21 9NT TEL: **0121 554 0999** FAX: 0121 554 6332  
EMAIL: [enquiry@williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk](mailto:enquiry@williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk) WEB: [www.williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk](http://www.williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk)  
HEADTEACHER: MR M. SINGH

# KNOWLEDGE LIGHTS UP THE MIND



## Washing Pods and Capsules - Child Accident Prevention Trust

Young children are vulnerable to all sorts of dangers in the home. One of the most present issues can come in the form of everyday cleaning products. Some like sink unclogger can look like fruit juice. The thick consistency and similarity to apple juice in colour make it particularly enticing. However, one threat stands out from all others in this regard. The washing pod. Many washing pods bear a striking similarity to over-the-counter confectionary. For children the mistake can be easy to make, especially when washing pods may be kept in a lower location than other cleaning supplies. The Child Accident Prevention Trust has recently published a page that looks to offer guidance on this issue. If interested, please follow the link below: <https://capt.org.uk/washing-pods-and-capsules/>

## Wearable Tech

More and more children are being given technology that can be worn, e.g. smartwatches and whilst there can be benefits the risks aren't always apparent. This article from Internet Matters explores wearable technology for children and gives advice on:

- The different types of wearable tech, e.g. smart watches, glasses, VR headsets and fitness trackers.
- Whether wearable technology is safe and what some of the concerns are, e.g. privacy and data collection, impact on body image.
- How wearable tech can support wellbeing.
- And more.

You can find the article here: <https://www.internetmatters.org/tech-and-kids-digital-futures/what-is-wearable-technology-safety-for-children/>

**Please remember as part of our acceptable use agreement children are not allowed to bring a smart watch into school.**

## Bring it on Brum! Holiday Clubs are Back for Easter 2025!

Get ready for another fantastic year of **Department for Education-funded holiday clubs!** Thanks to the **Holiday Activity and Food Programme**, known in Birmingham as [Bring it on Brum!](#), your child can enjoy holiday clubs packed with fun, learning, and healthy meals – all at no cost to you!



If your child is aged between **4-16 years** and eligible for **benefits-related free school meals**, they can join the **Bring it on Brum!** holiday clubs throughout the **spring, summer, and winter holidays** (excluding half-terms). Full eligibility criteria can be found here: [Eligibility Criteria](#).

### What's in Store?

With a diverse range of activities like **sports, arts and crafts, cooking, dance, music**, and more, there's something for everyone! Plus, every session includes a **nutritious meal** to keep them energised and happy throughout the day.

Each club offers a unique programme based on its location and type – there's so much to explore!

### Not Eligible?

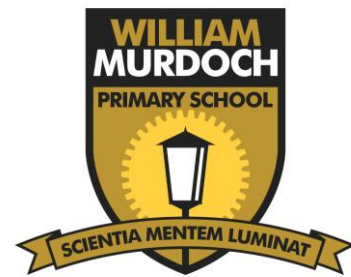
No worries! Many clubs also offer **paid places**, so every child has the chance to join the fun.

### Easter Holiday Clubs

#### WILLIAM MURDOCH PRIMARY SCHOOL

ANTROBUS ROAD, HANDSWORTH, BIRMINGHAM, B21 9NT TEL: **0121 554 0999** FAX: 0121 554 6332  
EMAIL: [enquiry@williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk](mailto:enquiry@williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk) WEB: [www.williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk](http://www.williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk)  
HEADTEACHER: MR M. SINGH

# KNOWLEDGE LIGHTS UP THE MIND



- **Dates:** Monday 14th - Friday 25th April 2025 (excluding weekends and Bank Holidays).
- **Bookings Open:** From Monday 24th March at [www.bringitonbrum.co.uk](http://www.bringitonbrum.co.uk)
  - **Your Bring it on Brum! (FSM) code is: 3302293**

You can also follow the handy [How to Book Guide](#) and [Sign Up](#) for 'Bring it on Brum!' updates.



## Maths Challenge

On Friday of last week, Mr Matthews took four pupils from Year 5 (Maya, Hamza, Abdur-Rahim and Daamin) to a Maths Challenge at King Edward's School in Edgbaston. They competed against 12 other schools in events such as the Crossnumber and paired relay. The team did fantastically well, just missing out on a top 3 spot. It was a great experience for the pupils, and their attitude and competitive spirit is to be commended.



## WILLIAM MURDOCH PRIMARY SCHOOL

ANTROBUS ROAD, HANDSWORTH, BIRMINGHAM, B21 9NT TEL: **0121 554 0999** FAX: 0121 554 6332  
EMAIL: [enquiry@williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk](mailto:enquiry@williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk) WEB: [www.williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk](http://www.williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk)  
HEADTEACHER: MR M. SINGH



## Red Nose Day 2025

The school supported the Comic Relief appeal today with children coming to school dressed in something red for a £1.00 donation. We have also sold lots of Comic Relief merchandise, and the cakes went down a treat too. Many thanks to the parents and children for supporting this worthwhile cause. The money raised will be used to change countless lives, both here in the UK and worldwide.

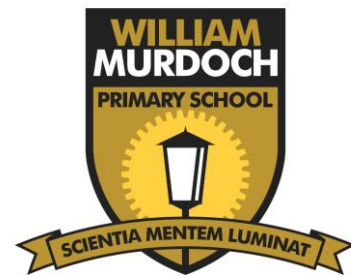
A glimpse into the fun had by all on  
Red Nose Day fun at William Murdoch



## Grove Lane Dental Surgery

Grove Lane Dental Surgery are now accepting new NHS patients 17 years of age and under.

# KNOWLEDGE LIGHTS UP THE MIND



## Year 6 Secondary School Allocations

If you are the parent/carer of a child in Year 6, you should have received an offer email and letter naming the secondary school your child has been offered for entry in September 2025. You **do not** need to contact Birmingham School Admissions if you intend to accept your child's offer of a school place.

You only need to inform School Admissions if you are **refusing** the school place your child was offered, and this must be done by **Friday 21 March 2025**. Details of how to do this was included in your offer letter. If they are not informed by this date that you wish to refuse your offer, the secondary school will update their records to show the offer has been accepted.

**We strongly encourage you to accept your offer, this is so your child has a guaranteed school place to attend in September 2025.**

By refusing your offer, please be aware that your child's school place may be offered out to another child from that school's waiting list once they are made available. Your child will have **no school** to attend in September as School Admissions only make one school offer to a child. If a family refuses their school offer, they are not required to offer your child a place at an alternative school. Your child will only be offered a place at another school if a place becomes available on the waiting list for one of your higher preferred schools due to waiting list movement, or if you appeal against the decision to refuse your child a place at one of your preferred schools and your appeal is subsequently upheld (successful).

**The offer being accepted will not affect your child's waiting list position for any of your higher preference schools, or influence the outcome of any appeal you may submit.**

If your child has not been offered a place at any of the schools that you applied for, this will be because the school(s) you applied for have received more applications than there were places available, and other children that better met the admission criteria were offered those places. Details of the school admission criteria that all applicants are considered under are available here: [Secondary Schools Admission Arrangements 2025](#)

## Unicef Article of the Week

### World Water Day

This week's article of the week has focused on World Water Day, which takes place on 22 March every year. Pupils have learnt that World Water Day is an annual United Nations observance which started in 1993 and raises awareness of the 2 billion people currently living without access to safe, clean water and good sanitation. This was Sustainable Development Goal 6.

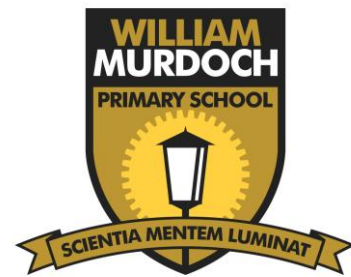


But there is still much work to be done with over 2 billion people drinking unsafe water. An important aim of World Water Day is to inspire everyone to act and make the necessary changes so that the right to clean water can be achieved by 2030 for everyone.

### WILLIAM MURDOCH PRIMARY SCHOOL

ANTROBUS ROAD, HANDSWORTH, BIRMINGHAM, B21 9NT TEL: **0121 554 0999** FAX: 0121 554 6332  
EMAIL: [enquiry@williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk](mailto:enquiry@williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk) WEB: [www.williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk](http://www.williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk)  
HEADTEACHER: MR M. SINGH

# KNOWLEDGE LIGHTS UP THE MIND



This week's activities were linked to the following articles: -



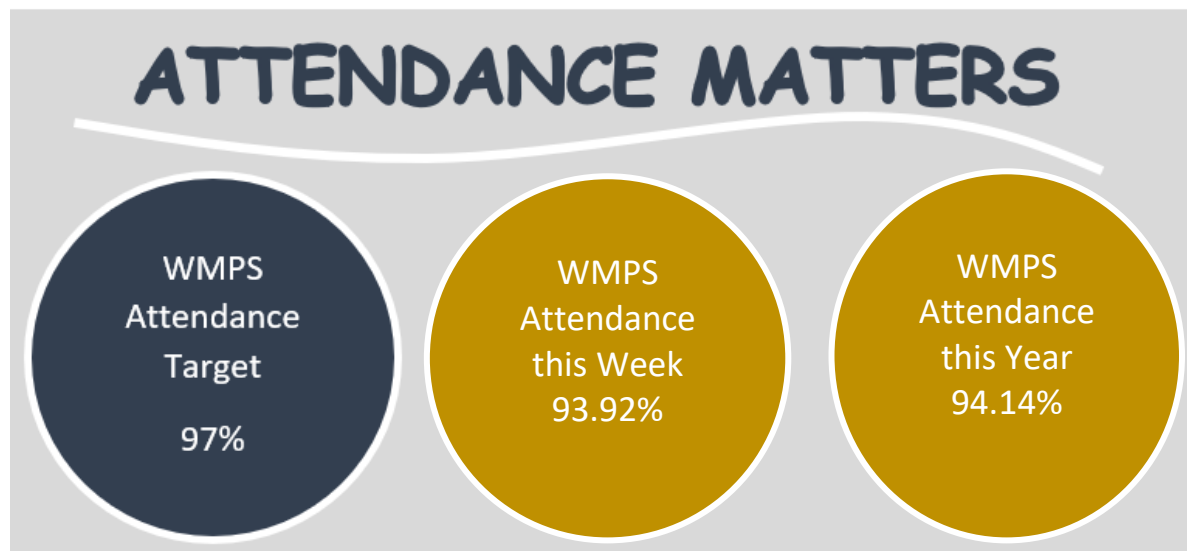
Article 24 (health and health services): Every child has the right to the best possible health. Governments must provide good quality health care, clean water, nutritious food, and a clean environment and education on health and well-being so that children can stay healthy. Richer countries must help poorer countries achieve this.



Article 27 (adequate standard of living): Every child has the right to a standard of living that is good enough to meet their physical and social needs and support their development. Governments must help families who cannot afford to provide this.

## WMPS Attendance Stats

Over a school year, we are due to be open for 190 days, which equates to 380 sessions. Registration takes place at 8.50am in the morning and after lunch in the afternoon. Attendance is affected if a pupil is not present at school for any whole session including registration.



### WILLIAM MURDOCH PRIMARY SCHOOL

ANTROBUS ROAD, HANDSWORTH, BIRMINGHAM, B21 9NT TEL: **0121 554 0999** FAX: 0121 554 6332  
EMAIL: [enquiry@williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk](mailto:enquiry@williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk) WEB: [www.williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk](http://www.williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk)  
HEADTEACHER: MR M. SINGH

## Mr Panichi's Book of the Week

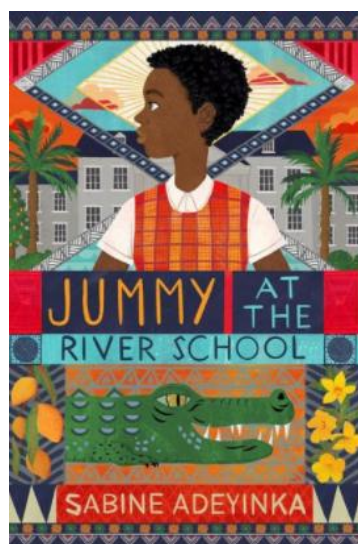
### Lower School



#### **Coming to England - Floella Benjamin Diane Ewen (illustrator)**

Baroness Floella Benjamin turns her autobiography, of the same name, into a book for children. Filled with optimism and joy, yet deeply personal and relevant, young children will follow Floella's experiences of moving home and making friends. Alongside vibrant illustrations by Diane Ewen, this powerful story shows little people how courage and determination can always overcome adversity.

### Upper School



#### **Jummy at the River School - Sabine Adebayinka**

Jummy at the River School is an immersive introduction to life at boarding school in 1990s Nigeria. Many of the themes of friendship and bravery and justice are universal, but the vividly described River School setting, and Jummy's own unique voice, makes the story sing. Jumoke has always dreamed of being accepted to Nigeria's best girls boarding school, and the reality is everything she hoped for. The grounds are beautiful, her dorm mates take her under their wing, and before long she is caught up in a whirlwind of midnight feasts, picnics, school songs and working hard to win the house prize. Everything seems perfect, the only fly in the ointment stuck-up Bolaji who thinks she is better than everyone else. However, it is not long before Jummy finds that, to her surprise, her best friend from back home, Caro, is also at the River School. Jummy's initial elation turns to confusion when she realises that Caro; brave, funny, clever Caro; is there as a maid to the matron, to work not learn. Jummy decides that everyone deserves the opportunities she has, and with the help of her new friends, resolves that there must be a way to help Caro join them at school....

Suitable across the Key Stage 2 age range, Jummy at the River School is very accessibly written, with short chapters averaging 8 pages and large, well-spaced text that is easy on the eye. The underlying poverty and class differences affecting Jummy, Caro and Bolaji are never shied away from but also never overwhelm the joyful nature of the story and the light-footed writing that keep you wanting to turn the next page. Perfect for fans of school stories linked to Africa, Jummy at the River School is as juicy and sweet and captivating as Caro's favourite agbalumo fruit.

## Mr Slinn's Artist of the Week

### **Aiela Y2.1**

Over the last few weeks, Year 2 have been learning about Ancient Egypt and the art that was created during this historical time. Lots of time was spent learning about the sphinx in Egypt and the reasons why they were created. Using clay, the children produced their own sphinx sculptures and many intricate details were carved into them. After the sculpting process was complete, the children painted the models with a range of metallic paints. Aiela produced a superb sculpture and put a lot of attention into the detail within the work.



### **Keyaan Y6.3**

The children in Year 6 have been learning about Renaissance Sculpture. The children learnt about a range of well-known Renaissance buildings and the reasons for their construction. After carrying out lots of research, Year 6 produced sculptures of famous Renaissance buildings and the final products were excellent. Keyaan created a brilliant piece of work that accurately resembles a significant piece of Renaissance architecture.







Pupil of the Week

Well done to our Reception pupils, for becoming this week's 'Pupil of the Week'.

**EFFORT**



Mohammed – R1



Leena – R2



Samarpreet – R3

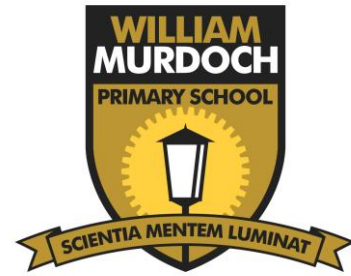
Many thanks for your continued support, cooperation and understanding.

Yours sincerely,

Mr M Singh  
Headteacher

Dates	
25 March 2025	KS1 All Star Cricket sessions
27 March 2025	Reception African Workshop (Dance and Mask Making)
28 March 2025	Mother's Day Assembly, 9.00am-9.45am
1 April 2025	Aston Villa Girls' League Fixtures
4 April 2025	Reception Eid Assembly, 9.00am-9.45am

**KNOWLEDGE LIGHTS UP THE MIND**



**WILLIAM MURDOCH PRIMARY SCHOOL**

ANTROBUS ROAD, HANDSWORTH, BIRMINGHAM, B21 9NT TEL: **0121 554 0999** FAX: 0121 554 6332

EMAIL: [enquiry@williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk](mailto:enquiry@williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk) WEB: [www.williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk](http://www.williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk)

HEADTEACHER: MR M. SINGH