

31 January 2025

## MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

*“The miracle is not to fly in the air or to walk on water, but to walk on the Earth.”*  
- Chinese proverb

Dear Parents/Carers,

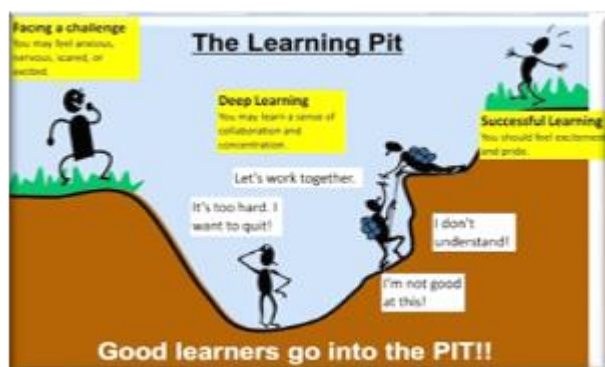
This week, I have truly enjoyed spending time in classes, talking to children about their learning, and looking at their work. I am so impressed and incredibly proud of their enthusiasm and dedication.

The curriculum at William Murdoch Primary School is far more challenging than anything in my day and, I would hasten to add, it is far more challenging than even a few short years ago. As a school we are continually developing our curriculum. We work with a range of leading partners including the King Edward Grammar Schools, the London based Primary Knowledge Trust’s History, Geography, Design Technology and Art curriculum, Services for Education’s Charanga Music curriculum and the National Association of Teachers of Religious Education’s (NATRE) Discovery RE curriculum to name a few.

There is a significant amount of reading within these different curriculums, and this is no accident. We have deliberately layered reading into the curriculums to improve reading fluency, background knowledge and vocabulary acquisition. I have written many times on the importance of reading on a daily basis and encourage you to foster this with your children by hearing them read, reading to them and showing that reading matters by making a habit of reading yourself.

Our subject leads are also engaged with a programme of peer reviews run by Birmingham Education Partnership, who support school improvement work in schools right across Birmingham. We regularly commission external reviews of all aspects of the school’s performance so that we can continue our school improvement journey.

### The Learning Pit



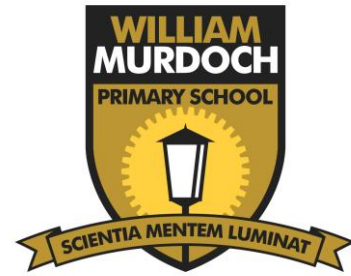
The Learning Pit explains the reality that when you learn something new, you may make a mistake, you may fail, and it may be difficult, but it doesn't mean you can't learn it. It just means you are in the learning pit and need to try again in a different way until you can get out of the learning pit. We teach our pupils that being in the learning pit is a positive thing. This is because it means that you are going to learn something new. The skills of resilience and

perseverance are key components of learning and will help you get out of the learning pit.

### WILLIAM MURDOCH PRIMARY SCHOOL

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HEADTEACHER: MR M. SINGH

# KNOWLEDGE LIGHTS UP THE MIND



Click below to watch a short film that explains the Learning Pit further:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8pdYmAbWR-k>

The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) has urged parents and carers to take simple steps to ensure children stay healthy. With flu and norovirus circulating at high levels, reinforcing good hygiene habits is more important than ever. Recent data from UKHSA shows a rise in flu cases over Christmas and New Year. Parents should encourage children to wash hands regularly with soap and water for 20 seconds and use tissues to catch coughs and sneezes. Handwashing is the best defence, as alcohol-based sanitisers do not eliminate all germs.

Children with mild symptoms like a runny nose or sore throat can attend school, but those with a fever, diarrhoea, or vomiting should stay home and return 48 hours after symptoms clear to prevent spreading infection. Stomach bugs are highly contagious. Cleaning with soap and bleach-based products is essential, and food preparation should be avoided during illness.

Vaccination is vital against flu and other serious illnesses. Parents should ensure children are up to date with routine vaccinations and check their red book or contact their GP if unsure.

By following these simple steps, we can keep our children and school community healthy this New Year.

## Islamic Experience Exhibition

The children in Year 6 were hosted by the wonderful staff at the Islamic Experience exhibition on the morning of Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2025. This visit was to support the RE curriculum for Year 6. The children were given 5 interactive presentations on:

- Faith and History
- Family Life
- Islam & Science
- The 5 Pillars
- Questions & Answers

The sessions culminated in a question and answer session. The 3D models of holy Islamic buildings around the world were amazing. The children were thoroughly impressed by the exhibition and were able to widen and deepen their knowledge. Many thanks to the exhibition for hosting our Year 6 pupils.

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## Club Drop-off and Collection

We have over recent weeks noticed a small number of children being dropped off far too early for morning clubs and/or collected late from after-school clubs. Quite often these clubs are held by school staff who are generously giving their time. Where children are being dropped off before 7.55am (morning clubs start at 8.00am) or are being collected late from clubs after school (clubs finish at 4.30pm), then a warning will be given, after which the facility will be withdrawn for the academic year.

Your cooperation in keeping children safe on site and by ensuring timely drop-off and collection is appreciated.

## Class Dojo

We have developed a number of useful instructional videos for parents on how to use Class Dojo. There is a version in English which has also been translated to Bengali, Punjabi and Urdu as these are the main language groups in school. The videos are available using the following links and will play on Youtube:

Class Dojo Guidance in Bengali: <https://youtu.be/zktwmOCwYMU>

Class Dojo Guidance in Urdu: [https://youtu.be/TwI\\_oqMi4eE](https://youtu.be/TwI_oqMi4eE)

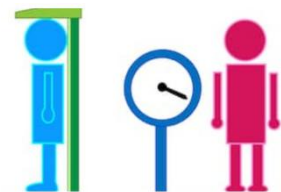
Class Dojo Guidance in Panjabi: <https://youtu.be/tSPsau7gYDM>

Class Dojo Guidance in English: <https://youtu.be/qCnYNDtNQJM>

Connecting to Class Dojo using your parent account will allow you to see the work your child is receiving and allows messaging between you and your child's class teacher. If you require another parent code, please contact the school at [enquiry@williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk](mailto:enquiry@williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk). It is important that you are connected to Class Dojo using your parent account as we utilise the instant messaging feature in Class Dojo to send important information to parents. This feature may be used to supplement information given by other means or to repeat the same information sent via email, text etc. By using different ways to deliver school information we hope to reach all those who need to receive that information in a quick, convenient and cost-effective way.

### Height and Weight Check

Children in Reception and Year 6 will be bringing home a letter and consent form to have their height and weight checked at school as part of the National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP). The checks are carried out by registered school nurses or trained health and care providers. Children are measured fully clothed, except for their coats and shoes, in a private space away from other pupils.



If you are happy for your child to be measured, you do not need to do anything; however, if you do not wish your child to take part or has a medical condition that may affect their height or weight, please inform your child's Class Teacher by Friday 7 February 2025.

### Reception Vision Screening Checks

In line with national guidance, we have been commissioned to carry out visual screening checks on reception aged children. Parents will have been provided with a consent form which gives you the opportunity to opt out of the screening test. Reception vision screening checks will take place on Wednesday 12 February 2025.

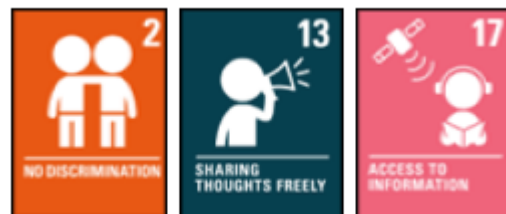


### Parent/Carer Autism Awareness Course

The Communication and Autism Team (CAT) are running an awareness course for parents/carers of autistic children or of children on the Neurodevelopmental pathway. The course has been designed for parents who want to increase their understanding of autism. The sessions will be delivered virtually via Microsoft Teams; a link will be sent to you a few days before each session. Each session will last for 2 hours. For further information, please see the attached leaflet.



## UNICEF Article of the Week



This week pupils across the school have looked at Article 2, 13 & 17.

**Article 2: (non-discrimination):** The Convention applies to every child without discrimination, whatever their ethnicity, gender, religion, language, abilities or any other status, whatever they think or say, whatever their family background.

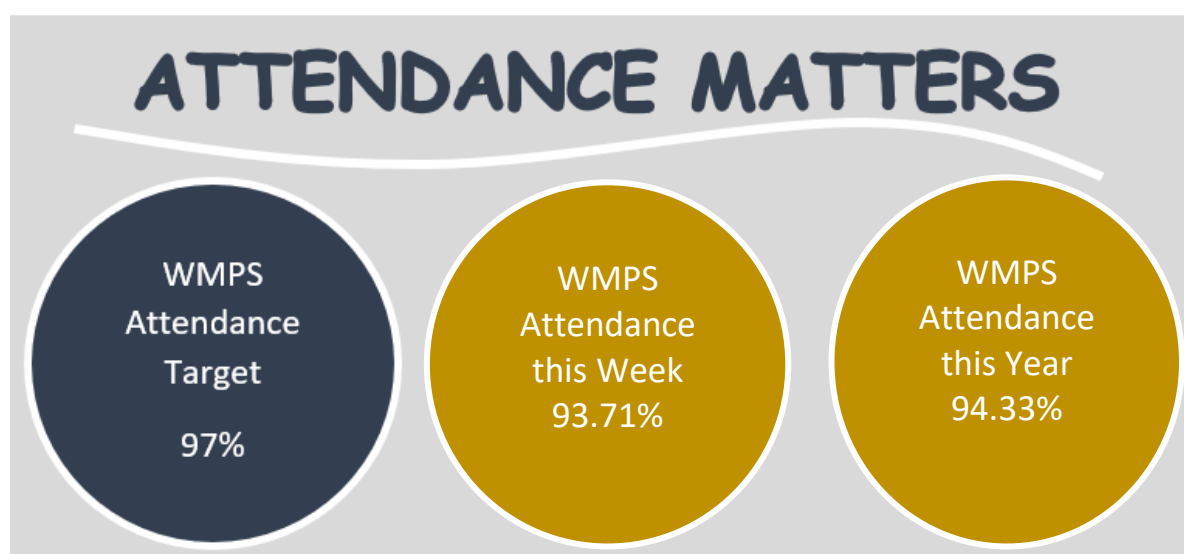
**Article 13:** (freedom of expression): Every child must be free to express their thoughts and opinions and to access all kinds of information as long as it is within the law.

**Article 17:** (access to reliable information): Every child has the right to reliable information from a variety of sources, and governments should encourage the media to provide information that children can understand. Governments must help protect children from materials that could harm them.

Pupils across the school focused on why is it important to listen to, learn from and celebrate people's differences in school and in our community.

## WMPS Attendance Stats

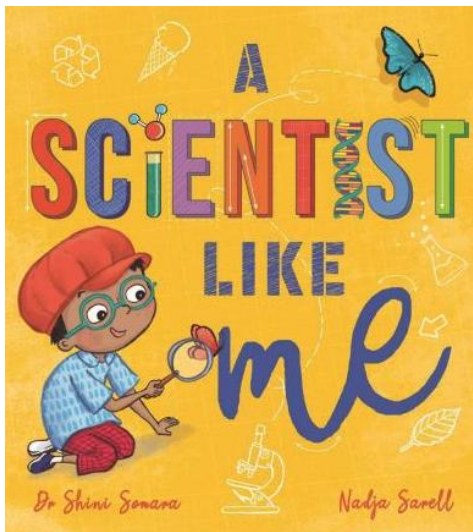
Over a school year, we are due to be open for 190 days, which equates to 380 sessions. Registration takes place at 8.50am in the morning and after lunch in the afternoon. Attendance is affected if a pupil is not present at school for any whole session including registration.



## Mr Panichi's Book of the Week

### Lower School

#### **A Scientist Like Me – Shini Somara, Catherine Coe & Nadja Sarell (Illustrator)**

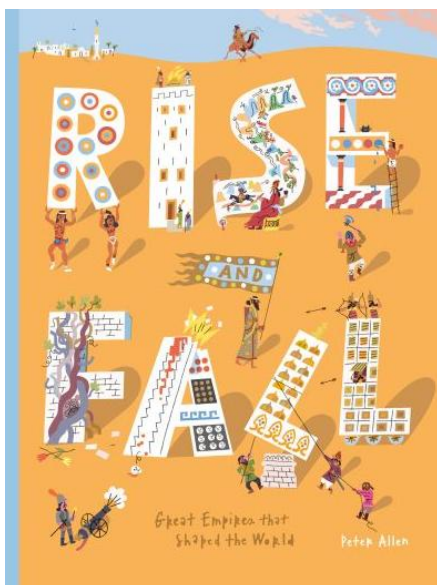


Vivid illustrations and an inspiring narrative come together to introduce young readers to the wonders of science, observation, and problem-solving.

Ruben is endlessly curious about the world around him. Why do leaves change color? What makes ice cream melt? During a beach trip with his mum, he uncovers fascinating insights about how the world works and learns about the incredible scientists who have helped explain it all. Could he try some exciting experiments and become a scientist himself? Packed with activities encouraging children to conduct their own experiments—like germinating seeds or creating invisible ink—this captivating picture book by scientist and TV presenter Dr. Shini Somara ignites a passion for science and celebrates the achievements of women in STEM. A great choice for young 'want to be' scientists.

### Upper School

#### **Rise and Fall: Great Empires that Shaped the World– Peter Allen**



Rise and Fall: Great Empires that Shaped the World is a captivating and insightful book that introduces young readers to the history of some of the most powerful and influential empires in human history.

Bursting with vibrant and detailed illustrations, every page provides a wealth of knowledge about empires ranging from the Minoan Civilization to the Kingdom of Ayutthaya. Through engaging storytelling and a clear, well-structured layout, the book makes complex historical events both accessible and enjoyable for children aged 8 and above.

Each empire is explored through topics such as religion, art, architecture, and eventual decline. This is a fantastic resource for any home library, perfect for curious minds with a passion for history, and for helping with projects.

## Mr Slinn's Artist of the Week

### **Nursery – Samuel and Calina**

In Nursery the children have been learning about Chinese New Year. The children learnt about the cultural traditions relating to this special time of the year and found out about the zodiac signs. Everyone in Nursery had lots of fun creating artistic representations of the zodiac signs and a range of materials were used. Samuel used detail effectively in his painting of a dragon and Calina used bright colours well in her snake art work. There are some very talented artists in Nursery!



### **Y3.3 - Fariha**

In Year 3 the children have been working through a unit called 'Landscape and Symmetry'. Lots of time was spent investigating how different artists represent landscapes in their art work. The work of Turner was explored in great deal and the children discussed how this particular artist used different paint textures and brushstroke types to create a range of landscapes. Year 3 produced seascape paintings which featured a stormy sea and a boat. Fariha put thought into the brushstrokes that she used and the colour choices that she made.



**Pupil of the Week**

Well done to our Year 4 pupils, for becoming this week's 'Pupil of the Week'.



Y4.1



Ammarah

Y4.2



Christian

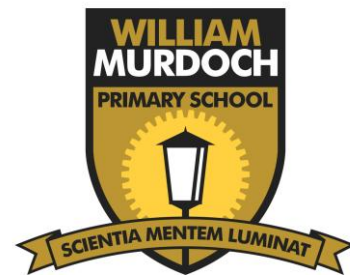
Y4.3



Shivali



# KNOWLEDGE LIGHTS UP THE MIND



Many thanks for your continued support, cooperation and understanding.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'M. Singh'.

Mr M Singh  
Headteacher

## Dates

3 February 2025	Lion Dance Workshop
5 February 2025	Year 3 & Year 4 Aston Villa Football Club Multi Sports Festival
6 February 2025	Year 5 visit to Holyhead School to see 'Sister Act' performance
7 February 2025	Y6.3 Safer Internet Day Assembly, 8.55am-9.15am
7 February 2025	Year 5 Good Work Assembly, 2.50pm-3.15pm
11 February 2025	Reception and Year 6 Height and Weight Checks
12 February 2025	Reception Vision Screening Checks
14 February 2025	Year 2 Good Work Assembly, 8.55am-9.15am

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