



Dear Parents and Carers,



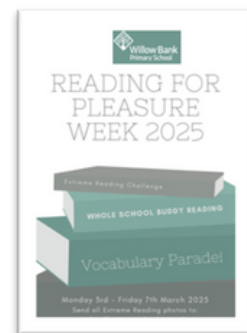
A very warm welcome back!

We hope you all had a restful and enjoyable half-term break. It has been wonderful to see the children return this week, full of enthusiasm and ready to immerse themselves in their new topics. Across the school, children have experienced an exciting range of hook lessons, designed to spark their curiosity and immerse them their new learning. Please read on to find out more.

WBP Reading for Pleasure Week 3rd-7th March

Next week, we will be celebrating Reading for Pleasure Week, packed with activities to inspire every child to develop a love of reading. We encourage all children (and parents!) to join in the fun, which includes:

- A special assembly to launch our celebrations
- Buddy reading across year groups
- Whole-school parent reading morning – come and share a book with your child on Thursday 6th March 8:40-9:10am
- Vocabulary Parade on Thursday 6th March (World Book Day) – children are invited to dress as a word of their choice!
- Masked Reader Quiz – can your child guess which staff members are behind the masks?
- Extreme Reading Photograph Competition – families are encouraged to get involved!



We hope you will join us in fostering a love of books and continue to enjoy reading together at home every day.



Ramadan Mubarak

Today marks the beginning of Ramadan, a holy month for many of our families and we extend our warmest wishes to those observing this special time. A reminder that Year 6 children who wish to fast during the school day must have written confirmation from parents. We will also be opening a prayer room at lunchtime for any children who wish to pray.

Parents' Evening – Week Beginning 24th March

Please check Arbor for an important letter regarding our upcoming Parents' Evenings. Appointments with your child's class teacher can be booked via the Arbor platform as usual. We look forward to discussing your child's progress with you.



Wishing you all a relaxing weekend.

Best wishes,

Mrs Oldfield and the Willow Bank Team



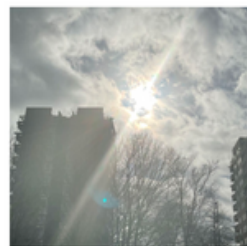
Year R

The Reception class has had a fantastic time diving into our new Big Question, 'Who wants to go on a Adventure?' We've been role-playing as dinosaur explorers, digging for dinosaur bones and using magnifying glasses to examine the various sizes and shapes of the bones from different dinosaurs. We also had a blast exploring our topic table, especially the space equipment! We can't wait to see what other exciting discoveries we'll make as we continue our adventures in exploring!



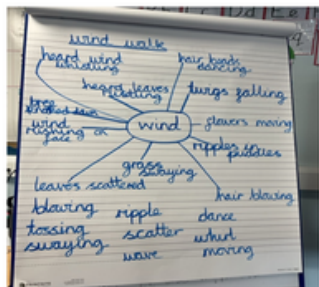
Year 1

Our Big Question this half term is 'What effects do the changes in weather have around the world?' Today we learnt about different types of weather including snow, sun, rain, thunder and lightning. We then went on a weather walk and observed what the weather was like today. On return to the classroom, we described today's weather and discussed what our favourite weather is and gave reasons for this.



Year 2

Our Big Question for this term is 'How does the weather shape our environment?' This week we ventured outside for a wind walk, exploring the effects of the wind and spotting objects that may have been influenced by it. This activity was inspired by our new book for this term, Wild is the Wind.



Year 3

Our Big Question is 'What did the Romans do for us?' Our hook lesson took us back to Ancient Rome. We spent time looking at the diets of the Romans. After identifying different foods which they would have eaten, we then tried them ourselves. Our favourite dish was dipping bread in honey!





Year 4

Our Spring 2 Big Question is 'How did the Ancient Greeks influence the modern world?'. Our Hook lesson in writing was all about exploring the fascinating world of zodiac signs! The children learned about the different zodiac symbols, their meanings and how they connect to Greek mythology. Inspired by this, in Design Technology (DT), we got creative and designed our own vision board showcasing our very own Greek mythical creatures!



Year 5

Year 5 had an exciting hook lesson linked to our Big Question ' Why does Earth need Rainforests?' To kick off their new core text, The Explorer! Stepping into the "Amazon rainforest," they took on survival challenges, finding water sources, spotting wildlife, and creating jungle soundscapes. Working in teams, they explored what it takes to survive in the wild, just like the characters in their book.

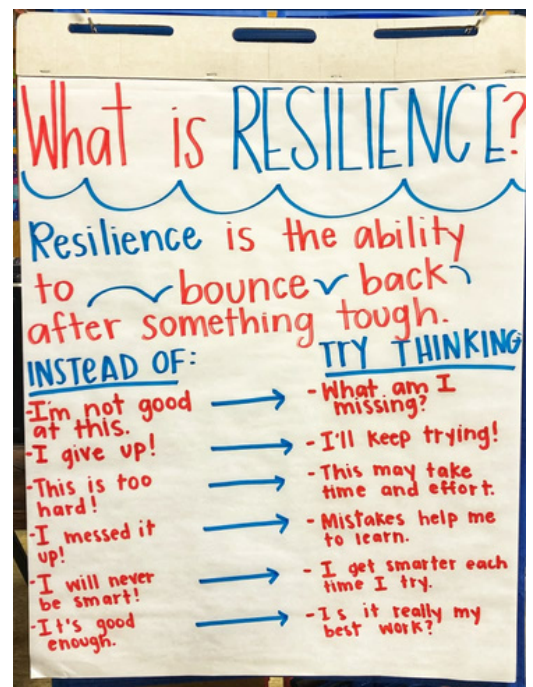


Year 6

Year 6 continued their journey into the events of World War II and considered what it would be like to have been evacuated and being sent to live in another part of the country away from all they know and care about. They revealed that they would 'feel anxious about being sent to live with strangers', 'be upset at leaving their loved ones behind', mixed with a feeling of 'curiosity about where they were going and what lay in store for them.'



OUR CORE VALUE FOR SPRING TERM 2 IS RESILIENCE

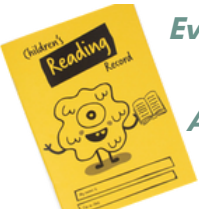




KS1 & EYFS Parent Reading Morning

Every Thursday from 8:40-9:10am



All parents and carers welcome!



We are looking for Read with Me volunteers at Willow Bank! These volunteers will visit our Yr 1 & 2 classrooms and listen to our children read.

If you are interested in volunteering with us for 30 minutes or an hour each week, then please pop into the office to express your interest and pick up our application pack.



Well done	Our target is over 96%
★ Magnolia - 96%	★ Yew - 99%
★ Hornbeam - 96%	★ Redwood - 99%
	Almond - 94%
★ Hazel - 98%	★ Walnut - 99%
★ Larch - 96%	★ Sycamore - 98%
	

School Reminder

Children should not arrive earlier than 8.20am, for Bagel Breakfast club from 8.25am - 8.35am
 School gates close at precisely 8:50am. After this time, entrance is via the school office and parents will need to sign your child/children in using the screen.

A reminder that we have our Chance To Chat.

As a school we provide ongoing support for the children’s wellbeing and mental health to which one of the methods is they can fill out a form while in school to express their worries. The form then gets placed in the ‘Chance to chat’ box where it will be addressed by the wellbeing team.
 We also have an online form which is located on the school website named ‘Chance to chat’.
 The children can complete the form if they are worried about something or need some advice? A member of staff will get back to the child at school.

Please copy the link below and paste in the search bar and it will direct you straight to the form.
<https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=MvrWB2Z-r0qnuEuN-giOI1CAPQc0X4RFje43giTliLNUOE5BWUFISE40VjBXODZYRVFITLNXvzZYNCQLQCN0PWcu>



Support • Inform • Signpost • Empower



SEND HEALTH FOCUS DAY

**‘Supporting your child with sensory differences’
for parents with children
age 3-16 years**

SEND Marketplace: 10am-2pm
Meet education and health professionals

Session 1

10am-11am (Registration from 9:30am)
Introduction to sensory processing and integration

Session 2

11:15am-12:15noon
What does this look like in a school/classroom environment? How we help schools to support children and young people

Refreshments: 12:15pm-1pm

Session 3

1pm-2:30pm
Interactive workshops on sensory strategies

www.bexleyvoice.org.uk

Thursday 20th March 25

**The Danson Youth Centre
Brampton Road
Bexleyheath
DA7 4EZ**

9:30am-2:30pm

This health focus day will be delivered by Educational Psychologists from Bexley and Occupational Therapists from Oxleas, in partnership with Bexley Voice

- Come to all or part of the day
- Advance booking necessary for all sessions
- Marketplace running throughout the day - just drop in

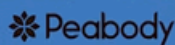
To request your place at this event, please use the links:
<https://bit.ly/3Q6Q0cw>



SEND Family Fun, Information & Support Day

A fun-filled day to meet others and learn more about the support available to you. Enjoy accessible sports, face painting, and free food and drink.

Saturday 1 March, 12.30pm - 3pm
The Moorings Sociable Club, SE28 8BG



To register for your tickets scan the QR code below or text 07386 684 242





At The National College, our [wakeupwednesday](https://www.thenationalcollege.com/wakeupwednesday) guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit [thenationalcollege.com](https://www.thenationalcollege.com).

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about WHATSAPP



WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

With more than two billion active users, WhatsApp is the world's most popular messaging service. Its end-to-end encryption only allows messages to be viewed by the sender and any recipients; not even WhatsApp itself can read them. The UK's Online Safety Bill proposes to end such encryption on private messaging, but for the time being, this controversial feature remains.

EVOLVING SCAMS

WhatsApp's popularity makes it a lucrative hunting ground for scammers. Recent examples include posing as the target's child, requesting a money transfer because of a spurious 'emergency' - give it some where fraudsters trigger a verification message by attempting to log in to your account, then 'proving an WhatsApp' call or text to ask you to request the code back to them, giving them access.

CONTACT FROM STRANGERS

To start a chat, someone only needs the mobile number of the WhatsApp user they want to message. Therefore, if a child has ever given their number out to someone they don't know, that person could then contact them via WhatsApp. It is also possible that the child might be added to a group chat or community (by one of their friends, for example) containing other people they don't know.

FAKE NEWS

WhatsApp's connectivity and ease of use allow news to be shared rapidly - whether it's true or not. To combat the spread of misinformation, messages have almost three million times on the app now display a 'forwarded many times' label and a double arrow icon. This makes users aware that the message they've just received is far from an original - and might not be entirely factual, either.

CHAT LOCK AND SECRET CODES

In 2023, WhatsApp introduced a feature that lets users keep their chats in a separate 'locked' state. Unlike normal WhatsApp chats, these are protected by a PIN or a 'Secret Code' - where users set a unique password for locked chats. Unfortunately, this creates the potential for young people to hide conversations and content they suspect their parents wouldn't approve of.

VIEW ONCE CONTENT

The ability to send images or messages that can only be viewed once has led to some WhatsApp users sharing inappropriate material or abusive texts, knowing that the recipient can't retain them later to use as evidence of misconduct. People seem to be able to circumvent this disappearing content - but a recently added WhatsApp feature now blocks this, giving protection of privacy.

VISIBLE LOCATION

WhatsApp's Live Location feature lets users share their current whereabouts, which can be tracked for hours. This means you can be checking that their child is safe while out, for example. However, anyone in a user's contacts list or in a mutual group chat can also track their location - potentially letting strangers identify a child's home address or journeys that they make regularly.

Advice for Parents & Educators

EMPHASISE CAUTION

Encourage children to treat unsolicited messages with caution; get them to consider whether it sounds like something a friend or relative would really send them. Make sure they know never to share personal details over WhatsApp, and to be wary of clicking on any links in messages. Turning up two-step verification adds a further layer of protection to their WhatsApp account.

ADJUST THE SETTINGS

It's wise to change a child's WhatsApp settings to specify which of their contacts can add them to group chats without needing approval. You can give permission to My Contacts or My Contacts Except... Additionally, if a child needs to use Live Location, emphasise that they should enable this function for only as long as they need - and then turn it off.

CHAT ABOUT PRIVACY

Check in with the child about how they're using WhatsApp, making sure they know you only have their safety at heart. If you spot a locked Chats folder, you might want to talk about the sort of content they're seeing in there, who they're talking to, and why they want to keep these chats hidden. Also, if children send any Live Voice content, it could be helpful to ask them why.

DISCUSS GROUP CHATS

Make children aware that there could be members of a group that they don't know well and that words can be misinterpreted. Encourage them to leave a group chat if it makes them uncomfortable - or for any reason, in fact.

THINK BEFORE SHARING

Help children understand why it's important to stop and think before posting or forwarding something on WhatsApp. It's easy - and all too common - for content that is user posts to be shared more widely, even publicly on social media. Encourage children to consider how an impulsive message or forwarding might damage their reputation or upset a friend who sent something to them in confidence.

Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian Government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



For more advice or a free helpline, visit our guide page or <https://www.thenationalcollege.com/wakeupwednesday> 2023

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