Friday 6th November 2026

Welcome to Autumn 2 Woodlands!

We are well and truly in autumn – the evenings are darker, the temperature has dipped, the leaves are changing and everyone is starting to talk about Christmas… which is just far too soon! Thank you to all our families who have ensured that our children in Y1 to Y6 are now dressed in their autumn and winter uniform which includes a proper shirt and tie. The children look so smart and ready to learn.

We would like to say a HUGE thank you to all our families who have generously donated items for our OPAL initiative which stands for Outdoor Play and Learning. We want our children to love lunchtimes through their play, through positive relationships and choice of play.

We will be starting small, later this half term, when we shall open zones of different activities for children to choose from during their lunchtime but this is only the beginning. The initiative will continue to grow over the next 18 months as we provide children with more fun choices of play and expand our area of play so that the field gets used during the winter months as well as the summer months. (Wellies will be key!)

We are all very excited about OPAL but we couldn't offer the children play choices without your contributions. Thank you.

Our children have been leading assemblies this week as the A Star Sheriffs reminded us of the need to be more visible during the darker months and wear reflective clothing or fluorescent clothing when out and about. The slogan is 'Be Bright be Seen'. The Phunky Food Ambassadors will also be launching their new theme in assembly next week 'Healthy Lunch'.

Next week is looking busy, we have a meeting for Y5 families who are interested in the Queen Mary Grammar Schools at 4:00 on Monday evening; Wednesday is Remembrance Day when we shall be joining the rest of the country in the two minute silence at 11:00 and learning about the reason for the silence. Y1 parents are invited into school to learn all about phonics in the parent workshops and then it is a non-uniform day on Friday for Children In Need for a £1.00. Parents can pay the £1.00 on Scopay.

It is likely to be a busy weekend with bonfire and firework displays plus Remembrance Services on the Sunday.

I imagine many of our children will be participating in the Services as they represent the out of school group they attend. I hope they feel very proud to be representing their community at such an important event.

Mrs Newton



Dear Parents and Carers,

I am sure you would have been very surprised to read in the last edition of this newsletter that Mrs. Newton will be leaving Woodlands at Christmas.

The governors were very sad to receive her resignation because she has been an outstanding Headteacher, showing great commitment and dedication to ensuring that our children have the best possible opportunities to learn, grow and succeed.

I want to reassure you that the governors will put appropriate arrangements in place to ensure all aspects of school life continue as normal until the appointment of a new Headteacher.

As previously reported, as an interim arrangement from January, Mrs Macpherson will step up to be Headteacher working alongside Mrs Jackson, Miss Edmunds, Mrs Baker and the other members of the management team.

The formal recruitment process to appoint a new Headteacher has already begun and we are committed to ensuring that this process is thorough and carefully managed, with the aim of securing the right leader to take the school forward and build on the strong foundations already in place.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. R. Lawrence
Chair of the Governing Board

WINNING CLASSES WITH THE BEST ATTENDANCE!

Well done to our children who arrive on time, before 8:50, and so are ready for the important first lesson of the day.

Best classes during the last week who earn extra play time are:

RJ 99% and 4N 98%

Absolutely Fantastic!



Attendance and Punctuality

This week, a number of our families have received an attendance letter from the attendance team. We always appreciate families keeping us updated with the reasons for absences and we know some of the reasons are very genuine and cannot be helped. However, we want to ensure that families are accurately informed about their child's attendance.

You will have received an attendance letter if your child:

Has attendance that is less than 90% (They have had at least 4 days absent so far this year)
Has attendance that is between 91-93% and so the letter is to warn you that your child is getting close to becoming a Persistent Absentee.
Has been late to school 6 or more times this academic year

How many days would an 'average' child be absent during an academic year?

A child with the best chance of academic and social success would have no more than 0 to 5 days in a whole academic year and therefore achieve an end of year attendance percentage of 97% to 100%.

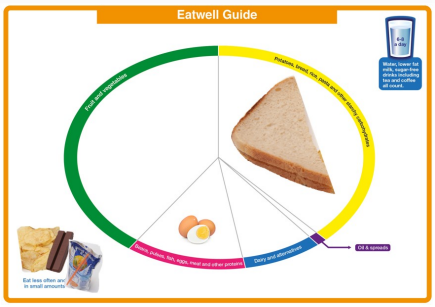
What is a healthy lunch?

Our Phunky Food Ambassadors will be leading assembly next week to share what constitutes a healthy lunch.

We should be aiming for an item from a few of the main sections of the Eatwell food circle for each meal.

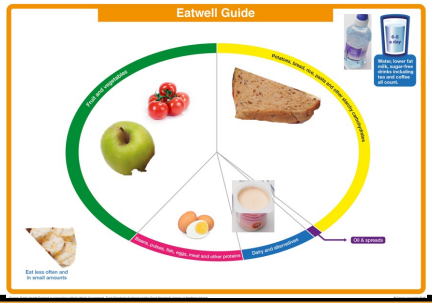






This can be clearly seen in the pictures of the two lunches.





Who are our SUPERSTARS this week?



Class	Name	Reason
Treehouse	Everyone	For great participation in their Explore and Discovery week activities!
NAM	Everyone	An amazing Explore and Discovery week, working on our independent skills, getting quicker and more confident as the week progressed.
NPM	Everyone	An amazing Explore and Discovery week, working on our independent skills, getting quicker and more confident as the week progressed.
RG	Everyone	For being amazing Record Breakers and improving their time for Walk a Mile! Well done everyone!
RJ	Everyone	For being amazing Record Breakers and improving their time for Walk a Mile! Well done everyone!
1W	Willow	For designing and creating fantastic art from recycled materials during Explore and Discovery week. Well done, Willow!
1NP	Finley T	For a creative collage in explore and discovery week. Finley created a sea creature linked to our topic of plastic pollution.
2CH	Evie	for always taking pride in her work. Evie carefully completes all tasks given to the best of her ability. Well done Evie - keep up the amazing work.
2D	Jessica	For taking care of her work throughout explore and discovery week, to ensure her special person had a brilliant time at the tea party. Well done.
3A	Everyone in Year 3	For a fantastic Explore and Discovery week! Year 3 became 'Culture Vultures' and explored different artists and artistic techniques with curiosity, enthusiasm and maturity. They embraced every activity with a positive attitude. Well done for your wonderful approach to learning!
3E		
4R	Guruman	For sharing his beliefs and information about his faith during our Explore and Discovery Week. Thank you Guruman.
4N	Nixon	Wonderful final piece of artwork. You have used tone, texture and negative space really well.
5D	All of 5D	For demonstrating excellent teamwork, fantastic creativity and imagination and great courage and confidence when taking part in our 'Explore and Discovery week.' Well done 5D! ☺
5H	Jaxon	For demonstrating outstanding leadership qualities and effectively applying British Values to inspire, guide and lead his team
6P	Everyone in Year 6	For embracing new challenges and developing resilience during a fantastic residential week at Bryntysillio, and for broadening their experience as a TA across the school, supporting children as they work towards their '11 Before 11' goals.
6H		

Well done to our 'Out of school achievers'

Cade in RJ has got a medal for his football skills and scored 3 goals at the weekend for Cresswell Wanderers.

Rajeeve in Y2 has been training hard at Little Ninjas and has consequently been awarded his Orange Belt.

Tobias Y4 football player of the match. He scored three goals in his tournament.

Nixon Y4 football parents player of the match. Setting up a goal and being part of a winning team

Brooklyn- Went to Las Vegas in a street dance competition. His team came first in the competition.

Albie Y3 Man of the match in his tournament at the weekend.

Oliver Y3 football medal for his competition at the weekend





Question of the week that we have been discussing in school and you can discuss at home too:

Is the journey more important than the destination?

British adventurer Karl Bushby has returned to the UK, after spending almost 28 years travelling around the world on an incredible journey



Our linking Woodland's value is:

Proud of achievements

Which British Value does this question highlight?

Karl's journey links to Rule of Law, because following the laws and rules of the countries he travelled through helped him travel safely and responsibly.

Which Protected Characteristic does this story link to?

Karl's journey shows that people can achieve amazing things at different ages. It reminds us not to judge what someone can do based on how old they are.

Key Dates to share for the Autumn Term:

Monday 9th November	4:00 Information meeting for Y5 parents regarding Queen Mary's Grammar Schools
Tuesday 10th November	Y1 Parent Workshop at 2:00 and repeated at 4:30
Wednesday 11th November	Remembrance Day
Thursday 12th November	Y1 Parent Workshop at 2:00 and repeated at 4:30
Friday 13th November	Children In Need. Non Uniform for a £1.00 on Scopay
Week Beginning Monday 16th November	Anti-bullying Week: Break The Silence (Odd Socks Day with School Uniform on Monday)
Tuesday 17th November	Photographs for children who missed photograph day
Friday 20th November	Last day to pay for Y3 Parent Christmas Lunch
Tuesday 24th November	Choir performing at Walsall Arena: Travelling Through Christmas
Friday 27th November	Flu vaccination for Y6 by the NHS (and for those children who were absent when the NHS came in last time)
Friday 27th November	Last day for Y3 Parents to inform the office of any dietary requirements for the Y3 Parent Christmas lunch
Wednesday 2nd December	Christmas Fayre after school
Tuesday 8th December	2:30 Musical Event for Y4 parents and parents of children who have private music lessons in school
Wednesday 9th December	Christmas dinner for 3A (parent per child invited - letter closer to the time)
Tuesday 15th December	Y6 at the Theatre
Tuesday 15th December	Christmas Performance for Nursery and Reception at 9:15. Christmas Performance for Y1 and Y2 at 2:15
Wednesday 16th December	Christmas Performance for Y1 and Y2 at 9:15. Christmas Performance for Nursery and Reception at 2:15 Christmas dinner for 3E (parent per child invited - letter closer to the time) Christmas dinner day for everyone
Thursday 17th December	Christmas Jumper Day and last day of term for children
Friday 18th December	Teacher Training Day – school closed for children
Monday 4th January	Everyone returns for the Spring term
Wednesday 13th January	Choir performing at Young Voices at the NEC
Friday 15th January	Y5 visiting Selly Manor



BIG FUN, BIG ADVENTURES!

Introducing OPAL Playtimes at Woodlands Academy of Learning

Dear Parents and Carers,

We're getting ready for a new kind of lunchtime! We're really excited to be introducing **OPAL (Outdoor Play and Learning)** at Woodlands. OPAL helps children enjoy more active, creative and adventurous play with their friends.

□ Why is play so important?





Play is much more than a break from learning. It helps children to:

- □ Be active, explore and build confidence
- □ Make friends, share ideas and work together
- □ Use their imagination and get creative
- □ Develop independence, resilience and problem-solving skills
- □ Have fun and enjoy coming to school

□ What will playtimes look like?

Children will have more opportunities to explore our outdoor spaces and choose how, where and with whom they play. This may include using a wider range of play resources, trying new activities and getting a little muddier along the way!



Children may experience new challenges and greater freedom to lead their own play. Staff will carefully consider risks and benefits so that play is as safe as possible, while still allowing children to explore, learn and grow.

□ A little help from home

As our OPAL adventure develops, we will be asking families to donate suitable play resources. Take a look at the poster overleaf that has a list of requested items. If you are having a clear out over the half term holiday please bring clean and safe (no broken items please) items from the list to school, during the first week back. Collection point will be the back left side of KS1 playground.

□ Be part of our OPAL journey

Over the coming months, we'll share updates and invite you to events where you can see our new play opportunities in action. We hope you'll join us in making playtimes happier, more active and full of imagination.

Want to find out more? Visit **www.outdoorplayandlearning.org.uk** for information and videos about OPAL.

Thank you for your support. We can't wait to see our children learning, exploring and having fun together!



Best wishes,
Mrs T Newton
Head teacher
Ms. A Campbell – OPAL Mentor

WE NEED YOUR HELP!!

We are looking for donations to improve our lunchtimes for your children. If you are having a clear out over the half term holiday and come across any unwanted items that we can use please bring them into school.

We need the following items that are clean and can be used safely for children from Nursery up to Year 6:

Clothing for Play
- Wellies
- Water proof coats, trousers and body suits.

Dressing up Items
- Dressing up clothes - any type.
- Scarves, hats, gloves, jewellery, handbags, purses, wallets, wigs.

Crafts
- Beads
- Ribbons
- Chalks
- Paintbrushes
- Paintbrush pots
- Sponges
- Dry paint palettes
- Wool
- String
- Natural objects (e.g. shells, pebbles, acorns)

Small World Items
- Model animals, dinosaurs, people, vehicles
- Small world mats
- Model buildings to make small worlds

Role Play/Toy Items
- Kitchen equipment
- Medical/hospital, post office, construction workers, vets, emergency services, school, shops, taking care of baby, explorer, anything else you can think of.

Musical Items
- Pots, pans, metal bottles
- old musical instruments
- Wooden spoons
- Pipes

Construction Items
- Large cardboard boxes (flattened)
- Lego and Duplo
- Large building blocks
- Plastic pipes and guttering
- String or thin rope

Storage
- Small wheeled suitcases
- Tarpaulin
- Lidded plastic boxes
- Curtains
- Shower curtains

Other Items
- Medium sized tents
- Scooters
- Balance bikes
- Boogie boards
- Go carts
- Pushchairs

Volunteers
We are also asking for volunteers to help with constructing our activity zones. If you are handy or like DIY, woodwork or gardening and have time to spare, please speak to Mrs Macpherson, Mrs Dickson or the school office.

Please bring your donations during the first week back. We will be waiting for you at the Donation Point at the back left hand corner of KS1 Playground.