A word from Mrs Milner

Friday 3rd March 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

Another exciting week at Woodside! Yesterday we celebrated World Book Day. Many thanks for all your hard work in preparing your child's costumes. I vividly remember the days when my own children informed me, usually a day before (this was before the wonderful facility of e-mails and texts to parents), that they needed to dress up as a book character. I recall one particular year struggling to attach a bright red washing up bowl to my son's back so he can go to school dressed up as a Ninja Turtle – not strictly a book character, I know, but this is all I had at 8am on that day. So, I am very grateful for all your efforts. All the children were amazing and looked wonderful. There will be a word below from Mrs Jonwood describing the day.

During these 'online heavy' times, propagating the love of reading books is, in my humble opinion, so important. There is so much pleasure that can be derived from a written word. Books can take a child to an imaginary world, improve their vocabulary as well as language skills and help with cognitive development. Additionally, when parents read to a child or with a child, it creates this very special bond between them. So please encourage reading and love of the written word.

A word from Mrs Jonwood -our reading leader…

We had a wonderful day on Thursday celebrating World Book Day. It is always such a pleasure to see all the children dressed up as their favourite book characters. Thank you to all the children and families who made such a huge effort. The day began with a lovely peer reading session, where children were paired with another child in the school to enjoy a book from home. We also held another successful book swap, allowing children to bring home a new book and supporting our school community to reuse and recycle. Children also took part in a series of exciting classroom events - all celebrating reading and a love of books. We held two thrilling competitions and the winners of those can be seen below. We were blown away by the number of entries and were so proud of all the effort the children put in.

Read in an unusual place competition:
Runners up: Daisy, Hannah, Archie, and Freddie
Winners: Apshara and William
Make and Bake a book character:
Winners - Nathun and Samuel

On Wednesday, Year 5 visited the Living Rainforest and below is a word from Mrs Webber and Mr Harvey-Mott…

Year 5 had a wonderful day at The Living Rainforest on Wednesday. We got to experience the climate, flora and fauna of a rainforest and learnt more about the importance of sustainability during the guided tour. Positive comments were made by the staff at the Living Rainforest about the children's enthusiasm and knowledge about the rainforest. We are very proud of Year 5 for the behaviour and inquisitivity they demonstrated and for representing Woodside excellently.
Mr Harvey-Mott and Mrs Webber.

Today we said goodbye to Miss Mulqueen, who worked with us for the last four years in her dual role as a midday supervisor as well as support assistant. Mrs Mulqueen relocated to another town and therefore will work closer to where she lives. On behalf of all staff and the children - thank you Sarah so much for all your hard work and we wish you all the best for the future.

I am looking forward to hearing all about this year's last cross-country competition that is going to take place this Saturday in Chesham. Good luck to all the participants and please remember; we are all proud of you regardless the result.

I cannot believe that it is now only four weeks until Easter break. Thank you very much for your continuous support for our school and the work that we do.

Have a lovely weekend.

Dorota Milner, Headteacher

Dates for your diary

Date	Event
4.3.22	Cross Country Event—Lowndes Park, Chesham
6.3.22	Easter Hamper Raffle Tickets go on sale via Classlist
10.3.23	After school Bingo evening! All years welcome! More info to follow
13.3.23-	Food Bank collection
20.3.23-24.3.23	Year 6 Residential
27.3.23	Easter Hamper Raffle Draw!
28.3.23	Year 5 Easter assembly to parents at 2.20pm
28.3.23	Parent/Teacher Interviews (Day 1)
30.3.23	Year 3 Dance Festival at Dr Challoner's
30.3.23	Parent/Teacher Interviews (Day 2)
31.3.23	Break up at 1.30pm on Friday 31st March. No Hideout Zone afterschool club on last day of term. Breakfast club is still available. Return to school Monday 17th April.
25.4.23	PTA Meeting in school 8-9pm
1.5.23	Bank Holiday
5.5.23	Year 4 Tri Golf Festival at Chiltern Hills Academy
8.5.23	Additional BANK HOLIDAY- His Majesty's coronation
9.5.23	Year 3 Tennis event at Dr Challoner's
17.6.23	PTA Summer Fair—SAVE THE DATE
29.6.23	Sports Day (if this needs to be re-arranged due to bad weather, the reserve date will be 13.7.23)
w/c 3.7.23	Bike-ability (Yr6)
4.7.23	Transition Day
21.7.23	Break up 1.30pm
	Link to 2023/24 term dates on website

House Point Totals

	Maple	Willow	Elm	Cedar
This Week	359	352	358	**364**
Total	**4505**	**4718**	**4109**	**4677**

BINGO

FRIDAY MARCH 10TH
AFTER SCHOOL - 4.30PM

£4 PER TICKET
INCLUDES - DRINK, SNACK, GAME SHEETS, GAME PEN & WINNERS PRIZES

TICKET SALES GO LIVE MONDAY 27TH FEB ON CLASSLIST

ALL SCHOOLYEARS EVENT TICKET NUMBERS ARE LIMITED SO BUY YOUR TICKET FAST TO AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT!

Woodside PTA
Registered Charity 296361

Safeguarding

I would like to talk to you about e-safety. I know that we have covered this particular topic many times, but I feel there is never "too many times" when we are discussing children's safety online. We, as a school, teach children about keeping safe online but we sincerely hope that parents will also support our work by taking an active part at home. Parents and carers have a responsibility for discussing e-safety with children and for backing up the e-safety measures that children have learned at school by reinforcing them at home.

By learning about the internet and talking to children about its benefits and risks, parents can make it easier for them to come and chat if something goes wrong. If you wait until it does, then conversations can become more complex and stressful and open communication becomes harder.

Part of a parental responsibility is knowing where your children go, who they meet and what they do. Today this applies online as much as off. The internet should be seen as a place that children go to. **A child might be in their bedroom, but if they are online, they are also out in the big wide world.** While connecting online can be a lifeline, it can also leave children at risk of issues such as online grooming. Children can be manipulated into building strong bonds with people they have only met online so they are quick to consider these people friends rather than a stranger.

Online Gaming - Children play with friends they know in real life but competing against new people is a huge part of the fun. Games can offer young people a sense of escape from the reality of the world and the social aspect of some games can help children feel part of a community. Playing online isn't all fun and games—children are at risk from bullying, identity theft, credit card fraud and even sexual exploitation. https://zeeko.ie/are-your-kids-talking-to-strangers-online/

What should parents watch out for?
Game chat — whether voice, video, or written — can have inappropriate language, can be cruel (including hate speech) as well as kind (since not all gamers are unkind). Game chat can be totally off-topic, too. Please be aware that not all game chat occurs on the platform children play on. **Some gamers prefer to use the chat app Discord** to talk with their teammates, so you'll want to find out whether your child uses it. Parents need to be aware that they are age restrictions on most of the chat apps. For example, Discord is aimed at 13 plus so not appropriate at all for primary school children.

Stranger Danger!
It's part of nearly everyone's childhood experience: we learn about things like "stranger danger" and how we should always be cautious around adults we don't already know. I cannot emphasise enough that the same rule needs to apply to any online activity that your child / children may be involved with. Children generally have a good sense of who is safe and who might pose a threat in the real world, but these signals are not as reliable as entering the digital world. Predators online can be extremely deceptive and have the advantage of anonymity. They can disguise themselves in chat rooms, video games, and social media, getting children to reveal information about themselves or even set up hazardous meetings in the real world.

What can parents do?

Explain the Basics of Online Chatting
The first goal for parents is to draw similarities between the digital and physical world, explaining how these two environments are closely related and interconnected. Children should understand that their behaviour online will impact what happens in real life and vice versa. They will understand that strangers online are to be dealt with the same way as they have been taught previously.

Run Through Scenarios
Parents can get key lesson points across to children by creating imaginary scenarios and what should be done when confronted with unwanted attention from strangers online.

For example, parents may ask children the proper response to a request for pictures or just information like age, gender, and location. Parents should craft custom scenarios based on the types of apps and environments their children use and give them a toolkit of possible responses and actions to navigate away safely.

Safeguarding continued…

Stay Close to Friends
Just as children are taught to stick by their friends on the playground and in public, they should be reminded to keep these same policies when navigating situations with new people and new friends online.
This applies mainly to parts of the social aspect of online experiences like chatrooms, message boards, and games.
The ground rules are simple enough and should be followed without exception: if you don't already know the person in real life, don't engage with them online in any way.

Establishing Boundaries
Creating a long list of do's and don'ts is a useful, interactive exercise that parents and children can do together and learn many key lessons along the way. This gives children a chance to ask all the questions they may not have felt comfortable asking before and helps parents understand where children are in their understanding of responsibilities online.

Recognize Red Flags
The more readily children can recognise online dangers, the more confident they will be in handling themselves maturely in the face of danger and navigating their way to safety. Red flags can be anything from anonymous and unrecognized user names to strange requests for images or information from unexpected sources. Children should be able to pinpoint concerning behaviours or patterns and know what to do in various situations.

Teach Exit Strategies
One of the most important lessons for children is stepping away from online interaction, even if they feel pressured to stay and engage. Parents should teach children about tactics that online predators can use to convince them to reveal information and offer different options for getting out. Children need to learn not to feel bad or rude for leaving conversations abruptly if they feel threatened or uncomfortable.

Learn About Digital Footprints
It's never too early for children to learn this crucial lesson: whatever happens online, stays online, even if you think it has been deleted from the web. The sooner children come to terms with this reality, the better, and it will help them be more cautious with how they navigate the internet with friends, anonymous users, and anyone else.

Limiting Access and Screen Time
In general, the less time spent online, the lower the chance of an incident with strangers.
Since parents cannot monitor behaviour 24/7, simply limiting access to certain apps and sites is the best course of action for protection. Parents may want to suspend internet access altogether at other points, like dinner or bedtime, and encourage children to seek other forms of relaxation or entertainment.

Set Examples as Adults
Children follow the examples set by adults in their lives. Even if children and adults spend time differently online, parents can set the tone by encouraging real-life activities and bringing the family together in ways that don't involve screens.

Keep an Open Dialogue Going
The most important lesson is teaching children the many ways that online predators can find their ways into various spaces online, even if it appears to be child-friendly and safe. **Part of this is speaking openly and honestly with children about what – and who – they encounter online, even if it brings up some difficult topics.** With an ongoing dialogue about their experiences and parental controls software to set limits, families are well protected against the threats of dangerous elements online.

Please support the school in keeping the children safe from any potential online hazards.

Wellbeing

I did not realise, until it was brought to my attention by our Trust, that w/b 12th March is a Sleep Awareness Week.

From the Well Being Matters (ODBST Trust)

Sleep plays a huge part in both our physical and mental wellbeing. When your body is sleep deficient it goes into a state of stress. Your body's functions are put on high alert which increases blood pressure and produces stress hormones. When you are struggling with sleep you can easily find yourself in an endless circle. Poor sleep leads to worry, worry leads to poor sleep, and worrying about sleep is like your mind trying to fight itself.

There are plenty of hints, tips, and advice for improving your sleep patterns:

[Sleep problems - Every Mind Matters - NHS (www.nhs.uk)](www.nhs.uk)

Tips to improve your sleep - Mind

The **Sleep Charity** also has lots of information and support available for both adults and children. The excerpt below is taken from their website:

Quality sleep is essential for children's growth and development. A decent night's sleep will help them to do better at school, allow them to react more quickly to situations, have a more developed memory, learn more effectively and solve problems, plus it will make them less susceptible to colds and other minor ailments, less irritable and better behaved!

Sleep deprivation causes increased hyperactivity and other behavioural problems, as well as damaging physical and mental development. Poor sleep habits from an early age can lead to long term sleep problems.

The bedroom environment plays an important role in getting a good night's sleep. There is a lot to consider including temperature, light and comfort. Here are some tips to help you to make sure that your child's bedroom supports a restful night's sleep:

- *Decorate in neutral colours, bright colours can be over stimulating.*

- *If the room is too hot or too cold it can disturb sleep, around 18 degrees is ideal, you may find it helpful to invest in a room thermometer.*

- *Make the bedroom a gadget free zone. If possible, keep TVs, gaming devices, tablets and phones out of the bedroom. Using them before may suppress the production of melatonin, the sleep hormone, and make it more difficult to nod off.*

- *White noise can mask out background noise and may be useful.*

- *For younger children put away toys or cover them with sheets at nighttime so that they don't provide a distraction. For older children try to discourage them from doing schoolwork on their bed and pack away school books at bedtime.*

- *A dark environment can help with melatonin production making us feel drowsy at the start of the night. Blackout blinds can also help in the summer months to avoid early waking.*

- *Some youngsters (and adults!) prefer a little light in the room at nighttime. If a dark room is distressing or disorientating, try using a soft glowing night light that can be safely left on all night. Those with visual/hearing impairments for example can find total darkness disorientating.*

- *Consistent conditions throughout the night are important. Avoid using products that switch off during the night or turning landing lights off when you go to bed.*

- *Comfort is important, we all have different needs when it comes to what we prefer and what suits our bodies. The firmness of the mattress and pillows, the texture of the bedding and nightclothes are all important considerations when planning our sleep environments, especially for those youngsters with sensory needs. For more information on mattresses for children visit NBF's Bed Advice UK.*