

NEWSLETTER



Friday 6th February 2026

HEADTEACHER'S MESSAGE

This week has certainly been a different week in school. On Wednesday our KS2 boiler decided that it was going to shut down. Engineers have identified the part required and it has been ordered. In the meantime, we have acquired temporary industrial heating solutions for the classrooms. Unfortunately, this means that we have had to postpone the Ukulele Concert scheduled for Monday 9th February. I'd like to thank you all for your understanding during this partial, temporary closure and as we move forward to permanently resolve the issue.

Parents' Evening has been rescheduled to 4th March, and your appointment times will remain the same (unless you request a different time from your child's class teacher).

Next week, we have an animal roadshow, Animals in Hands, in school for our Reception, Year One and Year Two children; Parent Workshop for parents of children in Year five; it is also mental health week; PTA Valentine's Discos and a non-uniform day.

Tickets for the PTA Disco are available from members of Friends of Woodcock Hill Primary School. Children may come to school in their disco party clothes on that day.

With very best wishes

Mr Higgins



DIARY

w/c 9th February Lunch Menu:
Week Two

9th February 2026

Animals in Hands (EYFS/KS1)

9th February 2026 – 9.10am

Ukulele Concert (Year 3 and 4)
Guitar Concert (Year 6)

POSTPONED

9th-13th February 2026

Children's Mental Health Week

11th February 2026 – 9.10am

Year Five Parent Workshop

12th February 2026

2.30pm – 3.15pm

PTA Valentine's Disco for EYFS/KS1

12th February 2026

3.30pm – 4.15pm

PTA Valentine's Disco for KS2

13th February 2026

PTA Non-Uniform Day Fundraiser

16th – 20th February 2026

Half Term week

23rd February 2026

Spring Term² starts for children

4th March 2026 – 9.10am

Year Four's Class Assembly

4th March 2026

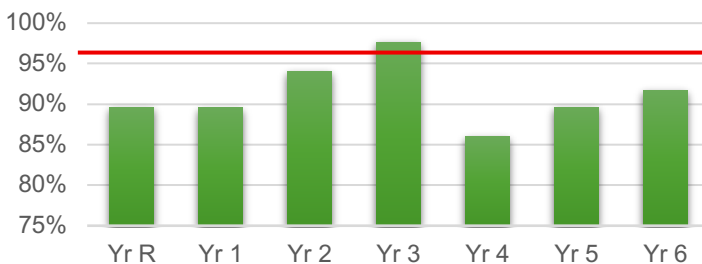
Parents' Evening

5th March 2026

World Book Day

Attendance

w/c 26th January 2026



■ Percentage Attendance

96% is our **MINIMUM** expectation for attendance.

Did your child's class reach 96% last week?

This year's attendance, to date, is

92%



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Autism

Does your child have a diagnosis of or is on the pathway for a diagnosis of autism? Do you have family members with autism or are you concerned your child may show traits of autism? Do you sometimes worry about how best to support your child/ren at home (or in school)?

Mrs Nash & Beacon School Support are holding 6 informative workshops for parents/ guardians. The dates for these are:

- Wed 11th March – What is Autism
- Tue 24th March – Understanding meltdowns
- Wed 22nd April – Structure and routine
- Wed 6th May – Supporting sensory needs
- Wed 10th June – Social understanding
- Wed 8th July – Bedtimes and sleep.

These workshops are open to all parents/ carers who are interested in supporting their children in a variety of ways, including building confidence, resilience and emotional awareness and regulation strategies.

Further reminders will be on the newsletter nearer the time of each workshop.

**Refreshments will be available.
We look forward to seeing you.**

Valentine's Disco

Thursday 12th February 2026

EYFS/KS1: 2.30pm – 3.15pm

Children should be collected from their classrooms

KS2: 3.30pm – 4.15pm

Children should be collected from the Junior Hall

Tickets are available from members of the PTA at £1 per child this includes entry and a drink.



Children may bring a small amount of change for refreshments. Children may come to school in their Disco Party clothes on that day.

Children's Mental Health Week

The week commencing 9th February will be the national Children's Mental Health Week. We will be exploring this in our assembly on Monday 9th and through activities, in class, throughout that week.

If you have any concerns regarding your child's mental health, please speak to Mrs Hall or Mrs Nash who will be able to support you. You can also visit

www.childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk

Year Five Parent Workshop 11th February 9.10am

Parents of Year Five children are invited into school on 11th February 2026. Mrs Keating, the children and parents will be exploring an area of the Year Five curriculum. The workshop will take place in the Junior Hall.

Lockdown

Next week, we will have a lockdown practice. The children practised these well last year; there will be a reminder session for each class, followed by one lockdown practice during the week.

Meccano Club Success

The children have had a great time in Meccano Club; creating, building and constructing vehicles and contraptions of all kinds!



Our School Values: We are respectful, ambitious, creative, inclusive, independent and we persevere.

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators USING TECHNOLOGY TO BOOST READING SKILLS

The way we engage with text has changed dramatically over the years. Whether reading captions on social media, instructions in a video game or an e-book on a digital device, technology plays a major role in modern literacy. While traditional books remain invaluable, digital tools can enhance reading skills by making text more accessible, interactive and engaging.

1 CHOOSING THE RIGHT TYPE OF TEXT

Before integrating technology, consider the types of text that a child engages with. If they need help on occasion, digital reading pens can assist by scanning and reciting words or sentences. These tools are especially useful for students with reading difficulties, and can even be used in exams if they're part of their routine learning process. Proper training and practice are required, but they can be a great help when tackling printed text.

2 READING ON SCREEN

Many devices now allow users to customise text for better readability. Adjusting font type, size and background colour can significantly enhance comprehension. For many readers, white text on a black background is the easiest to see, whereas other styles – such as dyslexia-friendly fonts – are designed to help those who are struggling. Teaching children how to personalise text settings on their devices empowers them to read more comfortably and with greater confidence.

3 ACCESSIBILITY TOOLS

Most modern devices include built-in tools designed to support readers. These features can be found in Settings under Accessibility and may include text-to-speech, speech-to-text and screen magnification functions. Enabling these tools can make digital reading more user friendly, especially for children with learning difficulties or visual impairments, who might have an easier time with spoken language than the written word, or who might simply require a closer look at the text.

4 INTERACTIVE READING PROGRAMMES

Many digital reading devices, such as Kindle and other e-readers, offer features like word highlighting, adjustable text speed and built-in dictionaries. These tools help learners to break down complex words and phrases while maintaining an appropriate reading pace. Some programmes even allow users to track their progress, making reading a more structured and motivating experience.

5 VIDEO GAMES AND READING SKILLS

Many video games require players to read instructions, character dialogues and mission objectives, making them an unexpected but effective literacy tool. Games that involve storytelling, puzzles or problem-solving often include large amounts of text – encouraging children to read these texts aloud or discuss them can improve their comprehension and vocabulary in a fun, engaging way.

6 SUBTITLES AND CLOSED CAPTIONS

Watching videos with subtitles or closed captions is an effective way to enhance reading skills. As children watch their favourite shows or online videos, they can follow along with the text, gaining a better understanding of how written words sound when spoken aloud. This is particularly beneficial for reluctant readers, as it exposes them to words in a familiar, engaging context. Repeatedly watching content with subtitles reinforces word recognition and comprehension.

7 USING AUDIOBOOKS

Audiobooks are an excellent way to develop listening and reading skills simultaneously. Children can follow along with the text while listening to a narrator, reinforcing word recognition and fluency. For struggling readers, listening to an audiobook before attempting to read the text independently can boost their confidence and comprehension.

9 TEXT-TO-VOICE TECHNOLOGY

Text-to-voice software reads digital text aloud, making it easier for learners to follow along. Most smartphones, tablets and computers come with this function built in. When enabled, users can highlight a passage or sentence and press Play to hear it read aloud. This tool is particularly helpful for auditory learners and those who struggle with decoding written words.

8 VOICE-TO-TEXT FOR WRITING AND READING

Voice-to-text tools allow users to dictate words, which are then transcribed into text. This feature helps children see the connection between spoken and written language. By using text-to-voice to have their dictated words read back to them, learners can identify mistakes and improve their reading and writing skills simultaneously.

10 SOCIAL MEDIA AND PARENTAL CONTROLS

While social media provides opportunities for reading, most platforms have age restrictions of 13–16 years old, making parental guidance essential. Many social media videos include captions and comments that can encourage reading. However, it's important to use the platform's parental controls (such as time limits and content filters) to create a safe and educational online environment for children. Encouraging responsible social media use can ensure a balanced and productive approach to digital literacy.

Meet Our Expert

Catrina Lowri is a qualified special needs teacher and experienced SENCO. She recently launched her own site, Neuroteachers, which offers a library of short, 'how-to' and explanation videos for educators. Catrina also writes and delivers online training and events for multi-academy trusts, businesses, schools and training organisations.



The National College

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