

Principal's update

I would like to begin the new term by sharing my thoughts on reading and asking for your help. Reading is an important educational skill - it is the key that opens up most of a child's curriculum. At home and school, we share the responsibility of teaching children to read. It's no secret that activities at home are an important supplement to the classroom, but there's more to it than that.

Although I appreciate that lives are sometimes hectic, you should try to read with your child at least once a day at a regularly scheduled time. Don't be discouraged if you skip a day or don't always keep to your schedule. Just read to your child as often as you possibly can. If you have more than one child, try to spend some time reading alone with each child, especially if they're more than 2 years apart. However, it's also fine to read to children at different stages and ages at the same time. Most children enjoy listening to many types of stories. When stories are complex, children can still get the idea and can be encouraged to ask questions. When stories are easy or familiar, children enjoy these "old friends" and may even help in the reading.

Taking the time to read with your children on a regular basis sends an important message: Reading is worthwhile. Our goal is to motivate children to want to read so they will practice reading independently and, thus, become fluent readers.

Richard Yates
Principal

Teach your kids
to love
READING



Dates for your diary

20th January

Y6 Junior Citizens Event

22nd January

Netball against Oakfarm

28th January

Y1 Reading Museum (1S and 1M)

Football against Rabbsfarm

29th January

Netball against John Locke

30th January

Y1 Reading Museum (1D)

2nd February

Y6 Visit to Imperial War Museum

3rd February

Reception Planetarium
Y6 visit o Imperial War Museum

Attendance

The class with the best attendance this academic year is:

1st place: 6M with 98.57%
2nd place: 3A with 98.28%
3rd place: 6C with 98.08%

It will be a non-uniform day for 6M on Friday 23rd January. Well done!

Hillingdon Inclusive Polybat Competition

Our students took part in a borough wide Inclusive Polybat Competition. This provided an opportunity to our students to have fun, work as a team and to have a positive experience outside the school. The competition was held at Meadow High School and children had a great time. Thank you to all the parents for their support.



Dodgeball Tournament

We are incredibly proud of our Y4 dodgeball team, who represented the school at Federation dodgeball competition. They competed against 9 other teams displaying incredible skill, speed and sportsmanship. They managed to secure third place and brought bronze medals home.

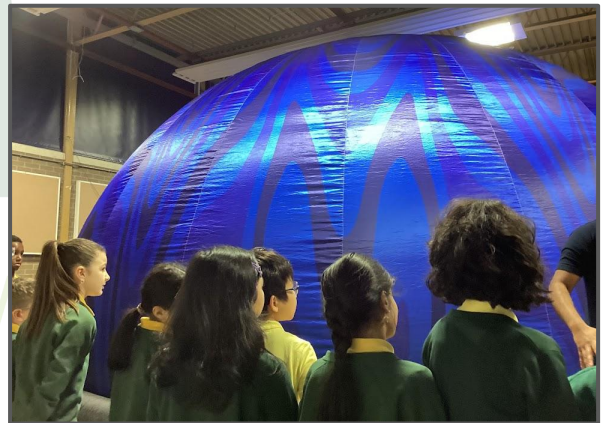
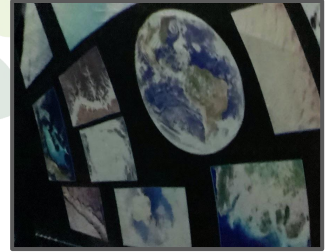
Another superb win for WDA!



Planetarium - Year 5

This week, Year 5 had an exciting visit from the Immersive Experiences Explorer Dome. They brought a planetarium to school for the children to experience an immersive space show. Year 5 were so amazed by the way the pictures were projected all around us, with mesmerising footage of planets, stars, asteroids and many more.

The children learnt interesting facts about the solar system and stars. The leader was very interesting and knowledgeable and Year 5 thoroughly enjoyed the space show in the planetarium. This was an excellent experience offered under the 100 club, and also helped the children develop more knowledge for their Science topic about Earth and Space.



HEAD



HEART



HANDS



HEALTH

No-phone on the playground Approach

From Monday 19th January, we will be introducing a no-phone approach on the playground during drop-off and pick-up times. We kindly ask parents and carers to refrain from using mobile phones while on the playground.

Our simple message is: **"Greet children with a smile."**

By being present and engaged during these moments, we help create a welcoming environment that supports children's confidence, wellbeing, and sense of belonging. Thank you for your support in helping us keep our playground a positive, child-focused space



Votes for School

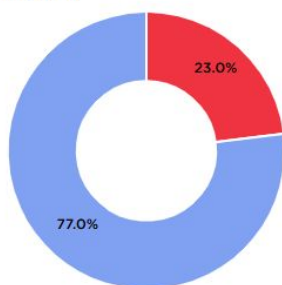
This week, during Votes for School, we discussed:

Are you interested in world news? (KS2)

Are you interested in news from other countries? (KS1)

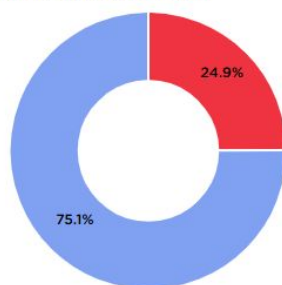


Your School



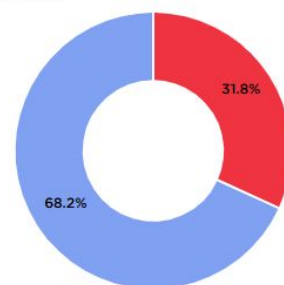
● No
● Yes

Regional (Greater London)



● No
● Yes

National



Coming up:

Is it easy to challenge stereotypes? (KS2)

Is it easy to work out what people are like? (KS1)

Pupils will have an opportunity to discuss whether it is easy to challenge stereotypes, and younger children will reflect on whether it is easy to know what people are like.



CATEGORIES FOR JUDGING:

- Most creative idea
- Best use of colour/material
- Most lifelike portrait
- Funniest portrait

Theme:
Create a portrait of a famous person in a FUN or UNUSUAL setting!

RULES:

- Use Any Medium (pencil, paint, collage)
- A4 or A3 size
- Entries should include the name of the person and the 'place' they've been reimagined

DEADLINE: Monday 9th February. Hand in to Mrs Patel



3rd place
(1 winner in each phase)
5 Dojos



2nd place
(1 winner in each phase)
10 Dojos

1st Place
(1 overall winner)
20 Dojos and a trophy



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**WE NEED
YOU!**

 **The PTA is restarting!**

We are relaunching as Friends of West Drayton Academy, bringing families and staff together to support our children and school.

Why Join?

TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

As well as fundraising, the PTA organises events which add so much to our children's school experience.

HAVE FUN

Being a part of a team is a fun and rewarding experience.

FEEL INVOLVED

Every parent is welcome to the meetings and new members are always welcome. Please consider coming along to meetings or volunteer a few hours of your time at an event.

First Friends Meeting – Everyone Welcome



Date: Friday 6th February

Time: 2:30pm

Location: School Hall

**Can't make this meeting?
Still register your
interest with Mrs Sall**

Supporting our school • Building community • Making a difference

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about AI TOYS

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

This festive season, the newest toys on the shelves do not just blink or make noise; they listen. Many now come with artificial intelligence (AI), allowing them to talk, learn, and even respond to a child's emotions. These toys can be educational and engaging, but they also collect, store, and process information. This guide explains what that means for families and why it matters.

TOYS THAT LISTEN AND LEARN

When a toy uses AI, it collects data such as voice recordings, interactions, and background sounds. This information is sent to remote servers, where it is analysed to improve responses. Your child's voice becomes training data, which may be stored indefinitely or shared with third parties.

WEAK SECURITY PROTECTIONS

Some AI toys have poor password protection or open network connections. Others may have microphones or cameras that stay on, even when the toy appears to be off. This can lead to recordings being made without your knowledge, including conversations unrelated to play.

ARTIFICIAL VOICES, REAL INFLUENCE

For very young children, an AI companion may become one of the first voices they interact with regularly. How that voice shows humour, empathy, or authority can shape how a child learns to communicate. If the model is artificial, then part of what is learned is artificial as well.

PRESSURE TO KEEP ENGAGING

Some toys reward repeated use or track engagement, encouraging children to interact more. When children compare how their toys perform, it creates pressure to play more often. This increases the amount of data collected and can make learning feel like competition.

MARKETING THROUGH PLAY

Toys that learn a child's preferences may feed that data into future advertising. A toy that knows a child's favourite colour or hobby could help a company design more targeted marketing to that child and their family.

PLAYTIME AS DATA TRAINING

The information collected from children helps train AI systems. Their voice, emotional responses, and behaviour shape how machines 'understand' people. Play becomes part of a much larger system that influences how future technologies behave.

Advice for Parents & Educators

START WITH A CONVERSATION

Talk to young people. Explain that some toys learn from what they say and do. Help them understand that even friendly technology should have boundaries, and to ask questions about it. Curiosity is healthy, blind trust is not.

SET LIMITS ON USE

Turn off Wi-Fi or Bluetooth when the toy is not in use, check for updates regularly, as they can change privacy or safety settings. Treat connected toys like any smart device; they should be monitored, updated, and switched off when not in use.

MODEL DIGITAL AWARENESS

Children learn from adults. If they see you checking privacy settings, reading terms, and talking openly about online safety, they are more likely to do the same. Show them how to question technology in a healthy way.

RESEARCH BEFORE YOU BUY

Look for toys that work offline or store data locally. Check for a free or demo version so you can test how it behaves. Read privacy policies to understand what data is collected, where it goes, and whether it's shared with others.

REVIEW PRIVACY SETTINGS

Find out where the data is stored and who has access to it. Some companies sell or share data with advertisers. If the toy connects through an app, check what it requests access to and limit those permissions whenever possible.

BALANCE AI WITH REAL PLAY

AI toys can be fun and creative, but they are not a replacement for real human interaction. Encourage time away from technology with activities that foster emotional and social development. Use AI toys to support learning, not define it.



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West Drayton Academy Newsletter

www.westdraytonschool.com
01895 442904
wdaoffice@theparkfederation.org

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CHAMPION OF THE WEEK

THE FOUR PILLARS ARE WEST DRAYTON'S VALUES THAT THREAD THROUGH THE CURRICULUM. EVERY DAY, WE ASPIRE TO DEMONSTRATE AND APPLY THESE VALUES IN EVERYTHING THAT WE DO. WE BELIEVE THAT THE PILLARS WILL HELP TO PREPARE OUR CHILDREN FOR TODAY, THE NEXT STAGE OF THEIR EDUCATION AND BEYOND.

EACH WEEK, FROM EACH CLASS, ONE CHILD WILL BE SELECTED AS THE WEEKLY CHAMPION. THE CHAMPION IS SOMEBODY WHO HAS CONSISTENTLY EXHIBITED THEIR CLASS VALUE OF THE WEEK.

Year 1

Shafana S

Kasim Z

Priyanshi M

Year 2

Melody S

Yoseph S

Rethym C

Year 3

Danitza M

Hanifa H

Aliza N

Year 4

Darcie R

Srirangram K

Reign B

Year 5

Vivienne Q

Preston D

Bianka G

Year 6

Oscar G

Rehaan S

Alvi M

BELIEVE • EMPOWER • ACHIEVE

Unlocking children's potential by knowing them, believing in them and providing opportunities to succeed