



We find ourselves at the end of the first half term of 2024 and within this space of time, the school has already had many great successes. Just this week, we have had our Eco Council and our Reading Ambassadors meet with school leaders to identify improvements that could be made to our school. Lots of fantastic ideas have been born from these meetings and we look forward to implementing the children's ideas into shaping the future of the school.

On Thursday, 12 children from Whitmore attended University of London (SOAS) to graduate from the The Brilliant Club. The Brilliant Club is a Scholars Programme which provides Key Stage 2 pupils with an inspiring experience of university-style learning beyond the curriculum and is delivered through seven tutorials taught by a PhD tutor. This specific programme focused on the cardiovascular system and how its is affected by exercise. The children used the scientific method to identify, plan, conduct and present their research in the form of an essay and it has provided an excellent understanding for the children about what learning at university is like. Please see below for a full summary of their day.

When we return to school, we will be taking part in a challenge set by Down Syndrome UK to celebrate Work Down Syndrome Day (21st March). The challenge is based on every child in the school planting a sunflower seed and taking it home to recognise that like sunflowers, each child grows and blooms in different ways. We are very excited to take part in this challenge and will ask that parents/carers take photos of their child's sunflower and send them into school so the photos can be shared in our weekly newsletter. Please keep an eye out for the posters which will be shared shortly.

Wishing you all a very relaxing half term break and I look forward to welcoming you back to school on Monday 26th February.

Mr Wade  
Head of School

#### Diary Dates:

##### February

16th—Last day of half term

26th—Return to school

29th—Year 5/6 Football match @ Bardfield (selected children)

##### March

1st—St David's Day

1st—Continenence Team Coffee Morning (more details to follow)

5th—Parent Consultations

6th—Parent Consultations

8th—World Book Day

12th—Girls football match @ Eversley (Selected children)

13th—20th—Book fair in School

15th—Red Nose Day

20th—Girls Football match @ Lincewood (Selected Children)

26th—Yr 5/6 football match @ Eversley (Selected children)

28th—Last day of term

##### April

15th—Return to school

Inset Days—22nd, 23rd & 24th May 2024.



#### Information/ Reminders —

##### Bikeability

Year 6 children have the opportunity to complete a Bikeability course please return the consent form asap to register your interest.

##### Front gates

Please can we ask that you do not block the gates at the front of the school at any time, access is needed throughout the day.

#### Vacancies.

Please visit the following for vacancies within our trust.  
[www.berlesduna.co.uk/Vacancy.php](http://www.berlesduna.co.uk/Vacancy.php)



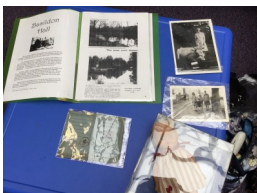
#### BERLESDUNA ACADEMY TRUST – JOB VACANCIES

CANEWDON – SEN LEARNING SUPPORT ASSISTANT closing date 26th February  
CHERRY TREE – CLASS TEACHER closing date 6th March  
CHERRY TREE – LEARNING SUPPORT ASSISTANT closing date 1st March  
CHERRY TREE – MIDDAY ASSISTANT closing date 1st March  
CRAYS HILL – SEN LEARNING SUPPORT ASSISTANT (FIXED TERM) closing date 28th February  
FAIRHOUSE – LEARNING SUPPORT ASSISTANT/SEN SUPPORT closing date 6th March  
MERRYLANDS – SPORTS COACH closing date 1st March  
MERRYLANDS – CLEANER closing date 1st March  
MERRYLANDS – NURSERY ASSISTANT closing date 1st March  
WHITMORE – ATTENDANCE & ADMINISTRATIONS OFFICER 26th February  
WILLOWS – LEARNING SUPPORT ASSISTANT closing date 1st March

For more information and to apply for any of our roles, please follow the link to our website [Vacancies – Berlesduna Academy Trust](http://www.berlesduna.co.uk/Vacancies)

#### Year 2 visit to the library

Today, year 2 visited Fryerns library to learn from a Historian about Basildon life, pre and post war. All the children and staff found it very fascinating.





## Certificate of Achievement

Week of 12th February 2024

Buttercup— Emily  
Daffodil— Kieran C  
Primrose— Khushi G  
Bluebell Class— Pippa  
Rose Class— Alexandra C  
Tulip Class— Aairah L  
Lavender Class— Patrick P  
Orchid Class— James B  
Sunflower Class— Azlan I  
Birch Class— Isabella S  
Hawthorn Class— Olivia V  
Pine Class— Mya-Lily G  
Ash Class— Asher O  
Beech Class— Faiqoh K  
Maple Class— Nicole T  
Olive Class— Isabelle P  
Sycamore Class— Charlie P  
Willow Class— Damari  
Elder Class— Tianna H  
Elm Class— Mitchellle N  
Oak Class— Alex S



## Reading Corner

Year Group	After half term we will be reading....
Nursery	Goldilocks and the Three Bears by Estelle Corke
Reception	Chinese New Year
Year 1	Beegu by Alexis Deacon
Year 2	A Walk in London by Salvatore Rubbino
Year 3	Charlie and the Chocolate Factory by Roald Dahl
Year 4	Who let the gods out? By Maz Evans
Year 5	The Wolf Wilder by Katherine Rundell
Year 6	The boy and the tower by Polly Ho-Yen

Class	Reader of the week...
Year 1—Bluebell	Frankie
Year 1—Rose	Hayden W-W
Year 1 - Tulip	Elizabeth L
Year 2 - Orchid	Teddie
Year 2 - Sunflower	Jenson R
Year 2 - Lavender	Ryka R
Year 3 - Pine	La-Bonte K
Year 3 - Hawthorn	Thomas W
Year 3 - Birch	Bianca T
Year 4 - Maple	Alice H
Year 4 - Beech	Ellie C
Year 4 - Ash	Harry M
Year 5 - Olive	Bonnie H
Year 5 - Sycamore	Logan A
Year 5 - Willow	Melissa
Year 6—Elder	Alfie C
Year— Elm	Rayden S
Year 6—Oak	Livvy S

We're teaching every child to read with Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised  
A complete SSP validated by the Department for Education



Please see below for what has been taught in phonics this week in your child/s year group:

Reception	This week has been a review week. The children have been practicing the new diagraphs and tricky words that they have learned since January.
Year 1	In phonics this week, Year 1 have been learning the following sounds: <b>le</b> making the /l/ sound like in apple, <b>al</b> making the /l/ sound like in total, <b>c</b> making the /s/ sound like in ice, <b>ve</b> making the /v/ sound like in give, <b>o-e</b> , <b>o</b> and <b>ou</b> making the /u/ sound like in come, mother and touch <b>se</b> making the /z/ sound like in cheese <b>se</b> and <b>ce</b> making the /s/ sound like in mouse and fence <b>ey</b> making the /ee/ sound like in donkey. We have also learnt the tricky words: school, call, different, thought, through, friend and work.
Year 2	Year 2 has now completed the additional review section of the Little Wandle Programme.

### Free Reader Friday

Please remind your child that every Friday, they can bring in their own book from home, or choose one from the book corner or school library.



## Oracy Corner



# Let's Talk



**Discuss:** Should all schoolwork be completed on the computer? Why?

**Instigate**  
Present an idea or open up a new line of enquiry

**Start by saying:**

- I would like to start by saying...
- I think....
- We haven't yet talked about...

**Instigate**

**Probe**  
Dig deeper, ask for evidence or justification of ideas

**Start by saying:**

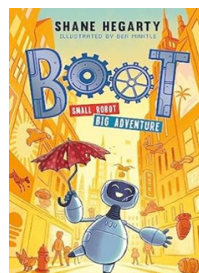
- Why do you think...?
- What evidence do you have to support X idea?
- Could you provide an example?

**Probe**

## Recommended Reads



KS1



Lower KS2



Upper KS2



**TT Rockstars Class of the week is Elm—**

**Player of the week—**

Lavender— Adebajji A  
Orchid— Jenson  
Sunflower— Adebambo A  
Birch— Jayme W  
Hawthorn— Daria P  
Pine — Tyler C  
Ash— Lillie-An M  
Beech— Kai M  
Maple— Darius M  
Olive— Bonnie H  
Sycamore— Willow V  
Willow— Nicoleta  
Elder— William W  
Elm— Michelle N  
Oak— Lexi C

**Numbots Class of the week is Rose—**

**Numbots Player of the week—**

Rose— Owen G  
Tulip— Thierry-Jane G  
Bluebell— Ben

## Times Table Rockstars and Numbots

Battle Board	16.2.24
Sycamore class	18
Pine class	15
Sunflower class	12
Hawthorn class	12
Ash class	12
Elder class	9
Willow class	9
Maple class	6
Lavender class	6
Olive class	6
Birch class	6
Orchid class	6
Beech class	3
Elm class	3
Oak class	3





### Eco Council

Introducing the Whitmore Eco Council, wearing their new badges proud! Our Eco Experts have been busy completing an environmental review of our school and deciding which areas we as a school need to focus on improving. They have agreed we should improve our **school grounds**, **save energy** and increase **biodiversity**.



As part of our school grounds project, we will be continuing to care for the trees, which were planted by some of our school community in November. Our energy saving project is up and running and many classes have an eco-monitor to remind their class the importance of turning off the lights when everybody is leaving the classroom, ensuring doors are closed in colder months and also keeping an eye on the paper recycling bin. Efforts have also been made towards our biodiversity goal, as Year 2 worked collaboratively to build a fantastic bug hotel on our field as part of their science lessons.

We are looking forward to keeping you updated with our progress throughout the year.

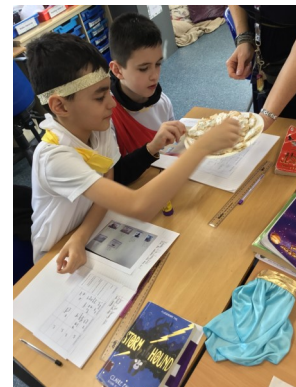
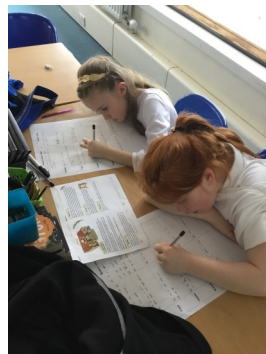
### Reception Animal Workshop

Primrose, Daffodil and Buttercup had an amazing time meeting the animals at our workshop last Friday. We saw Jemima the Prairie Dog, Oakley the stick insect, Frank the lizard, Daisy the skunk and Bruno the Royal Python! We even got to tickle LuLu the tortoise on her shell! The children showed such bravery and courage when stroking animals that they were scared of to start with. They all displayed exceptional behaviour and we are so proud of them!



### Year 4 Greek Day

On Friday 9th February, Year 4 had an Ancient Greek day. The children created their own fact files, made vases, retold myths and took part in food tasting. The children absolutely loved their day and are looking forward to other days like this as they move through the school.





### **Brilliant Club Graduation 15th February 2024**

On Thursday, children from year 6 who are part of the Brilliant Club travelled to London to visit SOAS (School of Oriental and African Studies) for their graduation ceremony.

Over the last few months, the children have been working with Randy Chance, a PhD tutor from Queen Mary University, London. They have studied the human heart and learnt about different ways it can be damaged and looked after, and how exercise can affect it. At the end of their course, they had to write a 1,500 word essay about their findings. The children have learnt about how to research independently, take notes, present their findings, and cite sources. They have all worked incredibly hard and we are extremely proud of them all. Every child received a final grade of either 2:1 or a 1st; this is an amazing set of results!

On the day of the graduation, they travelled by train and underground train to SOAS. They had a session where they reflected on all they had learnt and how it would help them in the future, before working with a SOAS student ambassador to learn more about university life. They had a tour of the university, which included highlights like the library (which is a masterpiece of Brutalist architecture and has over 1.5 million books), and the Brunei Gallery, which is full of interesting art and artefacts from around the world. The children also had some delicious sandwiches for lunch, before receiving their certificates.

Throughout the day, and throughout their time on the course, the children were well-behaved and respectful. Their time as part of the Brilliant Club has allowed them to demonstrate that they are able to embody all of our core values for life. They have demonstrated friendship when they have helped each other with their essays; honesty when they have asked for help when they are stuck; perseverance when they have kept going and never given up even when they found the course difficult; positivity for having a great attitude when undertaking their challenging tasks; and, finally, respect for how they have behaved in their tutorials with Randy and on their graduation trip. All of us at Whitmore are incredibly proud of these children and hope that their time doing this has given them the confidence to believe that they can achieve anything they can set their minds to!

