WHYTRIG MIDDLE SCHOOL
NEWSDROP

Week Ending 16th October 2026

Author Week

To kick off our Author Week celebrations, we were delighted to welcome acclaimed author Phil Earle (author of *When the Sky Falls* and the *Finn's Epic Fails* series) to school on Tuesday!

Phil led a fascinating assembly, sharing his personal journey to becoming a writer, the types of books he loved reading as a child, and how his hilarious *Finn* stories are based on his own family and childhood memories. The session ended with a brilliant 'draw-off' challenge between Brooke and Miss Waterfall—with Brooke ultimately taking the victory for her fantastic drawing of Trouble the Dog!

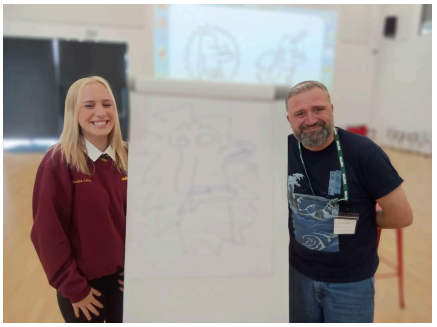
Afterwards, Phil spent time meeting pupils who had purchased copies of his books to personally sign each one. He even took the time to sign our Reading Challenge posters around the school! It was a fantastic afternoon that left everyone feeling inspired.

And today, we were thrilled to welcome back a friend to our school, Peter J. Murray! Peter visited to tell us all about his brand-new book, *The Even Darker Side of Wight*, which features ten spooky tales set on the Isle of Wight. Peter's scary stories are always a massive hit with our pupils, and it was fabulous to have him back in school inspiring a whole new group of enthusiastic readers! Peter will be returning to school on Monday! Copies of *The Even Darker Side of Wight* will be available to purchase for £12, and Peter will be meeting pupils to personally sign their books.

















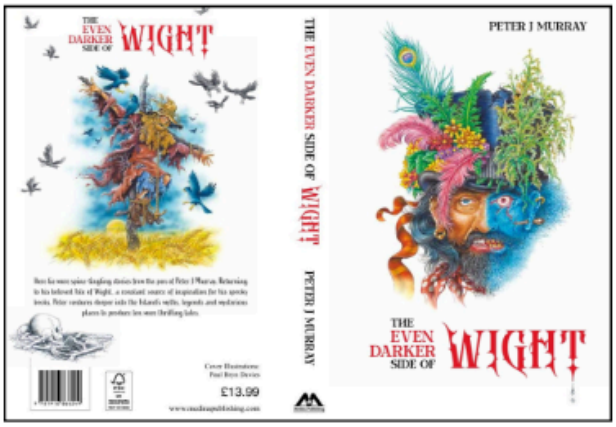
SCHOOL GAMES PLATINUM 2021/22 - 2022/23
MUSIC MARK INFLUENCING SUPPORTING & CONNECTING
PSQM Primary Science Quality Mark Valid 2022 - 2026 PSQM
2024-27 BRONZE SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH AWARD
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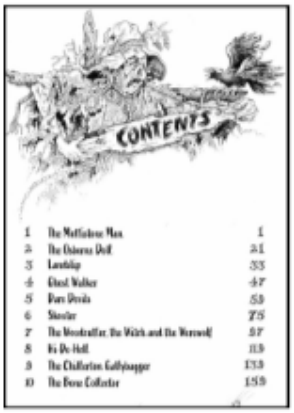
Peter J Murray Book Signings

Peter will return to school on **Monday 19th October** to sign and sell copies of his new book **The Even Darker Side of Wight (Hardback).** The book will be sold at the discounted price of **£12 per book,** and payment is by cash or cheque (payable to 'Mokee Joe Promotions') directly to Peter on the day.

PETER J MURRAY
EVEN DARKER SIDE OF WIGHT BOOK TOUR
AUTHOR VISITS 2026

The long-awaited sequel to the Darker Side of Wight, published back in Sept 2023 and winner of the Isle of Wight Children's Book Award, is the Even Darker Side of Wight, available right now! Ten more thrilling spooky takes set on the fascinating Isle of Wight.





The book is a beautifully bound hard-back book, published on the island by Medina Publishing, based in Cowes. The new book retails at £13.99 but is offered in schools at£12.
The author will sign and dedicate books as required.

*Please make any cheques payable to **Mokee Joe Promotions**.

CHECK OUR WEBSITE AT:
www.peterjmurray.co.uk
Instagram (mokeejoepro)
facebook

Autumn 1 - Dates for your Diary

- Monday 19th October - Peter Murray book sale/signings
- Tuesday 20th October - Halloween Disco
- Tues 20th October- Year 8 Boys football @ CLV
- Wed 21st October- Y6 Girls 7-a-side @ CLV
- Wednesday 21st October - Friday 23rd October - Year 5 Residential Trip to Ford Castle
- W/C Monday 26th October - HALF TERM holiday - SCHOOL CLOSED
- Monday 2nd November - Start of Autumn 2 half term
- Thursday 5th November - Year 6 trip to Northern Stage (25 pupils).

Job of the Week



This week's Job of the Week is **Upholsterer**. The video can be found in Google Classroom and also here.

We encourage you to watch the Job of the Week with your children so you can take part in the discussions we are having in school about future education and work.

If any parents or carers would like to get involved in our Careers provision at Whytrig please contact Mrs Campbell at wms@svf.org.uk

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Halloween Disco - Tuesday 20th October

Get ready for a spooky night of fun! Our Halloween Disco takes place on Tuesday 20th October.

- **Key Stage 2:** 3:40 pm – 5:00 pm
  - *KS2 pupils should bring their party clothes or costumes to school in a bag. They will get changed after school and head straight to the disco.*
- **Key Stage 3:** 5:10 pm – 6:30 pm
  - *KS3 pupils should go home at the end of the school day and return at 5:10 pm.*

Please note that tickets are no longer on sale and cannot be purchased on the door—you must already have a ticket to attend! Please also send your child with a small amount of spending money if they would like to buy treats from the tuck shop.

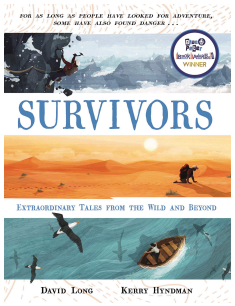
Please note: Attendance at the disco is dependent on continued positive behaviour in school.

We look forward to having a brilliant, spooky time!

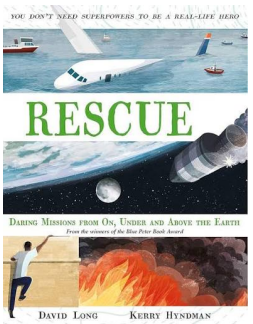


Book of the Week

This week's book is **'Survivors'** by David Long and Kerry Hyndman, from our Year 7 challenge.



Survivors: Extraordinary Tales from the Wild and Beyond is an inspiring non-fiction anthology filled with true stories of people who overcome incredible odds to survive extreme situations. Featuring over twenty remarkable accounts of human resilience, courage, and ingenuity from around the world, this collection spans both classic historical survival tales and modern-day adventures. Highlights include *The Man Who Sucked Blood from a Shark*—the incredible story of a WWII sailor stranded on a raft in the Atlantic for 133 days who survived by drinking shark blood when fresh water ran out!



If you liked 'Survivors', try... Other fantastic true-story anthologies by David Long, such as ***Heroes: Incredible True Stories of Courageous Animals*** or ***Rescue: Daring Missions from On, Under and Above the Earth*** - Available to borrow from Mrs Campbell and Mrs Harland

Extra Curricular Clubs

- Singing Club - Monday 3.30-4.30 https://forms.gle/6sEQxuaPkBwQe9ao7
- KS2 After School Dodgeball Club starts Monday 21st September - Sign up here: https://forms.gle/SKyHFFCFxrR2pfNT9 - THIS CLUB IS NOW FULL.
- Girls Football Club will be cancelled on Thursday 22nd October as Mrs Kelly is out of school for the Y5 residential trip. The club will resume after half term.
- KS3 Darts- Friday lunchtime- 12:45-1:05 (Darts arena)
- Netball - Friday 3.30 - 4.30 Link to Netball Club Form

More clubs coming after half term, watch this space……..

Stars of the Week

Our Stars of the Week are nominated each week by staff for a variety of reasons, which might be contributions to the school community, schoolwork, or something outstanding. Each week, their success is shared in school in the Star of the Week video or in assembly, and they receive a certificate and a chocolate bar.

Week ending 16th October 2026
5C: Brooklyn F ; 5K: Khloe W ; 5L: Bobby M;
6E: ; 6F:Noah H ; 6S: Isabella R ;
7H:Averie S ; 7L: Emily M ; 7W: Bobbi B;
8K:Emily R ; 8Ro: Charlie SM ; 8Ru: Sienna A ;
Head of School SOTW: Sadie W (6E)

Be You Northumberland - Autism Family Drop-In Sessions

Northumberland County Council Autism Team will be offering a family drop-in session at **Cramlington Community Hub on Tuesday 20th October 10am -12pm.** Go along for a cuppa and chat and to meet other parents. No diagnosis needed!

Please see the leaflets sent out through MCAS on Tuesday 6th October for more details or go to Be You Northumberland at https://www.beyounorthumberland.nhs.uk/about-us for more information about available services.

Safeguarding Update - AI Companions



This week's #WakeUpWednesday guide explores the risks of AI companions for young people, including emotional dependency, inappropriate content, privacy concerns and mental health. AI companions are becoming increasingly popular with young people, offering round-the-clock conversations with virtual characters designed to feel like genuine friends. Platforms such as Character.ai, Replika and Snapchat My AI can provide entertainment and creative opportunities, but their human-like interactions also raise concerns. This #WakeUpWednesday guide explores potential risks including emotional dependency, inappropriate content, oversharing personal information and harmful mental health advice.

A PDF copy of the #WakeUpWednesday leaflet was also sent out this week via MCAS.

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Attendance

Please remember to call in to the Middle School attendance line or send a message via MCAS if your child is unwell and will not be attending school by 8:30am. It is important that we have evidence for each day your child is absent, even if they were sent home the previous day.

To report an absence via telephone call please dial 0191 2371402, select 5 for Whytrig Middle School then select 8 to report a pupil absence.

Please send evidence of medical/dental appointments/medication to wms@svf.org.uk so we can attach these to your child's profile on our system. If you are submitting a Leave of Absence request please ensure any documentation supporting the exceptional circumstances is handed in at the same time as the Leave of Absence form.



This week's whole school attendance: 93.76%

Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8
95.12%	95.51%	91.98%	92.89%

The best attending class this week is: 6F (96.30%)

Free School Meals

It is always worth double checking if your child is eligible for free school meals. If your circumstances have recently changed or whether you've never checked before, the process is very straight forward: https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/education-skills/schools/school-meals

For every pupil who is eligible they receive a lunch credit every day. You can read more about the school's strategy here: https://svf.org.uk/our-federation/pupil-premium

Breakfast Club Survey

Your voice matters, and you could win £100 by telling us about your family's morning routines!
Whytrig Middle School now runs a free breakfast club, and we're taking part in a national study to help inform how they are run both here and across the country.
Take the 10-minute survey: click here
We need your help. Independent researchers at Ipsos want to hear from parents and carers about what your family's mornings look like. Whether or not your child attends our free breakfast club, we'd like to hear about your morning routines and before-school childcare.
Researchers worked closely with parents to make sure this survey asks the right questions and doesn't take up too much of your time.
- **The ask**: complete a 10-minute survey here*
- **Thank you**: a chance to win a £100 voucher.
- **Who**: everyone! We'd like to hear from you, whatever your mornings look like.

Please complete the survey by 23 rd October 2026. Your answers will help inform the national rollout of free breakfast clubs. *If completing the survey online does not work for you, please email UK-PA-BreakfastClubs@ipsosresearch.com.

Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service Safety Warning

With Bonfire Night approaching, Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service is encouraging parents and carers to talk to their children about the dangers of deliberate fire setting. Deliberate fires can put people, property, and the environment at risk, while placing additional pressure on emergency services.
Please take a moment to read the attached Deliberate Fire Setting Leaflet, which highlights the risks and consequences of fire setting and provides details of support services available.
We also encourage families to celebrate Bonfire Night safely by attending organised displays where possible and ensuring any fireworks used at home are handled responsibly and under adult supervision.
Thank you for helping us keep our communities safe this Bonfire Night.



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Lunch Account Balance

Please check your child's lunch account balance, and top up as necessary. We will never allow your child to go hungry, and should they not have enough money on their account then we will ensure they are able to buy a Main Meal Deal by granting them a temporary overdraft for that day of £2.60. You will then receive a message via MCAS advising you that you need to top up their account. This temporary overdraft facility will not be extended for additional days and should your child not have enough funds in their account the following day they will only be provided with a basic sandwich and drink. Our expectation is that you will top their account up immediately so they have a positive balance again.

MCAS Contact Details

Please remember to double check that your details are correct on MCAS. When you make a change in My Child At School, it updates the systems that we use to contact home. This also means that we don't make a mistake in the spelling of an email address or taking down a number incorrectly.

Social Media Channels

Don't forget to keep up to date with everything else on our social media channels

X - @WhytrigMS	Facebook - @Whytrig Middle School

Links to external agencies are provided in good faith. We do not take any responsibility for the content of these links.