

# FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER 2025



## HEADTEACHER UPDATE

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we approach the end of this half term, I am filled with pride at all the achievements of our students and the hard work of our staff. We've had 6 weeks filled with progress, creativity, and new opportunities.

Our students have been remarkable in their dedication and enthusiasm. A major highlight has been our focus on *Preparation for Adulthood*. Students have embraced activities that develop key life skills, such as cooking, shopping for essentials, travel training, and vocational experiences. These activities build confidence and empower our students to navigate the world more independently.

In the classrooms, we've seen wonderful creative projects, most notably the fashion topic that has been followed by key stage 3. This culminated in a fashion extravaganza, with students from across years 7, 8 and 9 modelling their creations on the cat-walk in front of a live audience!

I am thrilled to be able to start sharing information about our planned large-scale improvements. These projects are designed to enhance learning, play, and sensory experiences for all students.

**Outdoor Play Areas:** First drafts of our new playground designs are being reviewed by staff and students to ensure we are creating an area that is fully accessible, engaging, and inclusive. This will allow students to explore, move, and interact in new and exciting ways.

**Indoor Sensory Spaces:** Plans are underway to revamp our indoor sensory rooms too! These spaces will provide calming, stimulating, and enriching experiences, tailored to the individual needs of our students.

We believe these developments will have a lasting impact on both the well-being and the learning potential of everyone in school. We will keep you updated as these projects progress, and will be seeking your vital input soon (Initial images below).



Finally, a big thank you to all of you for your continued support. Whether it's attending meetings, cheering on our students, or partnering with us to make improvements, your involvement is invaluable. Together, we are creating a nurturing and ambitious environment in which our students can thrive.

We wish you all a restful and happy half-term break and look forward to welcoming everyone back soon. Kindest regards and best wishes,

James Horspool  
Head Teacher.

# What's been happening?

## Class 5.6—Developing independence skills in the kitchen

We have been working hard in cookery, making drinks and snacks to promote independence. Following visual instructions to enable us to build our confidence when identifying things in the kitchen and making our own food.



## Class 5.4—Community links and Travel

Class 5.4 students have used their bus passes for Public transport over the course of the term. We have practiced using the bus to travel into the community and had to negotiate different bus routes due to road works.

Will the road works ever be finished?

The students have used the bus numbers to check they are boarding the correct bus (The 87 and 3). Students have been using their passes on Wednesdays and Fridays as part of the curriculum offer. Making the most of leisure and staying safe in the community.



## Class 4.5

What an exciting Spring 1 term for Class 4:5!

We have enjoyed our shopping trips out in the community to Sainsburys. We really enjoy using public transport and our safety awareness in the community has been fantastic! In Sainsburys, the students have been locating items to purchase for our cooking sessions and learned how to use a self-service checkout. In Cooking, the focus this term has been making hot drinks and simple snacks e.g. teas, hot chocolate, beans on toast, soup with bread and butter and angel delight cheesecake. In Science, the students are studying Variation and Adaptation, we looked at live minibeasts of the same species to compare the differences. In P.E this term, the theme was Composing and Performing Dance, which ties in nicely with our Tuesday lunchtime Dance Club. The students have been learning simple dance moves and performing routines. In Maths, the students have been understanding the concept of doubling and halving. We are looking forward to our trip to Forge Mill Farm to support our learning in English on Farm Animals, which is based on non-fiction text.



## Class 4.1

Class 4.1 have been navigating the route to forest school, stopping at the crossing and safely arriving in our lovely forest school to complete outdoor learning. All the students enjoy learning outside in a different environment. The students enjoyed looking at the pets outside (worm) and making music in the wild.



## Class 3.1

This half term 3.1 have been learning how to make hot chocolate and plan, prepare and decorate caps for our fashion show. We have explored different careers like dog handlers and how to be a paramedic. We have also learnt about family members in different types of families and how to communicate



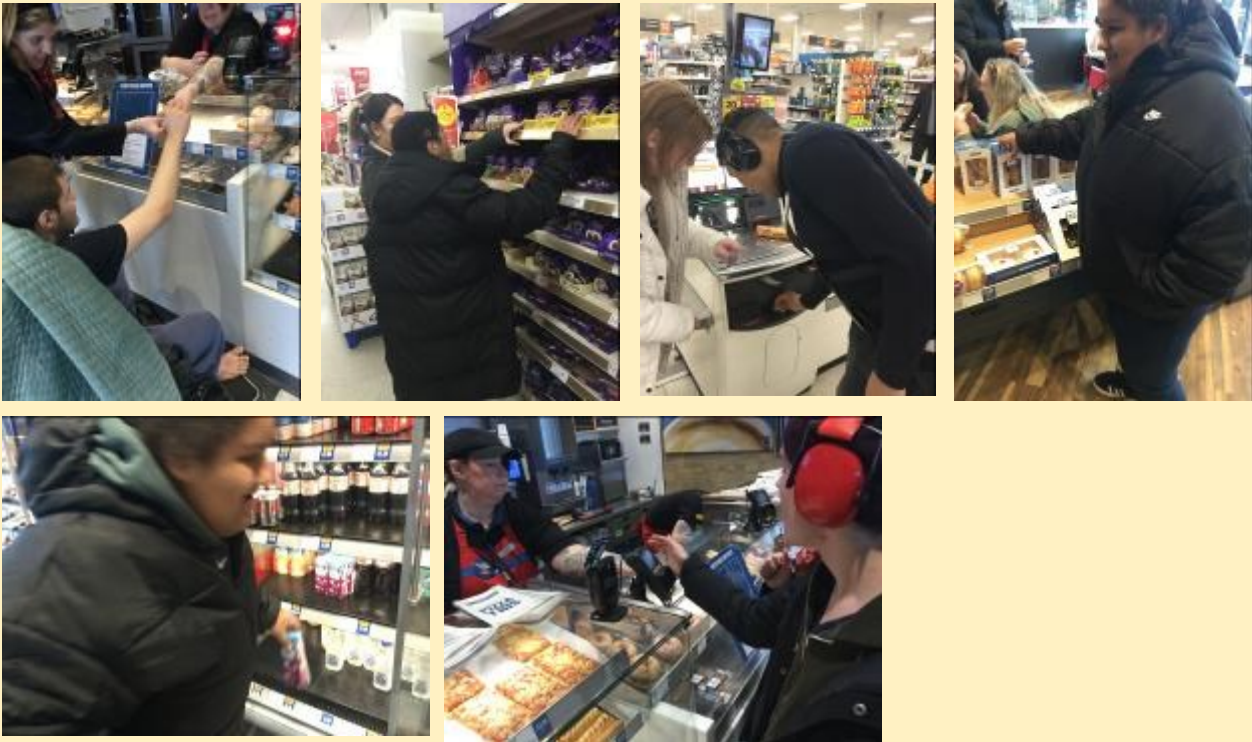
what healthy  
foods we like



and unhealthy  
and don't like.

## Class 5.7

Class 5.7 have been going into the community and using money. We have been to, Sainsbury's, Greggs and Costa exchanging money to purchase our preferred snacks and drinks.



Class 5.7 students actively engaged in preparing an English breakfast, working together following instructions and practicing cooking skills.



Class 5.7 Students participating in relay activities, to complete various physical challenges, promoting physical fitness and collaboration.



## Careers—Preparing for Adulthood

Careers is now known as preparing for adulthood.

We have been working very hard visiting colleges to see the different places available to us after The Meadows.

We have been to Sandwell college, The Hive and QAC.

We have also had visits from Sandwell College for our craft morning as well as Care First for a café encounter.

### Class 3.8 – The Hive

Class 3.8 visited The Hive in Erdington, this is a college that is attached to Stuart Wilson School.

We were met by The Hive's college lead and were shown around all their facilities including the food preparation areas where they make their own lunch, their communal areas to see their ICT areas and a range of classrooms, the outdoor gym, and football / MUGA areas.

Class 3.8 wore visitor badges and they were very excited and felt welcomed by staff and students. A very informative and helpful view of what is on offer when we leave The Meadows.



### Class 4.2 —Queen Alexander College



## Care First Visit

On Thursday 6th February 25, we have had Care First Staff and current students visit the Meadows. This is an encounter with an education setting for our young people to prepare for life beyond the Meadows (Post-19). Today, students took part in a snack exchange. This was a opportunity to use communication outside the classroom and to show appropriate interactions with new people. This forms part of careers strategy to meet Gatsby Benchmarks. Benchmark 7 - a meaningful encounter with providers. If you are considering what the future looks like for your son or daughter after the Meadows and you are not sure college would be suitable, CareFirst could be another option to look at.

Who are CareFirst? "We help people who learn differently. Through our combination of adult day provision and education, we have been able to successfully help our students learn new skills, adapt to their communities and live happier lives. Our highly qualified team help them to reach their potential and have even reduced students on 6-1 care down to 1-1." <https://carefirstltd.co.uk> If you would like to discuss the future beyond the Meadows, please get in touch. I work closely with connexions, as I support students with their destination (Ash Furness) and with Tina Chance (our Careers Lead) we both work with local colleges, educational providers and care settings.



## Class 5.6 —Queen Alexander College Visit

On January 30th we visited QAC as part of our encounters. Lottie showed us around and we got to see some old students from The Meadows who were able to tell us what they had been doing to help with our anxieties. It was a great visit.



## Internet Safety Day

We have learnt about how to keep ourselves safe on the internet when using our iPads and phones.

To help us remember, we learnt a song which we can use when we think we might need help to make sure we are safe.





## Class 5.3—co-operation

Over this half term, the students in 5.3 have been learning to co-operate with each other in different areas of the curriculum. They have been particularly amazing in their cooking sessions and demonstrated their ability to help each other, share equipment and resources, and work together as a team. The students have been making different biscuits every week and then enjoyed eating them with a cup of tea afterwards!



## Friday Football Enrichment

As part of enrichment for the students Dan and Ash have given students the opportunity to develop their football skills and join the Meadows Football Squad. This squad consists of 21 students across all age groups, with players training across two sessions. We are developing ball control and how to work together in small teams. The sessions have proved to be very popular and we are looking to arrange some friendly matches and sessions with other keen football players.

Watch this Space.



## Safeguarding Update

We would like to introduce the new Designated Safeguarding Lead at The Meadows Fiona Lee.

Any queries or concerns please do not hesitate to get in touch. We have some safeguarding workshops for parents coming up, please see Class Dojo or the school's website for reminders.



Many thanks to all those who have signed up to Class Dojo—this is free and requires no subscription. Class Dojo will help parents to communicate directly with class teams. Classes are able to share what children are doing in school via the class story or chat function. If you are yet to receive an invite from the class teacher to join, keep an eye on your emails for a link to be sent.

We have posted lots of information on the main page about holiday clubs and activities for over the February half-term holiday, please have a look and keep checking in for updates.

## School Communication

As you may be aware, all lunch payments and consent for trips are now being made using the School Gateway App.

Please can we ask you to download the app if you have not done so already.

In order to download, search School Gateway in your app store.

Apple iPhone users, download the app here: <http://schoolgateway.co.uk/iosdownload>

Android phone users, download the app here: [schoolgateway.co.uk/androiddownload](http://schoolgateway.co.uk/androiddownload)

Your login details will be automatically generated using the contact information The Meadows already has on the system, **so please make sure the contact details we hold for you are up to date.**

If you require any support in downloading or accessing School Gateway, please do not hesitate to contact the school on 0121 569 7080.



## UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday 6th March 2025 - 10am-12pm

We are busy preparing for our Annual Preparing for Adulthood fair where we will have over 15 different providers here for you to talk to and see what they can offer for you and your child.

Wednesday 12th March 2025 - Hugglepets will be visiting with Fergus for us to practise our skills learnt from the working with dog's career box.

Wednesday 9th April 2025 - Parent's Evening.

Thursday 10th April 2025 - We will be visiting Provision House, Dudley to work alongside staff to sell items we have made in class.

# Parents and Carers Workshops/Coffee Mornings



Please come and join us for our coffee mornings which take place at the school on the dates listed below. Our mornings are a great way to meet other parents and carers, engage with members of the school community and gain more information about specific topics linked to your child's learning.

Date	Time	Focus
Friday 7th March	9:30am—11:30am	Craft coffee morning
Wednesday 13th March	9:30am—11:30am	Parents and Carers Social
Thursday 20th March	9:30am—10:30am	Understanding Sexual Behaviour (including harmful sexual behaviour)
Wednesday 17th April	9:30am—11:30am	Parents and Carers Social
Wednesday 15th May	9:30am—11:30am	Parents and Carers Social
Thursday 22nd May	9:30am—10:30am	Cost of Living Crisis and Local Offer
Wednesday 12th June	9:30am—11:30am	Parents and Carers Social
Thursday 26th June	9:30am—10:30am	Student wellbeing and mental health
Wednesday 17th July	9:30am—11:30am	Parents and Carers social

## Parental Engagement Sessions

Date	Time
Thursday 27th February 2025	9:15am—10:30am
Thursday 27th March 2025	9:15am—10:30am
Thursday 8th May 2025	9:15am—10:30am
Thursday 19th June 2025	9:15am—10:30am
Thursday 17th July 2025	9:15am—10:30am
Thursday 22nd May	9:15am—10:30am

### Spring Term Dates

#### Half Term:

Monday 17th February - Friday 21st February

#### Students Return:

Monday 24th February

#### Students Last Day:

Thursday 10th April

#### Inset Training Day:

Friday 11th April

#### Easter Holidays:

Monday 14th April—Friday 25th April

#### Summer Term Dates:

#### Students Return:

Monday 28th April

#### May Day Bank Holiday:

Monday 5th May

#### Students Last Day:

Friday 23rd May

#### Half Term:

Monday 26th May—Friday 30th May

#### Students Return:

Monday 2nd June

#### Inset Training Day:

Monday 23rd June

#### Last Day of Term:

Monday 21st July