

MAY NEWSLETTER 2023



HEADTEACHER UPDATE

Dear families,

We welcome you to this half term's newsletter. It has been another busy half term and the sunshine has allowed our children to utilise our outside areas for PE lessons and of course, breaks and lunchtimes.

Our children constantly rise to new challenges and continue to make everyone in school proud of their achievements. There has been so much going on in school with school trips and special events. We hope that you enjoy reading on some of our highlights and experiences children have participated in over this half term. Please also refer to our Safeguarding and pastoral section updates and kindly remember that you may access a wealth of information on the school's safeguarding arrangements but also online safety on <https://themeadows.sandwell.sch.uk/information/statutory-information/safeguarding-and-e-safety>

As always, if you have any queries or questions, please contact the school who will direct your query to the appropriate member of staff. My door is always open so please feel free to contact me, or a member of our Senior Leadership Team. We aim to regularly update school news on the website so please look there for new information.

We hope that you and your families have a lovely half term holiday, and we are looking forward to seeing all students on Monday 5th of June.

Kindest Regards

Theodora Papaspyrou

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is the responsibility of everyone in our school and at all times we consider what is in our children's best interests. We work to ensure our children are safe and cared for and by doing this we are protecting their health and development and preventing them from harm. If we are worried, we will raise concerns, share information, and take prompt action with the aim of ensuring families receive the right help at the right time.

What's been happening?

Class 4.5

This term, Class 4.5's theme has been Active Citizenship and they visited Tividale Park to participate in tidying within the community. Some of the students walked to the park from school and applied their amazing road safety knowledge. They also visited the Balaji Temple behind the school to take part in a sponsored walk for their chosen charity—The Rainbow Trust. The students were very active and completed ten laps around the Temple in one hour! Well done Class 4.5! In Science, they have studied how natural factors affect plants in their environment, and in English, they are currently studying Romeo and Juliet.

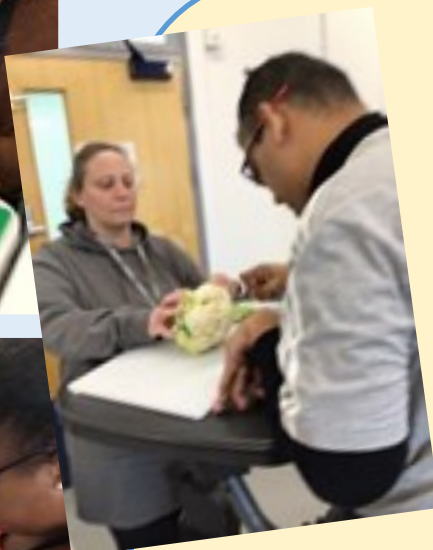


Class 5.6

Class 5.6 have been working on their independent living skills in a variety of different ways.

As part of their healthy living module, they have been exploring different ways to be healthy including food, exercise and sleep.

On a weekly basis, they have completed shopping lists for ingredients then visited the supermarket to buy these things. In doing this, they have had to apply their communication skills to follow and find things using their list, identify and use coins to pay and made use of the technology in the world around us.



The class have then learnt more about working in hospitality; learning about safety in the kitchen, preparing meals and eating and evaluating them as a class.

The skills the students have had to use through this work has introduced them to a

variety of different career opportunities within the school environment and the wider community.

Coronation Day



On Friday 5th May, The Meadows celebrated King Charles III's Coronation. Staff and students dressed in red, white or blue colours and enjoyed many activities including making crowns and designing and making castles for a whole school competition. Well done to three classes who won the castle making competition, Class 3.1, Class 4.1 and Class 4.5!

We also enjoyed visiting the ice cream van for celebration ice creams and had fun times on the bouncy castles. Students who couldn't use the bouncy castles enjoyed a sensory story called 'The Tiger Who Came to Tea', made scented coronation pouches and had fun making their very own red, white and blue ribbon wands.

During lunchtime, we all enjoyed street parties, either in the dining rooms, outdoors or in classrooms.

A great day was had by all, hip, hip, hooray!!

A big thank you to the organisers; Sharon Russell, Sarah Lockett and Sue Grundy and well done to all involved for making the day so special.



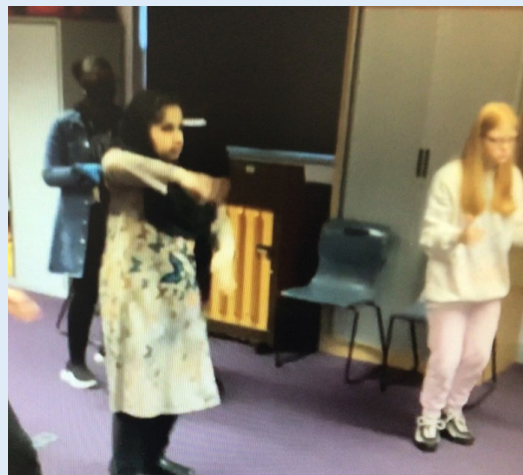
School Choir

The Meadows has introduced a Soundabout Makaton signing choir. This takes place every Friday from 12.00 – 13.00 with specifically selected students from Key Stages 3 and 4, who have an interest in music or singing. Please see photos from the session below



Dance Club

The Meadows has introduced a lunch time dance club. We are working in partnership with Synergy Dance. This takes place every Tuesday from 12.00 – 13.00 with specifically selected students from Key Stages 3 and 4, who have an interest in music or dance. Please see photos from the session below.



Sports Club

The Meadows has introduced a lunch time Sports club, We are working in partnership with Harry, our school's sports coach. This takes place every Thursday from 12.00 – 13.00 with specifically selected students from Key Stages 3 and 4, who have an interest in sporting activities. Please see photos from the session below



Safeguarding & Pastoral Updates

Mental Health Awareness Week 2023

You may or may not be aware that this week is Mental Health Awareness Week 2023. Sadly, research by the Mental Health Foundation found that Children with learning disabilities are **four and a half times more likely** to have a mental health problem than children without a learning disability.

However, this does not have to be the case! Please see below for some easy things you can do to improve your child's mental health:

1. *Try to maintain a familiar routine, where possible - children can feel calmer when they know what is going to happen next.*
2. *...but sometimes life does it's own thing and not everything can be predictable! So if something has to change, explain to your child that things will be different but you are still there with them to help them.*
3. *Show your child different emojis on your phone or device - talk through what each of them means so your child grows in understanding different emotions - and knowing that all emotions are OK*
4. *Try to get some form of physical exercise with your child - or at least some fresh air and time in nature*
5. *Laughter and physical touch goes a long way! We don't have to become experts in mental health, but we do know how to have fun with our child and give them a good hug.*

We are also aware that caring for a child with additional needs or disabilities can impact on many parents/carers' mental health too. If you are struggling to cope, or feel unusually low or disconnected, try the following:

- Give us a call - we might be able to help either practically or simply by listening
- Go to your GP and explain how you're feeling.

[Family support \(autism.org.uk\)](https://www.autism.org.uk) If your child has ASD, you can click on this link to see any community support in your area

- The Downs Syndrome Association has a Helpline: 0333 1212300 (10am-4pm)

[Helpline | Disability charity Scope UK](#) Scope have several helplines and can offer advice and support around practical elements of life as a parent of a disabled child

[Sandwell Local Offer | Family Information Service Hub](#) Take a look at this link for what Sandwell has available to support families including funding, short breaks etc.

NSPCC

We have recently developed an activity for some of our students based around the NSPCC Pantosaurus song and resources.

This is a colourful and fun way for children to learn that their bodies belong to them and to tell someone if a person tries to touch their private parts without their consent.

Feel free to watch the video at home and introduce these themes to your child. You could talk to them about who they might tell if they were worried, and what parts of their body are private. Otherwise, you could simply enjoy singing, dancing and clapping along to the video. Warning - the song is very catchy!

As always, the Pastoral Team at The Meadows are here to help you. If you are worried about your child or need some support, just give us a call.

Staffing Updates

This half term, we offer a big warm welcome to our new teacher, Sadia Rashid who is currently leading Class 3.3. We also welcome Sarah Hammonds, our new LSP in Class 3.5.

We unfortunately must say goodbye to Carole Robinson, who has worked at The Meadows for nearly 17 years. We thank her for all her hard work and support through the years and wish her all the best in her retirement!

We also thank our Interim Deputy Headteacher, Sharon Williams, and our LSPs, Maggie Moore and Holly Mansell, who sadly leave us this half term. We thank them for all their dedication and support they have given to the school and wish them all the best of luck in the future!

Transition

Just a quick update to let you all know that the school has commenced transition arrangements with feeder primary schools in the local area. Students have visited the school and spent some time enjoying some of the provisions that we offer, whilst getting to know key staff.

Dates for the Diary

Sports Day: Thursday 15th June
Parents Evening: Thursday 13th July

Term Dates

Last Day of Term: Friday 26th May 2023
Half Term: Monday 29th May to Friday 2nd June 2023
Students Return: Monday 5th June 2023
Last Day of Term: Tuesday, 25th July 2023