

FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER 2024



HEADTEACHER UPDATE

Dear Parents/Carers,

We would like to wish you all a very restful and enjoyable half term holiday. We can reflect on the very busy and positive term we have had and just how much has happened within the last five weeks. Please see below some of the term's highlights and learning, as well as some important upcoming dates and reminders.

We would like to thank you all for your continued support as we work together as a school community, raising standards and transforming young peoples' lives.

I hope you all have a wonderful break and we are looking forward to welcoming students back on Monday 19th February ready for another exciting half term ahead.

Best Wishes

Theodora Papaspyrou
Interim Head Teacher

Spring Term Dates

Half Term:

Monday 12th February—Friday
16th February

Students Return:

Monday 19th February

Students Last Day:

Friday 22nd March

Easter Holidays:

Monday 25th March—Friday 5th
April

Summer Term Dates

Inset Training Day: Monday 8th
April

Students Return: Tuesday 9th April

May Day Bank Holiday: Monday
6th May

Student Last Day: Friday 24th May

Half Term: Monday 27th May—
Friday 31st May

Students Return: Monday 3rd
June

Last Day of Term: Monday 22nd
July

What's been happening?

Class 3.3

As a part of their unit of work on Wildlife, KS3 had a visit from the animal lady where they met all kinds of animals and insects. Here are some pictures of 3.3 enjoying their experience, interacting with animals like a bearded dragon and a snake!



Class 4.5

Class 4.5 have had a great start to the Spring Term! Their unit in Maths this term is 'Using Money'. They visited Tesco Supermarket in Dudley on the 87 bus to participate in Travel Training and exchange items for money. They used a self service checkout; this was great experience for Class 4:5! Their new text this term in English is The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe. They have been looking at the main characters and events in the story so far. This term, they are taking part in "Big Top Music", where they are developing their multi-sensory music skills to maximise engagement. In Basic Cooking, they have made hot drinks, bread and vegetarian toad in the hole! They are participating in Healthy Living and have been swimming off-site, using the Fitness Suite and Outdoor Gym. Phew, what a busy half-term!



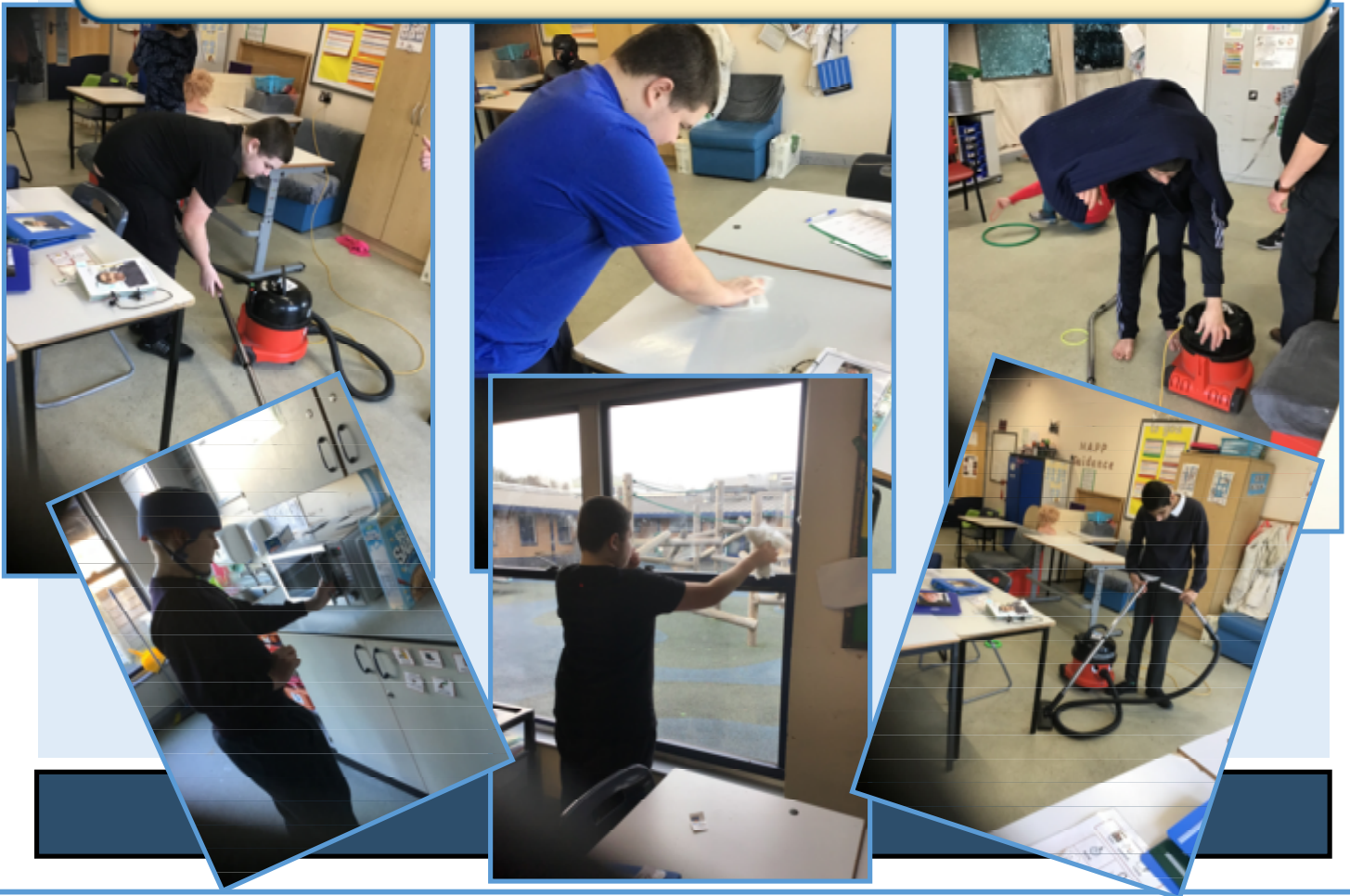
Class 4.4

Class 4.4 have been enjoying the local park visits this term!



Class 4.1

4.1 have been completing a unit of work on how to look after the home, including how to use items to keep their space clean after a long day of activities.



Student Council

The Student Council have been very busy talking to staff and finding out about their roles.

They have met with the Finance Manager, who has shown them what happens to the money that is raised from charity events and some of the council counted the money and logged onto the system to record a transaction.

Also, some of the council conducted a health and safety walk with the Assistant Site Manager where they looked at issues and solutions.



Parental Engagement Sessions

At The Meadows, our mission statement states, 'Every student reaches their potential and is fully prepared for life after The Meadows', and we aim to provide a range of opportunities to our students to achieve this.

Our vision is to achieve this through personalised approaches to learning and working in partnership with families, and we are delighted by all the parents who have accepted our invitation to work with their child and to build on relationships with class teams.

Over the last term, parents have taken part in lessons including PE, cooking and sensory art. This is some of the feedback classes received from parents: "Really enjoyed working with my child", "Lovely experience", "Enjoyed the session"

And here the photos say it all!



Rights Respecting School Award



The UK Committee for UNICEF (UNICEF UK) works with schools in the UK to create safe and inspiring places to learn, where children are respected, their talents are nurtured and they are able to achieve their personal best. The Rights Respecting Schools Award embeds these values in daily school life.

The focus of the award is to embed children's human rights in their ethos and culture. The Award recognises achievement in putting the UN Convention on the Right of the Child (CRC) at the heart of the school's practice to improve wellbeing.

The Award is based on principles of:

- Equality
- Dignity
- Respect
- Non-discrimination
- Participation

At The Meadows, we started our Rights Respecting Schools journey in July 2023, putting rights at the heart of our school. We have achieved Bronze award for 'Recognition of Commitment' and we are now working towards our Silver Award.

Bronze: Rights Committed
Here's our student council proudly showing our Bronze certificate and one of the most important articles

Article 12: Respect for the views of the child

Every child has the right to have a say in all matters affecting them, and to have their views taken seriously.



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 to 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



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.

Need support with School Comms?

Come along to our

Parent Coffee Morning

THURSDAY 29TH FEBRUARY 2024
09:30AM - 10:30AM

Schoolgateway

WELCOME TO SCHOOL GATEWAY

Send address

PSN

Logins

Forgot my PIN?

Don't have an account? Sign up

Schoolgateway



Valentine's Day

You may or may not choose to celebrate Valentine's Day but for some, it is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate those we love – pets, friends, children and romantic partners. It is important however, that we keep some safety messages in mind.

Firstly, for those parents who may be involved in the Online Dating scene, it is vital to remember that sadly, it has been recognised that some abusive adults and paedophiles are using online dating sites to groom single mothers, in order to gain access to their children.

MP Sarah Champion raised concerns some years ago about the site



'Plenty Of Fish' having the option to search only for women with children, which appeared to be enabling abusive adults to target vulnerable parents, looking for love.

You can read more here: [Brazen paedophiles using popular dating app Plenty of Fish to woo single mothers and prey on their children - Mirror Online](#)

Rather than avoiding online dating altogether, consider the following tips:

- Not sharing about having children until you have actually got to know someone in real life
- Avoid using pictures of your children in your profile picture
- Trust your instincts and if someone seems to be taking an unusual interest in your children, avoid them.

Of course, if you have any concerns about your child being groomed or abused, it is vital to contact the police immediately on 999. Remember that some abusive adults will be even more drawn towards single parents of children with additional needs. Ensure that if you do meet someone, you do not take them up on an offer to 'babysit' or provide personal care until the relationship is very well established and both you AND your child feel comfortable with the person.

Remember that [Clare's Law \(clares-law.com\)](http://clares-law.com) is available to you if you would like to know if your partner has an abusive or violent past.

Mental Health

February also brings us Children's Mental Health Week.

It is so important to talk to our children about their mental health and not just to wait until we are worried about them.

Recent research by the Children's Commissioner found that children with SEND were statistically significantly more likely to be affected by not knowing how to look after their mental health, compared to non-SEND children (59% of children with SEND vs. 38% of non-SEND children).

You can read more of this report here: [Annex-4-March-2021-survey-findings.pdf \(childrenscommissioner.gov.uk\)](https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/annex-4-march-2021-survey-findings.pdf)

There are some fantastic resources online to help you talk to your child including the link below from CBBC.

[Children's Mental Health Week 2024: - CBBC - BBC](#)

Some other tips include:

- Asking your child for the best part of their day and the worst part of their day – and sharing yours so the conversation does not feel one-sided.
- If your child is non-verbal, you can ask them to put their thumbs up or down (or in the middle) for how their day went.
- Showing your child pictures of emojis (either printed off or on your phone) and talking through what you and they think the character must be feeling. This increases what we call 'emotional literacy' and will give your child the ability to read other people's and their own emotions.
- Making sure your child gets regular movement and exercise as well as time out in fresh air.
- Dancing and 'shaking out your sillies' each day can release feel-good hormones. Meanwhile, screwing up paper that



represents the things that make us feel sad or stressed can be a physical way of releasing our negative feelings.



Online Safety

6th February 2024 was this year's Safer Internet Day. While most parents will constantly be taking action and making decisions to



ensure their child is safe in all areas of their life; we can sometimes feel a bit less confident when it comes to keeping them safe online.

Even if your child's needs mean that they do not have access to an online device themselves, there are still some safety issues to keep in mind:

- Children with disabilities may be more likely to establish online friendships due to sometimes feeling more socially isolated in their communities. This is a positive thing but may need your support and supervision to ensure they are making friends with people who are who they say they are – and are safe!
- Be aware of the photos you – and other family members – may post online of your child with SEND. Have they consented to having their image online – and do you know who could have access to it? Sadly some images of children with disabilities have been turned into cruel memes. If this is the case, remember you can report these images as a hate crime and get them removed.
- Ensure your child does not have access to a camera phone (or device that can take pictures) when they are alone in their room. They may not realise that taking pictures nude or in their underwear or bedclothes could be risky.

The Safer Internet Centre have some fantastic resources specifically for children with neurodiversity, in order to help them work out what is true online:

[SEND - UK Safer Internet Centre](#)

Remember: The Pastoral Team at The Meadows are here to help you. If you would like some support or are concerned about your child's safety, give us a call on 0121 5697089.

Parents and Carers 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.

- Wednesday 13th March—9.30am-11.30am
- Wednesday 17th April—9.30am-11.30am
- Wednesday 15th May—9.30am-11.30am
- Wednesday 12th June—9.30am-11.30am
- Wednesday 17th July—9.30am-11.30am

Parents and Carers Evening

This term's Parents and Carers Evening will take place on **Thursday 21st March** from 3pm-5pm. Letters will be sent out nearer the time in order for you to make an appointment to see your child's teacher.



Staff Updates

This half term we bid farewell to two of our Learning Support Practitioners, Vicky Naylor and Pauline East. We thank both members of staff for all their hard work whilst at The Meadows and know they will be missed greatly by both staff and students!