Witham St Hughs Academy
A L.E.A.D. Academy

Witham Newsletter

Message from the Headteacher

Termlet 2 2026

November is well underway and, as ever, there's certainly no shortage of things happening at Witham! Since our last newsletter, we've enjoyed some fantastic experiences, seen some brilliant learning and continued to develop the things that make a difference to our children. It's been busy, but then again, I'm not sure we'd know what to do with a quiet week!

You'll hopefully have spotted a couple of exciting additions to our school grounds, with our new Lost Cabin and Witham Weather Station shelter now built. Thanks to the fantastic support and generosity of our PTFA and The Lost Village, these new spaces will provide additional shade and more opportunities for our children to enjoy the outdoors. It's brilliant to see these improvements becoming a reality and another example of what can be achieved when our school community works together. A huge thank you to everyone involved.

There's also been plenty happening across school. We've enjoyed a fantastic disco, welcomed Lincoln City, had a brilliant PGL adventure and seen Year 3 head off to the zoo. Alongside all this excitement, we've marked Children in Need, Odd Socks Day and Remembrance, including a thoughtful Remembrance service. These experiences are an important part of school life, giving our children opportunities to try new things, develop their understanding of the world around them and make some wonderful memories along the way.

Of course, amongst all of this, the important business of learning has continued! I've seen some excellent mathematical thinking, fantastic writing and really impressive geography work across school. What has particularly pleased me is not just the work children are producing, but the way they're approaching their learning, asking questions, explaining their thinking, making connections and showing determination when things get tricky. These are the things that really matter, and they're a reflection of the hard work taking place in classrooms every day.

We're continuing to look carefully at how we teach, how children learn and where we can make things even better. It's about building on the good things already happening, developing consistency across school and ensuring our approaches have the greatest possible impact. There's always something to work on, and whilst that means the to-do list never seems to get any shorter, it's also what keeps us moving in the right direction!

It's been equally encouraging to see our pupil leadership groups going from strength to strength. Our children have been involved in interviews, supported monitoring across school and helped raise money for charity through their sales. These are genuine opportunities for children to take responsibility, share their views and influence what happens at Witham. We want them to recognise that their voices matter and that they can make a positive contribution to their school. They're certainly not short of ideas, and they're becoming increasingly confident in sharing them!

That sense of responsibility extends beyond the classroom too. We've recently launched our Walk to School scheme, encouraging children and families to develop healthy habits and think about the small choices that can have a positive impact on themselves and our wider community. We're looking forward to building on this as the year progresses.

And, of course, Christmas is beginning to appear on the horizon! I suspect it won't be long before the countdowns begin, rehearsals get underway and Christmas songs start making their way into classrooms. There's plenty to look forward to, although we've still got lots of important learning to squeeze in before the festive excitement really takes hold!

As I reflect on the past few weeks, what makes me most proud isn't simply the number of events we've managed to fit into the school calendar. It's the hard work happening every day, the commitment of our staff and the way our children continue to rise to the challenges we set them. We're proud of what we're achieving at Witham, but we're certainly not standing still. We want to keep improving, keep challenging ourselves and, most importantly, keep doing the very best we can for our children.

Thank you, as always, to our families, staff, children and wider school community for your continued support. We've got lots still to do, plenty to look forward to and, knowing Witham, probably a few more things we'll manage to add to the calendar before Christmas!

As always, we really value the positive relationships we have with our families. Please do continue to say hello and catch up with us at the school gates. It's always good to hear from you and keep those conversations going. Working together remains such an important part of what we do at Witham.

Now, back to the hard work, before someone starts playing Christmas music!

Mr Coy

Witham News

The Great Running Challenge Fundraising Success

We are delighted to share that our Great Running Challenge raised an incredible £4,897.61!

A spending plan has now been carefully developed to ensure this money benefits children across the whole school and helps us continue to improve opportunities for participation in sport and physical activity. We will keep parents updated throughout the year on how the funding is being used and the impact it is having.

We are pleased to say that two additional Swingball sets have already been ordered, as these have proved extremely popular at lunchtime. A portion of the funding has also been allocated to Foundation Stage to purchase new gross motor skills equipment, supporting the development of balance, coordination and movement from an early age. Some of the funding will also be used to provide transport to sporting events and purchase additional school sports vests and kits. This investment will help ensure that more children can take part in competitions and events representing the school, while also fostering a sense of pride, belonging and team identity when competing against other schools.

These are just some of the projects that have been allocated funding so far. We are excited to have more plans in place that will benefit pupils across the school, and we look forward to sharing further updates and announcements about how this fantastic fundraising total is being invested throughout the year.

At the School Gates

We recognise that the start and end of the school day can be very busy, with many families using the main gate at the same time. We kindly ask all parents and carers to be mindful of those around them and help us keep the area safe and welcoming for everyone. Please ensure children are lining up sensibly in the mornings and are aware of others when moving through the gates. A little patience and consideration goes a long way in helping arrivals and departures run smoothly for all members of our school community. Thank you for your support.

Start and End of the School Day

A reminder to all parents and carers about our school timings:

- School gates open at 8:50am. Learning begins straight away, so it is important that children arrive on time and ready to learn. Please ensure they arrive with all the belongings they will need for the day, including coats, bags, water bottles and any items required for learning.
- All children should be in school by 9:00am, when registers are taken.
- The school day ends at 3:30pm.

Please ensure your child is collected promptly at the end of the school day. If you are unable to collect your child at 3:30pm, alternative collection arrangements should be made. For families requiring after-school childcare, places may be available through Kids Club; please contact the provider directly for further information. Thank you for your support in helping us ensure a smooth, safe start and end to each school day.

Knex Donations

Our Knex construction is a hugely popular lunchtime activity, and we are beginning to run short of pieces. If you have any Knex sets or spare parts at home that are no longer being used, we would be very grateful for any donations. Please bring any donations to the school office. Thank you for your support!

Is My Child Too Ill for School?

We know it can sometimes be difficult to decide whether your child is well enough to attend school. The NHS has produced a helpful guide for parents and carers, offering advice on common illnesses and when children should stay at home.

Take a look here:
NHS: Is my child too ill for school?

This is a useful resource to help families make informed decisions and support good attendance wherever possible.

Odd Socks Day Reminder

A reminder that we will be celebrating Odd Socks Day on Monday 16th November. Children are welcome to wear odd socks as a fun way to celebrate individuality and recognise that our differences make us special. There is no donation required. We look forward to promoting kindness, respect and inclusion across the school.

Spotlight on: Mini Whiteboards

As a school, we are always reflecting, developing and building on what we do well to ensure we continue to provide the very best opportunities for our children and wider school community. Over the coming newsletters, we will occasionally shine a spotlight on different aspects of teaching and learning, sharing some of the thinking and ongoing professional development that takes place behind the scenes. We hope this gives parents and carers a greater insight into how we continually strive to make our already wonderful school even better.

At Witham St Hughs, we are always looking for ways to make learning more engaging and ensure every child is actively involved in every lesson. One area of focus this term has been the use of mini whiteboards.

Although mini whiteboards are not new to our classrooms, we have recently introduced a consistent whole-school routine to maximise their impact. By using a shared "3, 2, 1, Show!" approach, teachers can quickly assess understanding, respond to misconceptions and ensure lesson time is used as effectively as possible.
The impact has already been remarkable..."

Mini whiteboards allow every child to think, respond and participate, rather than just the few pupils who put their hands up. Using our new '3, 2, 1, Show!' routine, teachers can instantly see the understanding of every child in the room, enabling them to celebrate success, address misconceptions and provide support exactly when it is needed.

This simple change has created classrooms where all pupils are expected to think deeply and contribute. Children have responded brilliantly, showing high levels of engagement, enthusiasm and confidence when sharing their ideas. Teachers have embraced the approach too, using it to adapt lessons in real time and ensure learning moves forward at the right pace for everyone.

Most importantly, mini whiteboards help us ensure that no child slips through the net. By checking understanding throughout a lesson, rather than waiting until the end, teachers can quickly identify misconceptions and provide immediate support or challenge. This means more learning time is spent moving children forward and helping every pupil achieve their best.

We are delighted with the positive impact this strategy is already having and look forward to seeing the benefits continue to grow across the school.

Pupil Leaders' Corner

A message from our Prefects and L.E.A.D Learners:

"We are the Year 6 prefects. Our role is to be positive role models for our school and represent our school values at all times. You may have seen our recent video on social media where we shared a bit more about our role. This year, we will try our best to encourage all our pupils to be the best versions of themselves and improve our school as a whole. Two of our prefects supported our school by selling poppies at the start of the school day, and two of us recently welcomed an important visitor from the Department for Education! In the coming weeks, we will be showing parents around our school during Open Days. Thank you in advance for supporting our school and for taking the time to read this."

The Year 6 Prefects

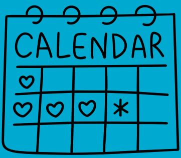
"We are the KS2 L.E.A.D. Learners. Our role is to improve learning across the school and create a better learning environment for all. Recently, some of us helped to interview three candidates who applied for a teaching role. We then spoke to Mr Coy and Mr Durkan about who we thought would be the best fit for our school. Our Year 3 leaders are currently putting together their Recommended Reads, which will be shared on social media throughout the year to inspire a love of reading. Please share these recommendations with your children, as these books are available in our library. Some of us also provided pupil voice about behaviour in school to help the leadership team understand what pupils think is working well and what could be improved."

The L.E.A.D. Learners

In other pupil leadership updates...

- Our two Year 4 Silver Readers are enjoying reading to an elderly member of our community each Tuesday morning. This experience is helping to develop their confidence in reading and communication, while also making a small but meaningful contribution to reducing loneliness in our local community.
- Our Playground Leaders are now proudly wearing their hats, high-vis vests and badges as they help to organise lunchtimes while the field is out of action. Following their popularity, three additional Swingballs have been ordered, target games have been introduced, chalks have been made available for playground games and drawings, and colouring books have been introduced in the drawing shed. Next, Mr Durkan will teach the leaders a range of playground games for them to lead at lunchtime. They will also be gathering children's views on the activities they would like to see. Knex remains a firm favourite, so any donations would be very gratefully received!
- Our Eco Leaders are excited to launch our new Walk to School Challenge! Children will be able to quickly record how they travelled to school each day. The Eco Team will then track the data, award badges and see which class can win our famous foot teddy!

Diary Dates



NOV 16 Y5/6 catch up swimming week
NOV 16 Odd Socks Day
NOV 17 New to EYFS Open Morning
NOV 23 Panto - Y4/5/6
NOV 26 New to EYFS open morning
NOV 27 PTFA Christmas Fair
NOV 27 Panto - EYFS, Y1/2/3
DEC 1-2 EYFS Nativity Concert - 2:30pm
DEC 4 AND 7 PTFA Breakfast with Santa - 8am
DEC 8/9 KS1 production 2:30pm - 8th 9:30am and 2:30pm - 9th
DEC 11 Christmas lunch and jumper day
DEC 14 No clubs this week
DEC 14-18 Christmas parties
DEC 18 Carols at 1:15pm
DEC 18 Term ends (2pm finish)
JAN 5 Children return and clubs start back
JAN 13/14 FS - Little City ezperience
JAN 25 Y1 phonics parents' meeting at 3:00pm
JAN 25 PTFA Bingo 6:00pm-8:00pm
JAN 29 Y4 Greek experience day
FEB 1-3 PTFA Mothers Day shop - 3:30pm
FEB 9 AND 11 Year 6 Parents' Evening
FEB 12 Non uniform day - Easter Egg Collection
FEB 12 Young Voices trip
FEB 12 Term ends (3:30pm finish time)
FEB 22 Children back

Who to contact?

Remember that we are always here to support you and to make sure everything is going well.

If you need and support or have any questions, then do not hesitate to contact the school on:

01522 869590 or admin@withamsthughsacademy.co.uk

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