



Newsletter

Hallfold, Whitworth, Rochdale
Lancashire, OL12 8TS
Tel (01706) 343218
www.wchs.co

Autumn Term 2
Friday 15th November 2024

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Dear parents and carers,

Welcome to the next edition of the Whitworth Community High School newsletter. As always, there is lots going on, so I'll try to summarise where we are up to at the moment.

New Building Update

The tarmac has eventually been rolled out on the overflow car park and on the main driveway. This means that we can now safely accommodate a few more vehicles on site, which will improve safety and make life a bit easier when we host events and visitors to school. Whilst we have had success with the driveway and car park, we still have ongoing issues with the heating in our new building. The new system that has been installed was designed to be much more environmentally friendly than a traditional gas boiler and radiator system. However, as with all experimental technologies, there are often teething issues. The designers and installers have been called back to our school site on a regular basis over the last few weeks to try to balance the temperature across the building so that we have an environment that is conducive to learning. Fortunately, Mr Bland has made it his business to fully understand the new system so that he can ensure that the work undertaken by the contractors is of an acceptable standard.



As many of you will already know, the new field which is situated next to the car park was seeded over the summer and was growing well. Sadly, the contractors have now dug up the newly seeded turf to lay drainage channels. Some parents have asked why the drains weren't laid in the first instance prior to any seed being planted. This is a fair question and one that I am struggling to answer myself. Similarly, several parents and students have also asked if there is a possibility of us having an astroturf pitch. Sadly, the answer to this question is that the Department for Education originally included an astroturf pitch in the original specification for the site but this was vetoed by Sport England who refused permission based on the fact that it wasn't part of their plan for sporting facilities in this part of the country. I continue to be baffled and bitterly disappointed by this decision taken by Sport England.

Panathlon Bowling

Last week, six of our brilliant new year 7 students took part in the Panathlon Bowling competition in Burnley. They competed against 20 other local schools, scored the highest overall score and won the competition! They will now progress to the Lancashire finals which will take place in Blackburn. Louisa and Minnie respectively scored the top and second top individual scores. Thank you to Mrs Ashworth for

Climbing higher!

Calendar

**December
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4th December 2024

Flu Immunisations
All Year Groups

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Y11 Parents' Evening
4.00-6.00pm

18th December 2024

Christmas Concert
6.30pm

19th December 2024

Christmas hat/Jumper
Day

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School Website : www.wchs.co

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accompanying the students and congratulations to you all for representing our school so positively.



Sporting Success

Congratulations to Harrison in year 9 who was recently nominated for one of the Rochdale Borough Active Awards. Harrison was runner up in the Young Sports Achiever category for his commitment to Football and Boxing. The awards were hosted at The Middleton Arena on the 7th November. We are all proud of Harrison for his sporting achievements.



STEM Challenge Day

On Thursday 7th November, a group of students from our Able, Gifted and Talented (AGT) cohort took part in the STEM Challenge Day at Fred Longworth High School, competing against five other schools from the region. The challenge asked students to design a prototype for a product to assist a specific group of people. Our team chose to create a 'time machine' toy aimed at stimulating fine motor skills in young children. The students worked collaboratively in roles such as Project Manager, Client Manager, and Engineers, overcoming circuit issues and managing budgets.

The judges were impressed with the team's creativity, attention to detail, and how well they adhered to the brief. They particularly praised the team's problem-solving skills, with one student noting the satisfaction of "finally solving the problem with the batteries," and another commenting on the importance of "working as a team." Thank you to Mr Hanif for organising the event and congratulations to the six students involved: Bailey, Finley, Arabella, James, Tabitha and Eva. Their teamwork, determination, and problem-solving skills were key to their success. We look forward to hearing about their progress in the next stage of the competition.

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GCSE Awards Evening

Last week, we held our annual GCSE Awards Evening at the Ashcroft. It was a joyful, celebratory evening during which we publicly recognised the achievements of our most recent alumni. It was a pleasure to welcome Councillor Baron, Mayor of Whitworth, who presented the subject award winners with their prizes. We also welcomed back Mrs Middlemas as our guest speaker. In her address she spoke to the students and their parents/carers about aspirations for the future. Mrs Middlemas also presented our major award winners with their trophies. Thanks to everyone who was involved, especially Miss Rawstron who did all of the preparatory work for this event.



Year 11 Mock Examinations and Y10 Mid-Year Exams

Our current year 11s are now coming towards the end of their November mocks. We have all been impressed by the diligent preparation that our students have put into these examinations. It has been impressive to see such determination, resilience and brilliant behaviour in the exam hall. It is hoped that this process will help our students to overcome their worries about external exams in the future. I look forward to sharing their progress with parents/carers on the evening of 4th December.

The year 10 mid-year exams will begin on the 9th December and will finish on the 19th December. The revision materials for these exams are available on our website. The username required to access the revision materials is i.climb and the password is Higher2021 (case sensitive). Parents/carers are urged to support their children by helping them to make a revision timetable in the three weeks leading up to these exams.

Climbing higher!

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Remembrance Assemblies

Our annual remembrance assemblies took place in the main hall on Monday morning. The assemblies included some famous war poetry, interspersed with video clips and readings. Students who are involved with local uniformed organisations led our assemblies and laid a poppy wreath at the front of the hall. Students in all year groups behaved respectfully and acted with reverence, especially as the names of the fallen soldiers from the Whitworth area were read out.

It is always great to hear when our students have been involved in acts of remembrance beyond the school day. I have heard about several students who took part in a variety of local services and marches. Some examples are in the photographs below. The first image is of Ben (Head Boy) and Darcey (Head Girl) laying a wreath at the Whitworth Memorial Gardens on behalf of WCHS. The second image shows Luke, Hannah and Liam, members of the 2nd Rossendale Scout Band who led the music in Rawtenstall.



Curriculum Update

I am very sorry to announce that Mrs Raza has taken the decision to step down from her role as Teacher in Charge of Geography. She has been instrumental in turning around the fortunes of our Geography department and has completely overhauled and modernised the curriculum. Mrs Raza will be sadly missed when she leaves at Christmas. I am pleased to tell you that we have appointed Mr Towers to this role. Mr Towers is currently teaching Geography at Bury Church School and will join us in January. I'm sure everyone will make him feel welcome.

I am also sorry to tell you that Mr Heapy will be moving on to pastures new at the end of this term too. Unfortunately, the recruitment process in the Modern Foreign Languages department has not been successful, which is very much in line with the national trend. As a short term solution, we have taken the decision to reduce the number of hours that students study Spanish at Key Stage 3 for the remainder of the academic year, whilst ensuring that we still cover the requirements as set out in the National Curriculum. Mr Khan has agreed to come back to Whitworth for two terms to help out with this situation. He will be offering a variety of additional humanities and literacy opportunities to our key stage 3 students whilst he is with us. I am looking forward to welcoming him back 'home' in January.

Lockdown Practice

During form time this week students have been shown what to do in case of a lockdown. A lockdown is simply the procedure that we follow to get everyone to the

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safest place possible, as quickly as possible in the event of an emergency. There is no legal requirement for a school to have a lockdown plan, but it is good practice to do so. Whilst we hope never to need to put the plan in place in a real situation, it is essential that everyone knows what to do should we have to. As such, we will be conducting a lockdown drill next week. I realise that this could potentially be upsetting for some students so it is included in my newsletter so that you have the chance to discuss it with your children. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch with Mr Bland who has taken responsibility for sorting out the lockdown plans.

Parent Governor Elections

In my most recent newsletter, I reminded you about our forthcoming elections for our new parent Governor. Thank you to all who were nominated and everyone who exercised their right to vote. Mrs Romy Vear was the successful candidate and will take up her role as soon as possible. Welcome to the team.

Best wishes

Mr A Oliver
Headteacher

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Festive fun



MFA Bowl in Burnley have fun-filled Christmas deals for pupils and their families.

They have a 24-lane bowling centre, complete with brand-new amusement arcades, and offer delicious food and refreshments.

Below are the festive packages specially designed to bring families and friends together:

A day of fun for everyone to enjoy over the festive period!



CHRISTMAS EVE
2 GAMES PER PERSON
£12.95 12 NOON - 8PM

BOXING DAY
2 GAMES PER PERSON
£10.00 12 NOON - 8PM

NEW YEAR'S EVE (DAY OFFER)
2 GAMES PER PERSON £14.00
BEFORE 5PM 2 PEOPLE MIN PER BOOKING

NEW YEAR'S EVE (NIGHT OFFER)
4 HOURS OF BOWLING PER LANE
ADULT £20.00/JUNIOR £10.00
AFTER 5PM 4 PEOPLE MIN PER BOOKING
INCLUDES: DISCO, LIVE DJ & NIBBLES, BUBBLY

NEW YEAR'S DAY
2 GAMES PER PERSON
£10.00 12 NOON - 8PM

FAMILY FESTIVE PACKAGE
1 HOUR OF BOWLING / £54.95
12 NOON - 10PM UPTO 5 PEOPLE PER LANE
INCLUDES: 1 DRAUGHT SOFT DRINK PER PERSON
PLUS FESTIVE SHARING PLATTER (PER LANE) DECEMBER ONLY

KIDS FESTIVE PACKAGE
1 GAME £11.95 PER JUNIOR
12 NOON - 6PM 6 JUNIORS MIN PER BOOKING
INCLUDES: A JUG OF SQUASH (PER GROUP)
PLUS A SMALL HOTDOG (PER PERSON) DECEMBER ONLY

BOWL & DRINK
2 GAMES £21.95 PER PERSON
12 NOON - 10PM
2 PEOPLE MIN PER BOOKING
INCLUDES: 2 SELECTED DRINKS PER PERSON DECEMBER ONLY

BOWL, DRINK & BITE
2 GAMES £25.99 PER PERSON
12 NOON - 10PM
2 PEOPLE MIN PER BOOKING
INCLUDES: 2 SELECTED DRINKS PER PERSON
& FESTIVE SHARING PLATTER (PER LANE) DECEMBER ONLY

CORPORATE PACKAGES AVAILABLE
CALL OR EMAIL US NOW FOR MORE DETAILS
0843 290 89 18
BOOKING.BURNLEY@MFABOWL.COM

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators ENCOURAGING CHILDREN TO CHOOSE RESPECT

Sometimes, differences between children can escalate into bullying, potentially impacting their mental health in a way that can persist into adulthood. While it's natural to disagree sometimes, teaching children the importance of respect is essential – especially in difficult situations. This guide provides strategies for encouraging considerate behaviour, even during a dispute, to foster a kinder, more inclusive environment for everyone.

1 LEAD BY EXAMPLE

As adults, we play a crucial role in modelling respectful behaviour for children: they observe and learn from our actions every day. Be mindful of the way you interact with others in front of children. Keep in mind that you should always approach others with an attitude of mutual respect, even if you disagree with them. Demonstrating this behaviour can influence young people and help them to handle their own conflicts in a healthy way.

2 AGREE TO DISAGREE

Make sure children know that it's fine to have differing opinions – and that disagreeing with someone doesn't mean you can't get along or respect each other's point of view. Help them understand that sometimes we can 'agree to disagree'. Using active listening skills when doing this can also help to build empathy and understanding of others.

3 PROMOTE ACTIVE LISTENING

Teach children about the importance of active listening: that is, making a genuine effort to listen to the other person's perspective without interrupting, before responding in a way that shows you understand their viewpoint, even (or perhaps especially) if you disagree with it. This makes people feel respected and allows for a better comprehension of their point of view, which in turn can make it easier for you to communicate your own opinions to them.

4 ENCOURAGE THE USE OF "I" STATEMENTS

If a child finds themselves in a disagreement with someone, it can be useful to encourage them to use "I" statements during the discussion. Framing their thoughts and feelings using statements like "I feel ..." or "I think ..." can help them avoid an accusatory tone and encourages them to take responsibility for their own emotions.

5 FOCUS ON BEHAVIOUR, NOT CHARACTER

When disagreements happen, encourage children to focus on critiquing and addressing the specific actions or behaviours that caused this upset, rather than attacking the person's character. For example, "I didn't like how you interrupted me" is better than "You're so rude". This can help children avoid hurting someone's feelings, which is likely to inflame the situation.

6 STAY CALM AND TAKE BREAKS

It's perfectly normal to feel upset during a disagreement – especially if it's getting heated. Remind children that if they feel overwhelmed, they should try to take deep breaths or even go for a short break to help them stay composed. If a conversation becomes too intense, remind them it's OK to suggest continuing it later or in a different setting. This can prevent things getting out of hand, allowing cooler heads to prevail.

7 START CONVERSATIONS ABOUT RESPECT

Talk openly to children about what respect means – to you and to them. Discuss how they might show respect to each other, to friends, to strangers and even to people we might disagree with. You could use examples of considerate or inconsiderate behaviour in books, films or TV to open discussions about the importance of giving others due regard.

8 SEEK COMMON GROUND

When a disagreement has occurred between children, they may find it hard to move past it. You can support them in finding a more positive way forward by helping identify areas of agreement or common ground with the other party. This can help to build bridges between differing opinions and foster a more cooperative atmosphere, as well as preventing those involved from demonising each other.

9 AVOID MAKING THINGS PERSONAL

It's important that we make it clear to children they must avoid name-calling, swearing or derogatory remarks in a disagreement with others. Respectful language sets a positive tone and helps keep the conversation productive. Reminding children to stay calm and take breaks – as mentioned previously – can help them avoid getting too emotional and saying or doing something hurtful.

10 REFLECT AND LEARN

After a child has had a disagreement, encourage them to reflect on the experience and think about what they can learn from it. What did they handle well? How might they improve their communication skills to handle conflicts more effectively in the future? You could use role play, writing and drawing pictures, or hypothetical examples to further develop their skills in showing respect during a disagreement.

Meet Our Expert

The Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) co-ordinate Anti-Bullying Week each year. ABA is a unique coalition of organisations and individuals, working together to achieve their vision to stop bullying and create safer environments in which children and young people can live, grow, play and learn. They welcome membership from any organisation or individual that supports this vision and support a free network of thousands of schools and colleges.



Source: See full reference list on guide page at:



ANDY MACNAE MP'S
**CHRISTMAS
CARD**
COMPETITION

DUE: MONDAY 2ND DECEMBER

Winning entries will be signed by the Speaker of the House of Commons,
sent to the competition winner and displayed in Speaker's House.

Submissions via email or
post

Email:
andy.macnae.mp
@parliament.uk

Post:
572 Bacup
Road
Waterfoot
Rossendale
BB4 7HB