



### **Dear Parents and Carers**

What a busy week! Year six children had a fantastic time in London and I loved seeing all the pictures posted on our school X (twitter) feed. A huge thank you to the staff who went on the residential; it is quite a responsibility taking so many children to London for three days and the trips like this would not happen without them volunteering to go. They said the children were fantastically well behaved and that is great to hear.

Thank you also to parents for the wonderful costumes on World Book Day. The children really enjoy the day and it contributes to promoting a positive culture around reading. The wooden spoon characters are a delight and show what creative families we have!

### **Sport Relief/Red Nose Day**

Next Friday, the 15<sup>th</sup> March is Red Nose Day. On the day the children can all come in wearing non-uniform if they want to and do something crazy with their hair!

Children will be able to buy a biscuit with a red nose on at break time for 50p.

In the afternoon, we hold the Exe Factor, which is a talent show and children who have made it through the auditions, will know they are performing. Parents of children who are performing, are welcome to attend. Sadly there is no room in the hall for more than that as the children all watch.

### **Staffing**

It seems as if every week, there is another staffing announcement! This time it is about Mrs Williams, who currently works with Year 5. Mrs Williams has decided to retire after working at the school since 1996. She started working at Summerway School and then joined Willowbrook when Summerway joined with Beacon Heath First School. I would like to thank her for her dedication to the children over the last 28 years and wish her a long and happy retirement. Mrs Williams will leave at the end of the spring term.

### **Exciting Offer**

We have been offered some free child tickets for Exeter Chief's women's team on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> March for a game at Sandy Park. If you would like to have some of the tickets, please call at the school office. You will need to purchase an adult ticket from the Sandy Park website at a cost of £11 a ticket. They will be given on a first come first served basis with maximum of two tickets per family.

### **School Dinners**

As we are approaching financial year end, please remember to keep your balance topped up. Moving forwards, from 1<sup>st</sup> April, all dinners will need to be paid for online and we will be unable to accept cash.

### **Numbots**

A special shout out to **Elliot W and Oliver D (both 2MT)** as they have both completed their Numbots stories this week! Well done both of you.

8th March 2024

| Monday  | Tuesday   | Wednesday  | Thursday                               | Friday                                  |
|---|---|--|--|---|
| Main Meal                                       | Main Meal   | Main Meal  | Main Meal                              | Main Meal                               |
| Macaroni Cheese with Focaccia Bread and Peas    | Sausage, Mash, Sweetcorn and Gravy                      | Roast Turkey, Roast Potatoes, Fresh Veg Medley           | Pepperoni Pizza with Wedges and Salad  | Chicken Bites, Chips and Baked Beans    |
| Vegetarian Option                               | Vegetarian Option                                       | Vegetarian Option  | Vegetarian Option                      | Vegetarian Option                       |
| Sweet Potato and Butternut Korma, Rice and Peas | Tomato and Cheese Gnocchi, Focaccia Bread and Sweetcorn | Roasted Veg Wellington, Roast Potatoes, Fresh Veg Medley | Margherita Pizza with Wedges and Salad | 5 Bean Enchilada, Chips and Baked Beans |
| Jacket Potato                                   | Jacket Potato   | Jacket Potato  | Jacket Potato                          | Jacket Potato                           |
| With Cheese / Beans / Tuna Mayo                 | With Cheese / Beans / Tuna Mayo                         | With Cheese / Beans / Tuna Mayo                          | With Cheese / Beans / Tuna Mayo        | With Cheese / Beans / Tuna Mayo         |
| Dessert   | Dessert   | Dessert  | Dessert                                | Dessert                                 |
| Cake Or Fresh Fruit/Yogurt                      | Flapjack Or Fresh Fruit/Yogurt                          | Ice Cream Pot Or Fresh Fruit/Yogurt                      | Cake Or Fresh Fruit/Yogurt             | Cookie Or Fresh Fruit/Yogurt            |

At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit [nationalcollege.com](https://nationalcollege.com).

# 10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators PROMOTING STORYTIME

Being read to regularly can help the under-fives in acquiring literacy; teaches them the value of books and stories; and sparks their imagination and curiosity. Reading to babies, meanwhile, provides the building blocks of language development and the beginnings of social and emotional skills. Here are our top tips for helping children discover the wonder of stories.

## 1 BE A READING ROLE MODEL

Children thrive on copying the behaviours of adults around them, so it's vital to model regular reading habits. If your child sees you reading, they're likely to copy you. Reading on a screen could be misinterpreted by a child as a different activity, so a printed book is preferable.

## 2 JOIN A LIBRARY

Local libraries are a cost-effective way of introducing your child to new books. Libraries often host free events to build engagement with reading. Librarians can recommend books based on age, interests, genre or author. Having their own library card and choosing their next read can be exciting for little ones.

## 3 TAKE IT IN TURNS

Taking turns to read and turn the pages can build your child's confidence and lets you model what's expected. For younger ones, reading doesn't have to mean the exact words on the page – they might prefer their own version! Reading to different audiences is useful: toddlers are excellent listeners!

## 4 CATER TO THEIR INTERESTS

Like adults, children tend to favour books with themes they're interested in. If they're less keen to move away from their preferred subject matter, you could vary the type of book they read by swapping between fiction and non-fiction. There'll be plenty of scope to diversify as they grow up.

## 5 BUILD READING INTO YOUR DAILY ROUTINE

Building reading into your daily routine will have a positive impact. Just before bedtime is ideal for many families, helping settle the child to sleep. The adult usually reads the story, but children enjoy more interactivity as they get older. It can be handy to have books with you when out and about.

## 6 USE PICTURES AND PROPS

Most children's books contain beautiful illustrations which enrich the text. Spend time discussing these with your child and pointing things out. As well as doing voices for different characters and making any relevant noises, you could also enhance story time with props such as toys or puppets.

## 7 RELISH THE LANGUAGE

The language in children's books is varied and rich; sometimes they might include words children are less familiar with, so you can take the opportunity to explain what they mean. With younger children, you could try paraphrasing certain sentences afterwards to help with understanding.

## 8 A COMFORTABLE ENVIRONMENT

Where possible, read to your child in an environment that's free from distractions. This helps children to get fully immersed in the experience, supporting their concentration and engagement. Doing this often can help to build up the child's ability to focus for greater lengths of time.

## 9 TAKE REGULAR BREAKS

Although reading can be hugely enjoyable, children can sometimes struggle to sit for long periods or to engage with texts fully. Have regular breaks: reading a few pages is better than none. You could also have some movement breaks – there's no particular 'right' or 'wrong' way to enjoy a story.

## 10 RE-READ FAVOURITES

Most children have certain stories that they love hearing again and again. This repetition lets them become familiar with language patterns and more engaged by feeling able to join in. Choosing other books by your child's preferred author can help them to discover new favourites.

## Meet Our Expert

Kara Kiernan has worked in senior leadership positions (both in the UK and internationally) for 15 years, supported by an MEd in Educational Leadership. As an educational consultant, she now delivers training for groups of organisations – notably on TWS practice and child development. Previously, Kara was head of a nursery and junior school and has also been a director of early years.



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Source: <https://literacytrust.org.uk/blog/reading-children-to-powerful-to-simple-and-yet-so-mundane-stories/> | <https://cdn.booktrust.org.uk/globalassets/resources/research/benefits-of-reading-booktrust-2023.pdf> | <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-1189898/reading-to-your-children.html>

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