

# Sharing Stories

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## The Incredible Book Eating Bus

**Thursday 27th October was a very special day for us in West Winds Primary; we opened our new school library!**

If you've driven along the Comber Road these last months, you will have seen the arrival of a double decker bus into our school playground at the start of the summer holidays. As part of our 50th anniversary celebrations we wanted to take on a project that would celebrate what had gone before and that would set us up for the next 50 years. So, in January 2022, we bought an old double decker bus with the aim of converting it into an exciting, engaging space for a school library. Since then, parents, staff, community and the odd child have cleaned, scraped, cut and built so that we now have completed our project. We're delighted that multi-million selling, Belfast-born artist and storyteller, Oliver Jeffers, has provided the artwork for the bus, whose story 'The Incredible Book Eating Boy' provided the inspiration for the name of our new library.



But throughout the project, the vision was always that the bus would be more than just a school library - it would be a hub for promoting literacy and learning within our whole community. To that end, we're looking forward to seeing how this develops in the coming months as we work with other local partners to support literacy and learning with pre-schoolers, parents and the wider community.

We really want to say thank you to everyone who has supported the project over this last year. It has been a mammoth effort and it wouldn't have happened where it not for the support provided by so many friends, parents and community.



**"The picture books tend to be more about just the joy of telling stories."**

**Oliver Jeffers**





# West Winds Winners!

**'Winning is being better today than you were yesterday. Every Day.'**

**This year we're focusing on being better today than we were yesterday...everyday! We're using this idea to encourage the children to compete against themselves, to challenge themselves and to focus on how they can improve and make progress. We talk about this during the week in school and, on Fridays Mr Manogue gives out certificates to our 'West Winds Winners' who have demonstrated that attitude during the previous week.**

At the start of October, we had a very special visitor come to assembly to help us launch this new focus - Barry McClements.

Barry is a past pupil, having left West Winds ten years ago. He now is a professional para-athlete and has begun to experience real success at international level. He won a bronze medal at the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham, at the 100 m backstroke S9 event, becoming the first Northern Irish medallist in swimming at the Commonwealth Games.

We are so proud of Barry and all that he has achieved - and it goes to show what hard work and

perseverance can do! He was the perfect person to talk to our children about winning - that process by which you improve, so that you are better today, than you were yesterday. Whether in swimming or sport, or learning or in school, that's the attitude we want our children to have and to leave West Winds with.

**#WestWindsWinners**



## Friendly Faces...

We are delighted to introduce you to Patricia Kay, our current P6 teacher.

**Name:** Patricia Kay

**Hometown:** Newtownards

**Hobbies:** Reading, buying shoes and paddleboarding

**Favourite Food:** Anything Italian, Pizza, Spaghetti & Lasagne

**Pets:** I practically own a zoo - we have 2 cats, 2 dogs, 2 guinea pigs, a snake (I'm scared of it) and a crested gecko.

**Favourite thing about West Winds Primary:** The children and especially my class - they are the kindest, funniest and best behaved boys and girls. (I suppose the staff are okay too!)

**Proudest Moment:** Graduating from Coleraine University and becoming a teacher!





# A day in the life...

**One of the best things about our 50 Years celebrations over the last 9 months has been hearing stories from former pupils and staff about what West Winds was like in their day. Lots of things have remained the same, but many people commented on how 'school is so different now, than it used to be'.**

So, as new families begin to think about choosing West Winds for their children in Nursery and P1 a 2023, we wanted to give you a flavour of what 'A day in the life of West Winds' looks like.

The day starts at 8:15am, with Mrs Evans and our breakfast club. Children can come and have a healthy breakfast and play with friends before school starts at 8:45am.

Once registration happens, classes start into their lessons. In West Winds we are always innovating in order that our children would have the best opportunity to learn and make progress - this year we are introducing a new phonics and reading scheme and are implementing new approaches to help with mental maths. We offer lots of opportunities for additional support through our full-time learning support teacher, our post-primary transfer preparation, small groups and our counsellor and play therapist.

Playtime happens outside, if at all possible, with each class having their own dedicated outdoor play space and access to sports equipment. Lessons continue after

break with further opportunities for learning outside at our outdoor science and learning hub or school vegetable garden or inside in the ICT suite or our brand-new school library.

School dinners are made fresh on site each day and all children eat together in our massive assembly hall, which doubles as a canteen.

At the end of the school day, there lots of after-school clubs to choose, from music and choir, to sports like football, netball and hockey, to board games or gardening. For parents and community there are chances to get involved in parent workshops, community groups or our PTA, Friends of West Winds. We are a busy little school, but with a warm atmosphere and a strong emphasis on nurturing children so that they reach their full potential. That much has remained unchanged over the years. We love to show what we've been up to on our social media channels - Facebook and Instagram

If you are considering West Winds for your child, please come along to our Enrolment Open Day (**Wednesday 7th December - 1:30pm**), or come to visit our school (contact the office to arrange a visit) or visit the enrolment page of our school website, [www.westwindsprimary.co.uk/new-pupils](http://www.westwindsprimary.co.uk/new-pupils) to find out more.

We look forward to welcoming more families to join us and play their part in making the memories of the next 50 years.

## Shaping Tomorrow's Nature-Keeper's at Queen's University

**Over the course of the last year, pupils at West Winds Primary have been working with Queen's University Belfast, in collaboration with a Royal Society Partnership grant, on a sustainability project. Our pupils have been exploring biodiversity through projects including the creation of a wildlife zone, a wildflower meadow and the creation of a small woodland.**

With the assistance of Professor Mark Emmerson from the School of Biology at Queen's and STEM partner, and the University's gardening team, our pupils have embarked on a journey to learn about the natural world and how to look after it.

On Friday the 22nd October, our entire school, staff and pupils, visited Queen's and took part in a number of biodiversity workshops in partnership with Ulster Museum, Belfast City Council Botanic Gardens, Conservation Volunteers, Wildflower Alley and St. Mary's University College. Our pupils shared their experiences of being part of the project and what

they have learnt and how it has helped them to think more about nature and their environment.

As part of the biodiversity study, our pupils have been engaged with local artist, Ed Reynolds, to create artworks on the theme of nature and wildlife.

The artwork that the pupils developed has been made into an 8 x 8-foot mural by Ed Reynolds and was unveiled in the main Black and White Hall at Queen's University today with Deputy Lord Mayor of Belfast, Cllr Michelle Kelly, Michael Alcorn from Queen's University, Mark Emmerson, Queen's University and STEM partner and our own Principal, Niall Manogue.



# West Winds turns 50!

This year was a very special year - our school celebrated its 50th birthday. Over the last year we have celebrated in style with open nights for past pupils and staff, lots of events in and around the estate and even put on a whole school production showing West Winds through the ages! We have had a great time celebrating the last 50 years and are excited about what the future holds for our school.



## Get in touch:

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