

Sharing Stories

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Books, books, books!

Here at West Winds Primary, we know how important it is to foster a love of reading within each one of our pupils. That's why we take every opportunity to explore reading across all levels, allowing pupils to engage with books that allow them to become better readers and better learners. And of course, there is no better place to explore reading than on our Incredible Book Eating Bus.

This term, we were very lucky to welcome a special visitor into our school. Polly Ho-Yen is a celebrated children's author who used to be a primary school teacher. She has written books such as *Boy in the Tower*, *Where Monsters Lie* and *How I Saved the World in a Week*.

Polly spoke with our pupils about how she was inspired to write her books and was able to share some encouragement about how they could start writing their own stories, too. Polly then gave a masterclass in illustration, showing our pupils how they can illustrate their stories using artistic techniques. Thank you to the EA Library Service and the Book Trust NI for helping us to arrange the visit.

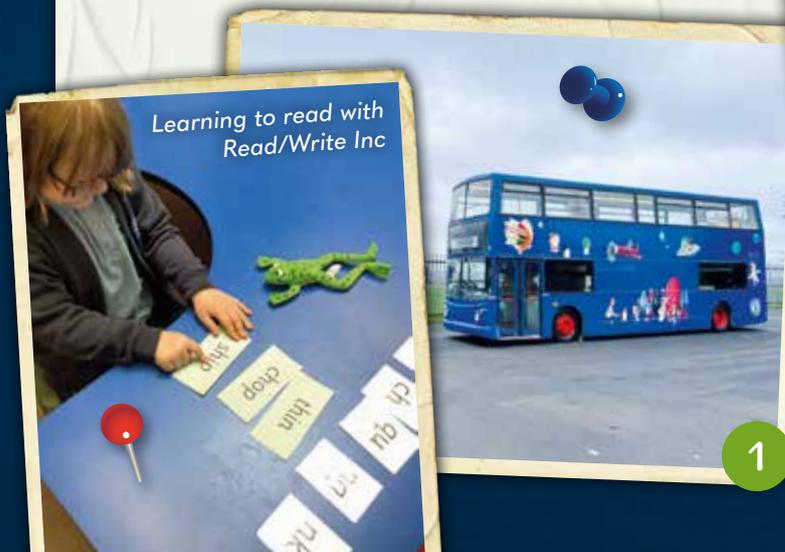
To nurture reading skills in KS1, we have also been implementing a new reading & phonics scheme called Read/Write Inc.

Read Write Inc is a programme which helps all children learn to read fluently and build their confidence reading independently. It helps to develop their skills in comprehension, builds vocabulary and allows them to work on their spelling ability. Our pupils have been making such incredible progress with the programme so far and it's wonderful to see.



Dorothy, one of our Time to Read volunteers with her P5 readers

We know that reading can be more fun when you get to do it with others, so we're delighted to welcome reading volunteers who come and read with our children through the Time to Read programme.



Learning to read with Read/Write Inc



A Bridge to France

Last term, our Primary six class had been working in conjunction with the British Council and W5 on a very exciting project. The cross-curricular project focused on broadening horizons, learning about different countries and using STEM techniques to do some hands-on learning.

To start, our P6 class had to apply to take part in the project and much to their excitement, the application was successful. Over the weeks that followed, the class took part in multiple zoom sessions that focused on French culture and language – even connecting with a teacher that lived in France.

Following this, W5 visited the class in school to deliver a string of workshops focusing on bridges and the science that keeps them standing. P6 were then set the challenge of designing and building their own bridge using a selection of materials provided by W5. The bridges were then to be displayed and tested as part of a showcase in Belfast. The class worked tirelessly over the following weeks, trying to make their bridges as strong as possible.

P6 then brought their bridges to W5 to take part in the showcase. The competition was stiff, as there were a lot of other schools there. Unfortunately, our bridge did not stand up to the tests, but everyone involved agreed that it was a fantastic experience and loved taking part. Well done, P6!



Staff Spotlight...



We are delighted to introduce you to Miss Carson, our current P1 teacher and Vice Principal.

Name: Miss Carson

Hometown: Bangor

Hobbies: Book club (and wine), going out for a walk, going out with friends

Favourite Food: Roast Beef Sunday dinner

Favourite TV Show: In for a Penny

Proudest Moment: Completing the 26 mile Edinburgh Moon Walk for Action Cancer in just over 6 hours, which was my target!



A day in the life of Nursery

We've had a Nursery Unit as part of our school since 1999 offering full-time Nursery learning to children in their pre-school year. It's an important part of our school community, setting our young children off on their first step on their journey into education. With 26 three and four year olds, there's no typical day, but we thought we'd give you a glimpse of a day in the life of our Nursery Unit in West Winds.



8.45am

Start our morning with a big smile or hug from Miss Ferris as we find our name symbol and hang up our coat. We choose to play with the items that are set out for us until our first circle time.

9.30am

We say Good Morning in circle time, chat about the weather, share any news and learn our Makaton symbol for the day.

9.45am

We begin our morning group sessions, doing activities linked to our learning topics.

10.00am

We have a healthy and nutritious snack together – some of us help Miss Murray get the snack and table ready. After snack we can go to the free play areas; we might play with small world, sand, water or playdough, the book corner or construction and creative tables.

10.45am

We tidy up before heading outside to play in the Nursery Garden – we look at the weather and decide what the best clothes to wear are. Afterwards we come inside for a story and get ourselves ready for lunch. Sometimes, during the week, we'll visit the school assembly hall to play games or go and listen to stories on our Double Decker Library Bus.

12.00pm

At lunch time we all sit together around the table having either a packed lunch, or a cooked lunch from our school canteen. We enjoy filling our tummies and help our adults serve the food to each other.

12.45pm

Depending on the weather, we play tabletop games or go outside again until our adults come to pick us up.

1.15pm

We go home, exhausted after a busy morning in Nursery!

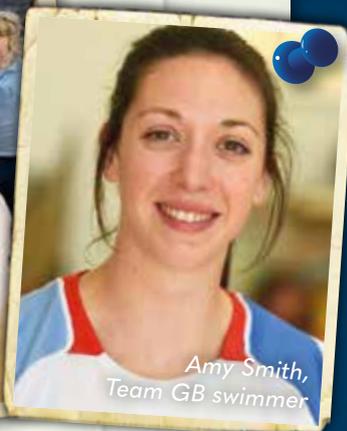
Sports for Schools

We were delighted to welcome Amy Smyth, a Team GB Olympian to visit West Winds Primary on March 23rd. Amy led the boys and girls through a series of sports and circuits exercises before taking an assembly for the whole school.

The pupils got sponsored to take part in the exercises and we were delighted to raise just over £1400! Amy spoke powerfully to the children during assembly, sharing her story of how she developed from a girl who was afraid of the water to a medal-winning, international Olympian. She encouraged us to be resilient, work hard and keep going.

We are using some of the sponsorship money raised to buy new sports equipment and playground games to encourage our children to have fun and be active at lunchtime. This week the School Council had the tricky job of searching through catalogues and choosing what to buy!

A massive thank you to everyone in the community who supported the event and helped us raise such a great amount of money.



Get in touch:

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