

# Yorke Mead School

## Newsletter



Friday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2023

### *This week at Yorke Mead!*

Welcome to our Early Years!  
What a fabulous first full week.



### *Dates for the diary*

This week	This Month	Next Month
<p><b>Fri 22<sup>nd</sup> September</b> – Jeans for Genes Day Freddie's Doughnut Day <b>Sat 23<sup>rd</sup> September</b> - FOYM Welcome Picnic EYFS</p>		<p>Black History Month ADHD Awareness Month <b>Mon 9<sup>th</sup> October</b> School nurse to see Year 6 <b>w/b 2<sup>nd</sup> October</b> Parent consultation week with SENDCo <b>w/b 9<sup>th</sup> October</b> Parent consultation week</p>

# A quiet Yorke Mead week!



Last week in the diary I told you we would have a 'quiet Yorke Mead week' – how wrong was I! As you know Ofsted have visited us this week. I want to say a huge 'Thank you' to all of you who completed the online questionnaire. It was so helpful for the Ofsted Inspector to see your wonderful comments. We await the outcome of the visit, but as you were informed, this visit was one that could not immediately influence the grading. It was a positive experience, and your children did exactly what they always do; they shone brightly! Thank you.

## Learning Next Week

<b>Nursery – Acorns</b> <b>Focus:</b> All about Acorns! Talking about 'people who help us' at school and creating a class 'helping hand'. Learning names of teachers and friends. Continuing to learn, how to use all areas of our indoor and outdoor environment. Singing nursery rhymes and sharing stories.		<b>Reception – Lime &amp; Willow</b> <b>Focus:</b> 'All about me' topic. Children will share their 'all about me' bags with the class and talk about who is in their family. Phonics: learning sounds i, n, m, d. We will also learn how to form these letters. Maths: subitising 1-5, using dice patterns and random patterns. Drawing pictures of family. Writing own name and listening for initial sounds of other names. Singing nursery rhymes. Baseline assessments.
<b>Year 1 – Elder &amp; Silver Birch</b>  <b>English:</b> letter writing <b>Phonics &amp; spelling:</b> revision: ee ow ai th <b>Maths:</b> the language of comparison: less, fewer, more, equal etc <b>Science:</b> ask questions and suggest ways of answering them <b>Topic:</b> using our senses to explore different types of bread <b>P4C/Growth Mindset:</b> The Yorke Mead Way in action	<b>Year 2 – Cedar &amp; Horse Chestnut</b>  <b>English:</b> The Magic School Bus on the Ocean Floor - Planning our own adventure story. <b>Phonics &amp; spelling:</b> Revising all graphemes learnt for the 'ai' sound. <b>Maths:</b> Think 10 addition and subtraction <b>Science:</b> Animal groups and characteristics <b>Topic:</b> Appraising Monet/Continents and oceans <b>P4C/Growth Mindset:</b> Listen to other people and contribute our own ideas about rewards and consequences.	<b>Year 3 – Laurel &amp; Sycamore</b>  <b>English:</b> Fables - 'War and Peas' <b>Phonics &amp; spelling:</b> long 'e' <b>Maths:</b> counting on and back <b>Science:</b> Nutritional value of foods <b>Topic:</b> composition of Arcimboldo inspired self portraits /How do religions traditionally celebrate festivals <b>P4C/Growth Mindset:</b> understand why rules are needed and how they relate to rights and responsibilities
<b>Year 4 – Maple &amp; Pine</b>  <b>English:</b> The Secret of Black Rock - using repetition and personification <b>Phonics &amp; spelling:</b> 'er' sound made with 'ir', 'ur', 'ear', 'er' and 'or' <b>Maths:</b> Estimating place value and rounding to the nearest 10 <b>Science:</b> Venn and Carroll diagram <b>Topic:</b> Using artefacts to understand the past <b>P4C/Growth Mindset:</b> Who is in our school community and what roles do they play?	<b>Year 5 – Ash &amp; Rowan</b>  <b>English:</b> Information text (How to be a World Explorer) <b>Phonics &amp; spelling:</b> plurals adding s/es <b>Maths:</b> Place Value <b>Science:</b> Movement of the earth and the planets <b>Topic:</b> Climates of South America compared to the rest of the world/ Art - Understanding proportion <b>P4C/Growth Mindset:</b> Rights and responsibilities	<b>Year 6 – Red Oak and White Oak</b>  <b>English:</b> Ice trap Exploring sentence types <b>Phonics &amp; spelling:</b> Homophones <b>Maths:</b> Place value – efficient mental strategies <b>Science:</b> The circulatory system – blood vessels <b>Topic:</b> geography: where do natural disasters happen and why are they caused? <b>P4C/Growth Mindset:</b> Embedding Year 6

# Freddie's Doughnut Day



Many of you will remember Freddie. Freddie's life was cut too short as a result of a rhabdomyosarcoma tumour. Freddie would have been part of our Year 6 class now – he would have been an eco-champion, determined to protect the environment for his beloved animals – notably snow leopards and rabbits! On Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> we will also be supporting Freddie's Arc, a charity focused on research into treatment of tumours in children. Doughnuts will be sold for a donation of around £1 each and the year 6 children will be organising the sale. More details will follow next week!

# Are you following the correct year groups on X (formerly known as Twitter)?



Adults in school are 'Tweeting' (not sure what we should call it now!) regularly to share with you some of the activities your children enjoy in school. Many of you may still be following the Twitter pages from last year – remember to also follow your child's current year group. There are also many activities posted on the school feed and the sports feed you may wish to follow.

Here are the handles to help you find the correct pages!

@YorkeMead  
@SportYorkeMead  
@ecoyorkemead

@NYorkeMead  
@RYorkeMead  
@1YorkeMead  
@2YorkeMead

@3YorkeMead  
@4YorkeMead  
@5YorkeMead  
@6YorkeMead

## Jeans for Genes Day



On Jeans for Genes Day (22<sup>nd</sup> September) we wear our school uniform top and jeans/denim bottoms with trainers in exchange for a small donation for genetic research. This is an important day for Henry (Y4) and his family who are impacted by a very rare genetic condition. We hope you will all support this important event.

## The Yorke Mead Way

### How does Mindful Breathing help us?



We complete a short Mindfulness/Mindful Breathing activity three times a day. These sessions are completed at the start of the day and after breaks to help the children get their minds settled and ready for their learning.

We also teach the children the value of breathing to calm their emotions when they have 'flipped their lid' and their amygdala is in charge. This helps the mind to calm, the emotions to settle, helping children with anxiety, frustration, anger, over excitement and feeling very sad. This is a useful strategy and one



that will help your children throughout their lives.



# Road Safety Update

As you will know one of our children was involved in an accident outside the school last week. I know that many parents have expressed concern around the parking and the road outside of school. I have taken this matter up with Hertfordshire County Council and our local councillors to address this. I know that Councillor Chris Lloyd has started work on our behalf and I will keep you posted on the outcomes of any meetings we have. Until then, please park safely and considerately if you must drive; if you can walk, please do!



# Helmets



Please can I advise parents of the importance of helmets when cycling or riding a scooter. I have seen first-hand how significant an injury can be when someone comes off these and we have children in school who have fallen off and hurt themselves. Mostly, I appreciate, children hurt knees and elbows – however, even a small bang to the head can result in serious injury or even worse. Please don't take a risk.

We expect helmets to be worn if travelling to school on a bike or scooter. Please also remember that no one should ride a scooter or bike past the scooter/bike shelters and not on the playground. This includes the smallest children and toddlers too. Thank you!

# Teaching Spellings



In the past year we have given much thought to the teaching of spelling and, based on research, a key decision we have taken is to spend more time 'teaching' spelling rules and patterns and less time 'testing' these. The reality is that so many children are learning the spellings for the test each week and then simply forgetting these as they move onto the next pattern.

The new approach does not mean that we won't be checking your children's learning in spelling; we will be doing this through formative assessment activities throughout the week.

We will also do a 'formal' spelling test at the end of each half

term (the results of which will be shared with you) so that we can see how well the spelling patterns are being retained and remembered. We will still send home lists of words that match the focus of the spelling pattern and phonics being covered in school each week to help parents in supporting their children's learning so that you can still be involved in the spelling.

The primary curriculum is incredibly full, and we are conscious that we must maximise the time for teaching. Losing the pre-test and spelling test we envisage will give at least another 40mins a week to spend on teaching spellings – I am sure you all agree that teaching has to be better than testing ... *measuring children in isolation does not make them grow!* It remains extremely important that parents are helping their children at home ... not so they do well on a weekly spelling test; so your children develop into people who can spell well!



There are a number of articles you can read linked to this idea – here is one I found both interesting and a quick, easy read: <https://www.nafp.org.uk/articles/13-does-a-weekly-spelling-test-improve-yur-spelling>

# School Games Mark

Yorke Mead Achieves Gold again!

We are delighted to announce that Yorke Mead School has achieved the School Games GOLD Mark Award for the 2022/23 academic year.

The School Games Mark is a Government-led award scheme facilitated by the Youth Sport Trust to reward schools for their commitment to the development of competition across their school and into the community, and we are delighted to have been recognised for our success.

We are extremely proud of our pupils for their dedication to all aspects of school sport, including those young volunteers, leaders and officials who made our competitions possible. As part of our application, we were asked to fulfil criteria in the areas of participation, competition, workforce and clubs, and we are pleased that the hard work of everyone at our school has been rewarded this year.

We look forward to applying once again in 2024!



## *Letters sent out this week.*

Autumn Term Clubs  
'All About Me' Bags - Reception

*Lucille Pollard*

Head teacher