Whinney Banks Primary School Autumn 1 Newsletter 2026

Be Brave, Be Kind, Be Strong, Be Proud, Aim High

Dear Parents and Carers, it has been great to see so many of you in school for our performances, events and parent/carer consultation evenings to discuss your child's progress. It has been a productive half term in school - everyone has worked very hard. Thank you, as always, for your continued support. We look forward to welcoming everyone back after the break for an exciting half term ahead.

A very big thank you to all parents and carers who attended our OPAL parent and carer events. It was fantastic to see so many of you joining us! Our children were excited to share their play with you, and much fun was had by all!







Year 3 Teesmouth Field Centre visit

Year 3 enjoyed a fantastic, interesting and informative 'Rocks and Fossils' visit to Teesmouth Field Centre where they studied coastal environments through a variety of fun activities.











Year 2 Animal Encounters

Linking to their English learning and leading to writing a non-fiction report about nocturnal animals, Year 2 experienced an exciting visit from Animal Encounters, where they were able to find out more about the animals and hold them too! This also led into their Y3 assembly. Thank you to all those parents and carers who attended.



SPORTING NEWS!

Congratulations to our girls Y5 and Y6 rugby team who, after competing against schools across the Tees Valley area and winning the Middlesbrough finals, went on to win the Tees Valley Finals!

Huge congratulations are also due to our Y5 and Y6 girls Football team who not only won the Tees Valley Finals but will now go on to represent Cleveland in the North of England Finals – Good luck Whinney Banks!

LONDON RESIDENTIAL

Many pupils from Y6 spent an exciting and eventful two days and one night in London, enjoying a trip to a West End theatre to watch Matilda, a Thames boat cruise, a ride on the London Eye and visits to the Natural History Museum. We also had a memorable visit to the Houses of Parliament.









SAVE THE DATE!

NOVEMBER:

Thursday 5th and Friday 6th: **Book Fair**

Thursday 12th: **Whole School Photos**

Thursday 19th: **Y6MB CCI Science site visit**

DECEMBER

Friday 4th: **Christingle performance for parents at St Martins Church at 10am**

Tuesday 8th and Wednesday 9th**: Y1 and Y2 Christmas performance at 1.30pm**

Wednesday 9th and Thursday 10th: **Y5 and Y6 Christmas performances at 6.30pm or 4pm**

Friday 11th: **Reception Christmas performance at 1.30pm**

Wednesday 16th**: Nursery Christmas performances**



Remember to visit our school Book Fair!!

The book fair will be held in the lower hall and will be open to parents and carers from 3pm until 4pm on THURSDAY 5th and FRIDAY 6th November.
You may bring your child/children from school after 3.10pm.
Please use the Nursery entrance.

Buying books:
An on-line payment system is available for parents to pay by card/phone via a QR code scan at the fair, also via our Scholastic app.

PLEASE NOTE; WE WILL NOT BE ACCEPTING CASH PAYMENTS.

As most of our parents and carers will be aware, our children are thoroughly enjoying and benefitting from our newly adopted Outdoor Play and Learning…
As we improve play opportunities for your children, you may find that we ask you for resources and that we make changes to how the children use the school grounds. They may use more of the grounds, for more of the year. Your children may get a bit messier, be exposed to more challenges and have greater freedoms to play where, with whom and how they like. The experiences the school is fostering are essential for children's physical and mental wellbeing and are in line with all current good practice advice on health and safety, wellbeing and development.

Please ensure your child has a warm coat and a change of footwear e.g. wellingtons or old trainers which can be left in school.

If you would like to learn more about the OPAL Primary Programme, please have a look at the OPAL website (www.outdoorplayandlearning.org.uk), where you will find lots of useful information and several videos about the programme.









Sponsored Bounce!

On Thursday 5th November we will be holding a sponsored bounce in years Reception through to Year 6 to raise funds to buy new OPAL playtime equipment. Sponsor forms will be sent home with your child, and any donations will be very much appreciated.



Parent Event

On Wednesday 11th November Gary Wilson, an expert in raising boys' achievement, will be sharing his experience in an inspiring session open to all parents and carers. Please come to the lower school hall (enter through the Nursery entrance) for 1.30pm. We hope to see you there for this exciting opportunity.

Parents and carers of Nursery, Reception, and Years 1 and 2 children are warmly invited to attend our Early Reading and Phonics Coffee Morning and Parent/Carer event.

Thursday 5th November in the lower school hall

Find out more about how we teach phonics, and how children progress to becoming confident readers.

You will also have the chance to visit your child in their classroom to observe a lesson in action and to get involved in some activities alongside your child.

We look forward to welcoming you on the day.

2026/2027 TERM DATES

Autumn term 1: Tuesday 1st September to Friday 23rd October 2026.
October half term holiday: Monday 26th October to Friday 30 October 2026
Autumn term 2: Monday 2nd November to Friday 18th December 2026
Christmas holiday: Monday 21st December 2027 to Friday 1st January 2027
Spring term 1: Monday 4th January to Friday 12th February
February half term holiday: Monday 15th to Friday 19th February
Spring term 2: Monday 22nd February to Thursday 25th March
Easter holiday: Friday 26th March to Friday 9th April
Summer term 1: Monday 12th April to Friday 28th May
May half term holiday: Monday 31st May to Friday 4th June
Summer term 2: Monday 7th June to Friday 16th July

PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING P.D DAYS:

Tue1st and Wed 2nd September 2026
Monday 19th July 2027
Tuesday 20th July 2027
Wednesday 21st July 2027

Arbor

All our school communications, payments, and key information are made through Arbor.

If you haven't done so already, please kindly download the app and activate your account to ensure you receive important school communications. When setting up the app, please ensure you allow 'notifications'.

Please contact the school office if you encounter any problems.

Christmas Party Dates

- Monday 14th December **Reception and Year 3**
- Tuesday 15th **Year 2 and Year 5**
- Wednesday 16th **Year 1 and Year 4**
- Thursday 17th **Nursery and Year 6**

ATTENDANCE

Our average, whole school attendance so far this year is 93.7%

A special mention goes to Mr Bell's class who have the best overall attendance so far!

Reporting an absence should be made via a message on Arbor or by leaving a message on the answerphone before 9am.

A reminder that our doors open at 8.30am, when children are invited into school. The doors are closed at 8.40am and the register is taken, this is the start of the school day. Any child arriving after this time must be accompanied by their adult to sign in through the office.

USEFUL LINKS;

For more updates and useful information please visit our website, whinneybanks.org.uk and follow us on X/twitter,@Banks Primary or on Facebook.

email, office@whinneybanks.org.uk,

phone number, 01642 817713

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