



WEST THORNTON

PRIMARY SCHOOL

West Thornton Weekly Newsletter

30th January 2026

It's been a busy week at West Thornton! Year 1 on both sites took an exciting trip to the Natural History Museum to further enhance their knowledge around classifying animals. They had a fantastic time and were beautifully behaved on public transport, modelling our school values.

We've also had Year 6 SATs Workshops led on both sites to support children and their parents/carers with tackling the Reading paper - thank you for all that attended. If you were unable to, but would like the resources shared with you, please speak to your child's class teacher who will be happy to support with this.

The high achievement of our disadvantaged pupils is recognised nationally

We are proud to announce that we have been recognised by the UK Government for the outstanding achievement of our disadvantaged pupils.

On Friday 23 January, Headteachers Mrs Callaghan and Mrs Dennis received a letter from the Rt Hon Bridget Phillipson, the Secretary of State for Education, for the outstanding achievements of our disadvantaged pupils at the end of the 2024/25 academic year.

The letter of congratulations confirms that our pupils' performance places our school among the very best schools in the country, and is one in which every child, regardless of their background, is given an excellent education.

The letter reads, "This success reflects the dedication of your staff and the hard work of your pupils. It shows what can be achieved when ambition and commitment come together..... Your school's achievement demonstrates what is possible."

This success reflects our commitment to ensuring that no child is left behind.

Each pupil benefits from our commitment to quality first teaching, bespoke support for high needs, nurturing pastoral care, alongside enriching extracurricular opportunities to ensure that all our pupils enjoy primary school and leave us as confident learners.

"We are incredibly proud of this national recognition, which serves as a testament to the relentless hard work of our pupils and the unwavering dedication of our entire staff team. At our school, we



WEST THORNTON

PRIMARY SCHOOL

believe that a child's background should never determine their future; this letter confirms that by combining high ambitions with a nurturing environment, we are truly breaking down barriers and ensuring every child has the opportunity to excel."

A Special Guest from the High Seas

Year 5 at Canterbury Road enjoyed a truly memorable afternoon this week when we welcomed a special visitor. As we continue to explore the history of The Windrush, the children have been imagining the reality of traveling across the vast ocean. We were incredibly lucky to host a parent who has spent years working on ships, and she kindly shared her firsthand experiences with the children. From hearing about life at sea for months at a time to seeing incredible photos of her travels, the children were completely captivated. They were particularly "wowed" to learn that she has visited 78 different countries, and they loved hearing about the diverse sights, sounds, and exotic foods she encountered along the way.



The children showed great curiosity as they asked insightful questions about maritime engineering and life on board. They were eager to know how and where such massive ships were built and were particularly concerned about safety at sea. There were many questions about what happens if someone falls overboard, but the children were quickly reassured to learn about the rigorous safety measures and advanced technology built into a ship's design to keep everyone secure. It was a fantastic opportunity for the children to connect their classroom learning to real-world adventures, and the buzz of excitement lasted for days afterward.



Attendance

Well done to all these classes with Attendance over 97%

CR - Year 2 Palm Class

CR - Year 6 Acer Class

RR - Year 1 Maple Class

RR - Year 4 Beech Class

RR - Year 5 Silver Birch Class

RR - Year 5 Magnolia Class

RR - Year 6 Eucalyptus Class



WEST THORNTON

PRIMARY SCHOOL

Curriculum Focus

Reception

In our writing sessions, the children are continuing to impress us with how wonderfully they apply their phonetic knowledge to caption writing. We have introduced the tricky word "his" and encouraged the children to use some of the Phase 3 digraphs they have been learning in their captions. The children are also becoming more confident in using full stops, showing a growing understanding of why they are important in writing. We are so proud of the little writers they are becoming!

This week, the children revised the composition of 5, which helped them feel ready to move on to exploring 6 and 7. We acted out the rhyme "5 Little Men in a Flying Saucer" to help the children understand that 6 and 7 are really just 5 and a bit more. The children used dice patterns and double die frames as the "spaceships" for the aliens. For example, if there were 6 aliens, would they fit into one spaceship (one die frame)? No! They would need two spaceships (two die frames). This helped the children to see how numbers can be made up and how they grow beyond 5 in a fun and practical way.



This week, the children continued to explore the story *The Gingerbread Man* with a focus on the setting. They talked about the different places in the story, such as the bakery, farm and river, and compared them with other story settings (like *Goldilocks*) and our own local environment. The children then created their own setting maps, labelling key features such as farm, river, path, grass and house.

Year One

Year One has had a very exciting week! The highlight was definitely their trip to the Natural History Museum in London. Not only was it exciting taking the tram and tube but also seeing the animals and of course the dinosaurs. Their science learning about animal classifications was brought to life as they were able to see the 5 main types of animals; mammals, reptiles, fish, amphibians and birds. Looking ahead to next week, they are looking forward to telling you all about it through the recounts that they will be writing to retell their exciting day!





WEST THORNTON

PRIMARY SCHOOL

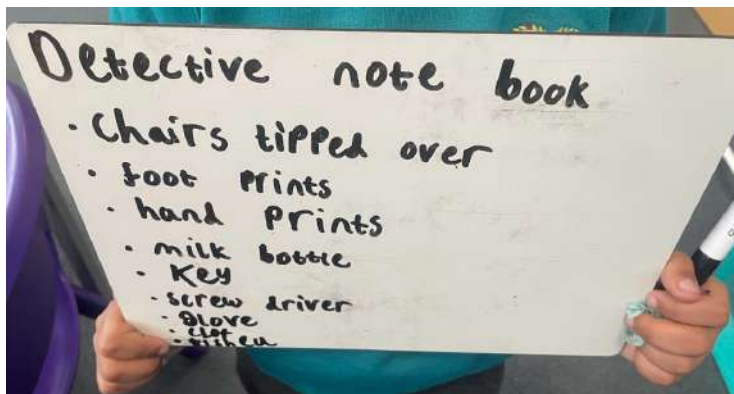
In maths they have been securing their knowledge of subtraction through counting backwards, finding the difference and identifying related facts. It has been a tricky week but they have all shown our school value of resilience by not giving up and trying their best.

In wider curriculum, they have continued to enjoy their learning in History about leaders in the past and present. This week they learnt all about Queen Elizabeth, her coronation and what she did. In art they have made plans to create their own mosaics next week, they can't wait to show you their final pieces.

Year Two

This week in Year 2, the children have had an exciting week! In Maths, we have begun to look at multiplication through arrays and equal grouping. The children had many practical lessons using different objects to represent the grouping of numbers and how this can then be transferred to a simple multiplication calculation.

In English, the children were greeted with a 'trashed' classroom after lunch, where they had to use their detective skills to figure out who would do such a thing! The suspects were Mrs Callaghan, Mr Ray and Mr Yusef. The children successfully used deductive reasoning and questioning to find out who the thief was! This was the hook lesson for our new book in English - Hermelin, the detective mouse.



Finally, in our wider curriculum this week we conducted an experiment in science, looking at different heart rates. The children recorded their beats per minute once after walking, then jogging and then running. In Art the children have begun their final piece of work based on the work of Australian artist, Sally Morgan. They are excited to show their final model next week!

Year Three

This week, we have been combining our Geography and English skills! The children have been using their expert knowledge of deforestation to prepare for writing their very own information leaflets. We have been "text detectives," hunting for the features of a great leaflet—such as sub-headings, bullet points, and introductory paragraphs.

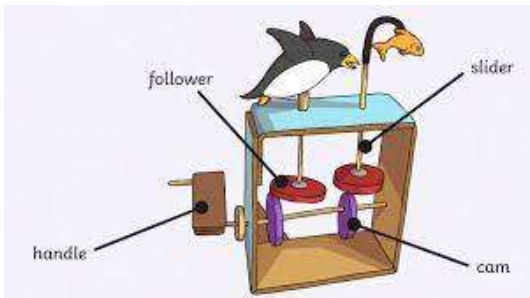


WEST THORNTON

PRIMARY SCHOOL

We've also been practicing our "Scientist" voices by using technical vocabulary like *biodiversity*, *habitat*, and *canopy* to make our writing sound professional.

In Maths, we have been getting to grips with measuring and scaling. The children have been learning how to accurately measure objects using millimeters (mm) and centimeters (cm). They have been practicing their conversion skills and learning how to scale measurements up or down—a very important skill for our upcoming DT projects!



Our creative side really shone through in DT this week! The children have started designing their moving CAM mechanisms. It was wonderful to see their imagination at work as they decided which rainforest animals they wanted to feature. We have some fantastic sketches of jaguars, sloths, and toucans that will soon be "jumping" and "moving" using our mechanical systems.

We have continued our journey into the world of Rocks and Fossils. This week, the children focused on identifying and classifying rocks into three main groups: Sedimentary, Igneous, and Metamorphic. By looking closely at examples in each of these groups, the children explored the different properties that define them. We discussed how to distinguish between rocks based on their appearance, texture, and characteristics, helping us understand why certain rocks are better suited for different purposes in the world around us.

Year Four

It has been a legendary week for Year 4 as we dived into the world of Greek myths and ancient history. Here is a look at our learning journey:

In English: The Voyage of Odysseus

Our young authors have been busy planning their own epic myths based on The Voyage of Odysseus. We focused on building suspense using "Show, Not Tell"—describing characters' fear through trembling hands and wide eyes rather than just telling the reader. The children have been drafting their introductions, expertly using subordinating conjunctions like *because*, *that*, and *when* to link their big ideas.



WEST THORNTON

PRIMARY SCHOOL

In History, we traveled back to Ancient Athens to explore the roots of democracy. We compared their voting systems to our own JLT elections and discussed the "sticky knowledge" that, in Athens, women and girls were excluded from school and voting. The children are now mastering the differences between a democracy, a government, and an oligarchy.



In Ancient Greece citizens voted with pebbles and put them into two huge vessels to agree or disagree with the issue. The vessel with the most pebbles won.



Our classroom turned into a pottery workshop as we practiced shaping techniques to create our own clay pots! Using the pinch technique, the children rolled their clay into smooth balls before pressing their thumbs into the center to create a hollow shape. By squeezing their thumb and index fingers together and moving around the clay, they successfully shaped their pieces into basic vessels. We also explored the essential skills of scoring, slipping, and blending to ensure our pots were sturdy and well-finished. It was wonderful to see everyone applying these techniques with such care to create their final constructions!

Year Five



It has been another bustling week of discovery and creativity in Year 5! The children have shown fantastic engagement across all their subjects, tackling new concepts with curiosity and enthusiasm. They have begun a new writing genre this week as we dive into the world of poetry. Staying connected to our core text, *Windrush Child*, the children have analyzed and performed a variety of poems. We explored the classic structure of "If" by Rudyard Kipling and celebrated the rhythmic, vibrant style of the late Benjamin Zephaniah. Using these as inspiration, the children have started planning their own original poems. They have been busy collecting rhyming words linked to our topic and discussing the use of anaphora—deciding



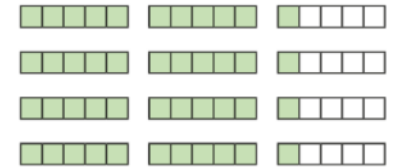
WEST THORNTON

PRIMARY SCHOOL

which powerful phrases they might repeat at the beginning of their lines to create impact and rhythm.

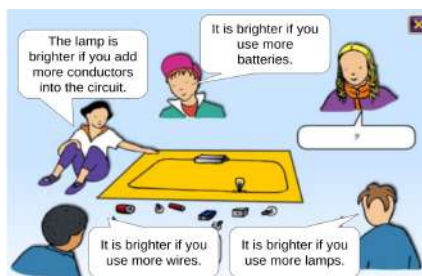
In our math sessions, the children have consolidated their understanding of fractions. It was wonderful to hear them confidently discussing the various methods they use to solve complex calculations. We have now transitioned into our new topic: decimals. The children have begun exploring the relationship between fractions and decimals by looking closely at tenths and hundredths.

$$4 \times 2\frac{1}{5}$$



In science this week, the children focused their lunar observations on the phases of the moon. We began by sharing the impressive facts the children already knew before moving on to more technical terminology. The children enjoyed discussing the difference between the waxing and waning of the moon and worked hard to identify and label each specific part of the lunar cycle. Their diagrams and explanations showed a clear grasp of how the moon's appearance changes from our perspective on Earth.

Year Six



It has been a busy and productive week in Year 6. The children have shown impressive resilience and determination, working hard to apply their knowledge across all areas of the curriculum and demonstrating a wonderful attitude towards their learning.

In English, the children began innovating their narratives inspired by our core text. After carefully planning their independent pieces, they have started their final outcomes. We have been particularly impressed by their ability to use a range of speech verbs to convey emotion and advance the plot through a blend of dialogue and action.

In Mathematics, the children continued their work on percentages and fractions. They have applied a variety of strategies to compare and convert fractions and decimals, masterfully applying their understanding to a range of complex contexts.

In Science, pupils planned an experiment for next week to test how different components in a circuit function. The children identified their independent variable (the factor they will change) and their controlled variables (the factors that must stay the same). They then made thoughtful predictions about how these changes might affect the brightness of the bulb.



WEST THORNTON

PRIMARY SCHOOL

Reading



National Year of
Reading 2026

Reading books at home with your child... **How do I get started?**

If you're not feeling confident about reading aloud or sharing books, don't worry – there's no right or wrong way to enjoy a story together. But if you'd like some pointers, here are a few to help you out.

- Cuddle up together. You could encourage your child to hold the book themselves and turn the pages, too
- Or, why not take a book out and about with you? Learn about different minibeasts, then see if you can spot them in the park
- Try being one of the characters. You can make silly voices and do the actions – your little one will love it!
- Reading can be done anytime, anywhere. On the bus, at the park – books are great for quick entertainment
- You don't have to read a book cover to cover, you can just dip in and out
- Just have fun! Remember there's no right or wrong way to share a story – find the way that works for you and your child.

For hints on tips on how to make reading fun check out:

<https://www.booktrust.org.uk/>

Looking for some new authors try:

<https://authorfy.com/books-of-the-month/>

<https://www.rebelreadingsociety.co.uk/authorspotlight>

Phrases of the Week



¿Qué tiempo hace hoy? - What's the weather like?

Hoy llueve y hace frío. - Today it's raining and cold.



WEST THORNTON

PRIMARY SCHOOL

Stars of the Week

YR Ash	YR Oak	YR Pine	YR Willow	
Mateo	Jannat	Lennon	Valmika	
Thackshan	Aharan	Ali	Hadiyah	
Y1 Elm	Y1 Fir	Y1 Lime	Y1 Maple	
Ananya	Whole class	Ayeza	Whole class	
Zeyne		Yoel		
Y2 Aspen	Y2 Palm	Y2 Rowan	Y2 Spruce	
Moiz	Harry	Kiko	Elrick	
Haris	Lianne	Mohammed Z	Jessica	
Y3 Cedar	Y3 Cherry	Y3 Larch	Y3 Chestnut	
Krishiv	Noah	Kavya	Zina	
Kiera	Loreran	Norah	Jason	
Y4 Acacia	Y4 Beech	Y4 Hornbeam	Y4 Olive	Y4 Yew
Stari	Zara	Whole	Hanna	Safiullah
Elena	Christabel	Class	Serena	Nizar
				Elizabeth
Y5 Cypress	Y5 Hawthorn	Y5 Magnolia	Y5 Silver Birch	Y5 Sycamore
Keshav	Yamur	Salome	Chinmay	Layla
Ahmad	Kyla-Shae	Sharick	Areej	Ayden
Y6 Blackthorn	Y6 Eucalyptus	Y6 Juniper	Y6 Holly	Y6 Acer
Sofia	Aicha	Neva	Yahya	Bilal
Taha	Bilin	Kavinie	Aayan	Skylar



WEST THORNTON

PRIMARY SCHOOL

Community

Contact us

The service is open on Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm (apart from bank holidays).



Telephone:

020 8688 0100

Email:

FJS@croydon.gov.uk

or scan the QR Code

Outside of these hours call the 24-hour National Domestic Violence Helpline on **0808 2000 247** or **999** in an emergency.

The [FJC \(Family Justice Centre\) in Croydon](#) is a specialised, multi-agency centre providing comprehensive support for survivors of domestic violence, abuse and related crimes. It acts as a "one-stop shop" offering services like IDVAs (Independent Domestic Violence Advisors), legal advice, and housing support.

Pre-Payment Energy Support Available

To apply call 01482 420836

Phone lines are open
Monday - Thursday 9am - 3pm
Friday 9am - 2pm

To be eligible, households must:

- Have a pre-payment meter
- Have not received fuel vouchers from Unity in Community within the last 12 months

This is in response to the ongoing cost of living crisis and beneficiaries can be working, unemployed, self-employed or retired

Email: healthyhomes@unityincommunity.org.uk



Need a hand with your energy bills? ⚡

Unity in the Community is offering vouchers for gas and electricity to those in need.

You can claim these if:

You have a pre-paid meter. ✓

You haven't received vouchers from them in the past. ✓

Everything you need to know is on the flyer. For more information or to request a voucher, call on:

☎ **01482 852292**

✉ info@unityincommunity.org.uk

Please share this with anyone who might need it!



WEST THORNTON

PRIMARY SCHOOL

Croydon **TALKING** Therapies

Parent Mental Health Day – 30th January 2026

Parent Mental Health Day (PMHD) is an annual campaign which takes place each year in the UK on the 30th of January and raises awareness between the vital link between parents' and carers' mental health, and the wellbeing of the whole family.

While PMHD is an important date in the calendar, the challenges parents and carers face are year-round. The current cost-of-living crisis, increased concerns about digital harms, rising rates of mental ill health and the impact of stretched services have further increased parent and carer anxiety and, in some cases, helplessness and hopelessness. Add to this, when you are a busy parent or carer, it is easy to neglect your own mental well-being.

PMHD is an opportunity to check in with how you are doing, which could help you to identify anything you may need support with. In turn, this could support you to be more available for your child's needs

If you are feeling low, anxious or stressed, you can access Croydon NHS Talking Therapies, a service that offers free and confidential talking therapies and specialist support to help you feel better.

You can find out more about Croydon NHS Talking Therapies and what this service has to offer by clicking on the link here: <https://croydontalkingtherapies.nhs.uk/>

You can access the service by completing a self-referral form by clicking on the link here: <https://croydontalkingtherapies.nhs.uk/refer-yourself/>



WEST THORNTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Could you be the education professional who makes a difference in the lives of young people in Croydon?

Past, current or new teacher?
Interested in teaching as a profession?
Considering a career in education?

Croydon settings will be hosting its Recruitment Fair on:

**Saturday 28 February 2026
(10am - 12pm)**

London South Bank University
3 Wellesley Road, Croydon, CR0 2AG
5 minute walk from East Croydon station



Free to attend

Representatives from Croydon's educational sectors* available to discuss your current and future teaching opportunities.

*training providers, housing providers, academies, colleges, special, primary and secondary schools, early years providers, professional associations

To book:

[e teacher.recruitment@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:teacher.recruitment@croydon.gov.uk)

[w www.croydoneducationjobs.org](http://www.croydoneducationjobs.org)

Teach
in CROYDON
www.croydoneducationjobs.org



CROYDON
www.croydon.gov.uk





WEST THORNTON

PRIMARY SCHOOL

CREATIVE WELLBEING PROGRAMME FOR CHILDREN AGED 5-10 WITH EXPERIENCE OF DOMESTIC ABUSE


A 10-week after-school programme supporting children to improve wellbeing, emotional literacy and understanding of healthy relationships through fun, group-based, creative activities.

Every Tuesday during term time in South Norwood

13 January- 24 March 2026

4-5:15 pm for 5-7 year olds

5:30-6:45 pm for 8-10 year olds



Connect with
other parents
and carers



Travel
support and
food
provided

This programme is for families that have been free from abuse for at least 1 month.



Scan the QR code or get in touch for more information

CreativeHealth@croydon.gov.uk

07356194605



CROYDON
www.croydon.gov.uk



WEST THORNTON

PRIMARY SCHOOL

KG-Doodles

CHILDCARE

BREAKFAST & AFTERSCHOOL Club



WEST THORNTON
PRIMARY SCHOOL



COME ON IN NOW!

Are you entitled to Zero or Discounted Fees

- On Full Benefits and going back to Work or College - up to 100% fees paid
- Universal Credit claimants - up to 85% of fees paid
- University Students Childcare Grants CCGPS up to 80% of fees paid
- Childcare choices & Voucher scheme Tax relief

UC Universal
Credit

Childcare Vouchers*

Childcare
Choices

CGPS VISA MasterCard

Open Hours:

Monday - Friday Breakfast
07:30 am - 8:40 am
£5.50 per session

Monday - Friday Afterschool
15:15 pm - 18:30 pm
£12.50 per session*

Registered & Approved

Ofsted CRB



www.kgdoodles.co.uk
0117-3322-811

* £12.50 applies for non-eligible children