

Townhill Junior School

Weekly Update: 28th November



National Young Poet's Weeks

It's National Young Poet's Week so Mrs Gregory introduced the inspiring and creative poet and Children's Laureate Alex Wharton in assembly on Monday. We loved this poem that we listened to in assembly:

<https://youtu.be/D-32hZQPepU?si=F6x7HyQwTI2IA0s5>

Take a look at his website with your child and explore his work more. Mrs Gregory has set a whole school poetry writing competition inspired by his Star Control poem. Those who are interested took the information in assembly and now have two weeks to write their own versions. We can't wait to see what they come up with!



Star Control

the stars that glisten
for you at night
are selected by star control

a celestial team that
bend shadows and light
upon the sky you have come to know

they sail through space
a magnificent sight
on an upside down rainbow,

and they look a little like us
but with eyes lightening bright
and skin that shimmers silver and gold,

so when you are lying in bed
and the stars sparkle with delight
like diamonds floating on shadows

wrap yourself up tight
whilst dreams take gentle flight
and slip away beneath a silvery glow.

Be imaginative and try using some figurative language if you can.

The Competition: Your Turn

In the poem Alex talks about a magical type of person or people, that control the light that we see in the stars. They travel the night sky on an upside down rainbow and their skin shimmers (much like stars do)

Perhaps something similar is going on at day time. Magical people that help the sunlight reach us here on earth?

Or a team of specialist (magical people/creatures that manage the rain, the snow, the wind and hail?)

We look forward to reading them!

Y3 Author Workshop

Year 3's Magical Author Adventure! ✨📖

On Wednesday, our Year 3 children had an amazing opportunity to join an online author event with Abiola Bello, the brilliant writer behind the Wild Magic series!



The session was full of creativity and imagination:

✍️ Children designed their own characters that could step right into the Wild Magic world

👂 They listened carefully to Abiola's insights about storytelling

💡 Shared their fantastic ideas with confidence and enthusiasm

What a wonderful way to inspire a love of reading and writing! Huge thanks to Abiola Bello for sparking so much creativity in our young authors.



Chocolate Elf



🌲 ✨ A HUGE Thank You to Our Wonderful School Community! ✨ 🌲

We are absolutely blown away by your generosity in supporting this year's Christmas Elf Appeal. Your donations will make such a difference and bring festive joy to families who need it most. ❤️

A special shout-out to Mrs Gregory (and her own little elf!) for coordinating the collection with so much care and Christmas spirit. 🌟🧝

Together, we've shown what kindness and community can achieve. Thank you for helping us spread the magic of Christmas! 🎁🍪

Y6 Aim High Writing Workshop



✨ AIM High Writing Day – What an Incredible Experience! ✨

Last Wednesday, our school was buzzing with creativity as we hosted the AIM High Writing Day! A huge thank you to the amazing author Jane Prowse, who spent the day inspiring our Year 6 children to write with passion and imagination. From crafting brilliant stories to dressing up as ninjas, the excitement was off the

charts! 📖 The outcomes were fantastic, and we couldn't be prouder of the effort and enthusiasm shown by every single child.

👏 Thank you to all our wonderful Year 6 writers for embracing the challenge and to Jane Prowse for making the day truly unforgettable.

Carols by Candlelight

If you would like to have a table at this popular event on Tuesday 16th December, then please let either the office, Mr H or any member of the SFC know and we will book one for you. The cost of a table is £10.



If you have access to any portable outdoor lighting, we would be very interested in your support for this event so please let Mr H know if you can help with this.

Learning is the key to success

Star of the Week

Class	Name
3F	Jack
3G	Emilia
4OR	Kacper
4T	Ibrahim
5T	Ozzy
5C	Herkus
6I	Scarlett
6OH	Woody
PE	Year 5



Times Tables Rocks Leaderboard

Rank	First Name	Class	Correct Answers
1	Rosa	4OR	-3.02
2	Jonah	4T	-1.12
3	Darcey	4T	-0.73
4	Oakley	4T	-0.72
5	Charis	5T	-0.72
6	Aoife	4T	-0.4
7	Callum	5C	-0.24
8	Kyra	5C	-0.03
9			
10			



Boom Reader Leaderboard

Class	Most Reads
3F	X
3G	Poppy
4OR	Oscar
4T	Ruby
5C	Herkus
5T	Fleur
6I	Alexandra
6OH	Matilda
Class	4OR



Learning is the key to success

Current Learning

	Subject	What the children will be learning	Ideas to support with the learning at home
Y3	English	Writing newspaper articles	Watch Newsround to see
	Maths	Column multiplication	Tell your parent how to partition 2 digit numbers
	Art	Self portraits	Practice drawing features: eyes, nose, mouth
Y4	English	Writing newspaper articles	Read news reports online and discuss the language with an adult
	Maths	Further multiplication and division	Show your adult a written method for division
	Computing	Podcasts	Listen to a podcast. BBC Sounds has some good, child friendly examples.
Y5	English	Writing newspaper articles	Read a newspaper article and find the answer to the 5w's (who, what when, where, why?)
	Maths	Worded Problems	Think of real life maths problems involving multiplication or division and give them to a family member to solve
	DT	Pop Up Book	Look at examples of pop up books and how their moving parts work
Y6	English	Persuasive letter writing	Adults, persuade your child to do something for you and get them to tell their teacher how you achieved it!
	Maths	Decimals	Look at Black Friday deals and calculate the money discounts on offer
	Computing	Website Design	Develop your ideas for a website for Oliver Twist



Home Learning

A reminder that all of our home learning is online through two main platforms and the expectation is that every child should be logging their reading, and completing challenges on TT Rocks every week. The children should also be learning their spelling lists.

Maths: Times Tables Rockstars
Reading: Boom Reader



School Attendance News



Attendance Statistics

Whole School Attendance this week	Whole School Attendance this year to date
934.0%	94.7%
Number of children with over 97% attendance this week	Number of children with over 97% attendance this year
172	123



Class Attendance for this week:

Weekly Attendance	3F	3G	4OR	4T	5C	5T	6I	6OH
Attendance Percentage	97.5%	93.5%	95.6%	97.0%	95.2%	96.7%	94.8%	90.1%
Progress	+3.1%	-0.6%	+2.3%	+3.1%	+4.3%	+2.9%	+2.8%	-4.1%

Getting Your Child to School Really Matters



Did You Know... ?

In a School Year, if Your Child is Late Every Day By... Your Child Would Have Lost Approximately... or They Would Have Missed Approximately...

5 Minutes	3.5 Days from School	20 Lessons
10 Minutes	7 Days from School	41 Lessons
15 Minutes	10 Days from School	55 Lessons
20 Minutes	14.5 Days from School	82 Lessons
30 Minutes	22 Days from School	123 Lessons

Please Encourage Punctuality to Maintain Attendance

Next week at Re:Minds...

1st - 5th December 2025

Shirley Evening Support Group
Monday 1st December
6pm-7pm

Join us for a friendly cuppa with others who truly 'get it'

Meet fellow parents/carers, chat about the ups & downs of neurodiversity and mental health in our children, share experiences, pick up top tips and get support & advice from the **Re:Minds team**

No need to book, just drop in! There's no cost to attend and you'll be warmly welcomed!

You can also access the book & sensory library while you're here

This is an adults only group

Find us at:
St James Road Methodist Church, SO15 5HE
Upstairs in Room 7

Access is from the rear of the church via the car park
Please let us know if you need to use the lift



SEND Legal Advice Clinic

**Wednesday 3rd December
12.30pm**

We are linking with Shentons Solicitors to offer free SEND legal advice clinics to our Re:Minds families who require advice around education, tribunals, appeals etc.

Please email info@reminds.org.uk to book a slot, or follow the link on the event



**Shirley Support Group
Friday 5th December 10am**

Join us for a friendly cuppa with others who truly 'get it'

Meet fellow parents/carers, chat about the ups & downs of neurodiversity and mental health in our children, share experiences, pick up top tips and get support & advice from the **Re:Minds team**

No need to book, just drop in! There's no cost to attend and you'll be warmly welcomed!

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Access is from the rear of the church via the car park
Please let us know if you need to use the lift



Please email info@reminds.org.uk to book your space at the clinic
No need to book to attend the support group - just drop in!



with thanks to 
NHS Foundation Trust

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

TIKTOK

AGE RESTRICTION
13+

(Certain features are restricted to over-18s only)

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Online videos are often associated with apps such as YouTube, but among teens, TikTok is king. The app provides a potentially addictive, never-ending stream of short clips tailored to users' interests based on their viewing habits. Around half of British children use TikTok, and while most content is benign, Ofcom considers it the app where young people are "most likely to encounter a potential harm".

AGE-INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

TikTok's Following Feed shows videos from known creators, while the default For You Feed serves endless clips based on viewing history. Most are harmless, but unsuitable content can still appear, and watching for long enough signals interest to the algorithm. Although TikTok bans illegal or inappropriate uploads, the volume of posts means some slip through, increasing the chance that children encounter age-inappropriate material before it is detected or removed.

BODY IMAGE AND DANGEROUS CHALLENGES

Ofcom reports that most online harms for girls involve body image, while boys more often see dangerous stunts. Both types appear frequently on TikTok and spread quickly through its engagement-driven algorithm. Harmful challenges have included the "blackout" trend, where users held their breath until passing out. Families filed lawsuits after children died linked to the trend, showing how extreme or risky content can rapidly reach young people and negatively influence them.

IN-APP SPENDING

TikTok is free, but children can still spend money. TikTok coins, costing £9.99 to £224.99, let users buy gifts for creators. TikTok Shop adds risk by allowing purchases from influencers or companies, sometimes leading to poor-quality items driven by persuasive marketing. A Canadian investigation found TikTok collected personal data from many children for targeting and advertising despite age limits, meaning young users may lose control over their personal information.

CONTACT WITH STRANGERS

Between 1.6 and 1.9 billion people use TikTok, meaning there's a high risk of unwanted attention from strangers. Accounts created by over-18s (or young people using a fake date of birth) are set to public view by default. This means that not only is someone's profile visible to everyone else on the app, it also suggests their videos to others and allows anyone to download or comment on them.

MISINFORMATION AND RADICALISATION

TikTok's short videos may appear lighthearted, but they can expose young people to harmful ideas. Misinformation is common, and Ofcom reports that nearly one-third of 12-15-year-olds use TikTok as a news source, increasing the chance of seeing racist, misogynistic, extremist or conspiracy material. Even brief clips can influence impressionable users and shape their worldview, making discussions about critical thinking, propaganda and online influence especially important for parents and educators.

ADDICTIVE DESIGN

TikTok's fast-paced stream of eye-catching videos can be potentially addictive for young users. In 2024, UK children spent an average of 127 minutes per day on the platform, double the time recorded in 2020. Excessive use can disrupt sleep, increase irritability, and distract from healthier activities. Constantly skipping between short clips may also affect attention span, making it harder to focus on longer tasks such as homework or reading.

Advice for Parents & Educators

ENABLE FAMILY PAIRING

Family Pairing allows parents to link their TikTok account to their child's in order to manage settings remotely. Parents can then turn on Restricted Mode (reducing the chances of a child seeing inappropriate content), set screen time limits, make accounts private and manage whether their child can send messages – and if they can, to whom. Children cannot alter these settings without parental approval.

BLOCK IN-APP SPENDING

Parents can restrict in-app purchases on iPhone and Android devices to prevent accidental or impulsive TikTok spending. Young people can easily spend large amounts on TikTok coins or low-quality products promoted through TikTok Shop. If a disappointing purchase occurs, turn it into a discussion about influencer marketing and how online promotions can be misleading.

DISCUSS THE DANGERS

If a child wants to use TikTok and you're happy for them to do so, it's good practice to discuss the potential risks. Ensure they don't share any identifying personal information or respond to dangerous trends, and that they know to talk to a trusted adult if they're worried by interactions on the app. With more teens using TikTok for news, it's important to talk about misinformation and propaganda.

READ THE SIGNS

If you're concerned that a child is spending too much time on TikTok, or that they've been emotionally affected by something they've seen, it's important to know how to spot the signs. Increased irritability and a lack of concentration are potential red flags, as is failing to complete homework or skipping meals. Remember, the parental controls are there for a reason, and it's never too late to introduce limits.

Meet Our Expert

Alan Martin is an experienced technology journalist who has written for the likes of Wired, TechRadar, Tom's Guide, The Evening Standard and The New Statesman.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

See full reference list on our website

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Dates for the Year



AUTUMN TERM 2025

Tuesday, 9th December	:	5T Butser Farm trip
Thursday, 11th December	:	5C Butser Farm trip
Tuesday, 16th December	:	Whole School Church visit (9am) Carols by Candlelight (5pm)
Wednesday, 17th December	:	Christmas Lunch
Friday, 19th December	:	End of Term (3.15pm)

SPRING TERM 2026

Monday, 5th January	:	Spring Term begins
19th – 23rd January	:	Y6 Mock SATs Week
Friday, 13th February	:	'Break the Rules' Non Uniform Day Disco (5:30pm - 7pm)
16th – 20th February	:	Half Term
Monday, 23rd February	:	INSET Day
Thursday, 5th March	:	World Book Day & Dress Up Day
9th – 13th March	:	Assessment Week
Tuesday, 24th March	:	Parents Evening (3:30pm – 7:00pm not 5T)
Wednesday, 25th March	:	Parents Evening (3:30pm – 5:00pm)
Friday, 27th March	:	'Break the Rules' Non Uniform Day End of Term: (3.15pm)

SUMMER TERM 2026

Monday, 13th April	:	Summer Term begins
Wednesday, 22nd April	:	Y6 SATS Parents Evening Event (6:00pm)
Thursday, 23rd April	:	Spanish Language Day
Friday, 24th April	:	Disco (5:30pm - 7pm)
Thursday, 30th April	:	Y3 Hilliers Trip
Monday, 4th May	:	Bank Holiday
11th – 14th May	:	SATs Week (Y6)
Friday, 22nd May	:	Y6 Careers Fair (pm) 'Break the Rules' Non Uniform Day
25th – 29th May	:	Half Term
Friday, 5th June	:	Disco (5:30pm – 7pm)
Friday, 19th June	:	INSET Day
22nd – 26th June	:	Assessment Week (Y3 –5)
Monday, 29th June	:	Year 2 Parents Evening (5:30pm)
Wednesday, 1st July	:	Transfer Day
Thursday, 2nd July	:	Y3 & Y4 (9am – 11:30am) Sports Day
Friday, 3rd July	:	Y5 & Y6 (9am – 11:30am) Sports Day (Reserve Sports Day: Mon 6 th July)
Friday, 10th July	:	Y4 Itchen Valley Teambuilding Day
Friday, 17th July	:	Year 6 Leavers Prom (6.30pm – 8:30pm)
Monday, 20th July	:	Y6 Leavers Celebration Event (6:00pm)
Tuesday, 22nd July	:	End of Term: (3.15pm)

