



# NEWSLETTER

## ISSUE 11

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[www.withamoaksacademy.co.uk](http://www.withamoaksacademy.co.uk)



w/c: 30th March 2026



Dear Parents and Carers,

As we come to the end of a busy and successful Spring Term, we would like to take a moment to reflect on some of the wonderful experiences and achievements across the school.

We were incredibly proud of our Year 4 pupils, who delivered a fantastic Easter assembly to parents. Their creative approach, presenting the story in the style of a newsroom, was both engaging and memorable. The term ended on a high with an energetic and uplifting Rocksteady concert on the final day. It was a joy to see so many pupils performing with confidence and pride.

Year 5 also enjoyed an exciting and enriching visit to Colchester Zoo. The trip provided a valuable opportunity to enhance their learning beyond the classroom, and the children represented the school brilliantly throughout the day.

We would also like to commend our Year 6 pupils for their hard work and determination during their final SATs mock examinations. We are very pleased with the progress they are making and are confident they will continue this momentum.

As we reach the end of term, we also say a fond farewell to two valued members of our team, Miss Chaplin and Miss Westley. We thank them both for their contributions to the school and wish them every success and happiness in their next steps.

Finally, we would like to thank you all for your continued support this term. We wish all of our families a happy and restful Easter break and look forward to welcoming everyone back to school on Monday 13th April.

Warm regards,  
Mr Sheehan and Mrs Harrington

### KEY DATES

14/04/26	Non Uniform Day for Cereal
04/05/26	BANK HOLIDAY
11/5/26-14/5/26	Year 6 SATs Week
09/05/26	5 Korea Class Lunch
25/05/26-29/05/26	HALF TERM
01/06/26	NON-PUPIL DAY
01/06/26-12/06/26	Year 4 Multiplication Checks
09/06/26	5 Singapore Class Lunch
16/06/26	Year 3 & 4 Sports Day
16/06/26	5 Thailand Class Lunch
17/06/26	Year 5 & 6 Sports Day



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# This Week's Attendance



## Attendance Cake

5 Singapore



## Attendance Update

Regular attendance is crucial for academic and social success. Missing school can disrupt learning and make it difficult to catch up. Some children are missing out on part of their education by arriving late to school. The gates are open from 8:35am. Please make sure your child arrives before 8.45am when the gates close. We are monitoring punctuality very closely and may contact you if we have a concern.

## Attendance League

WITHAM OAKS ATTENDANCE LEAGUE			
POSITION		Pts	
1	6 China	149	7
2	4 Peru	108	8
3	5 Korea	110	9
4	4 Kenya	88	10
5	6 India	83	11
6	4 Zimbabwe	79	12
			5 Japan
			5 Singapore
			5 Thailand
			4 Argentina
			4 Brazil
			3 Egypt

## House Team Competition/Update

	Attenborough	5406		THUNBERG	5570
	RASHFORD	5451		Yousafzai	4592

## RECENT LETTERS- AVAILABLE ON THE WEBSITE

All communication will be sent through ParentMail. Please ensure that you have given us a current email address.

Issues with ParentMail communication should be emailed to [adminwoa@inspiresmat.co.uk](mailto:adminwoa@inspiresmat.co.uk)

# This Week's Awards



## Stars of the Week

Each week, children will be celebrated for demonstrating one or more of the five key character strengths



Lillie – 3B  
Isabelle – 5T  
Harrison – 6J

Adrijana – 3P  
Emilia – 4K  
Charlie – 4Z  
Elsie-Mai – 5S  
Ronnie – 6C  
Jasmin – 6I

Millie – 3A  
Summer-  
Grace – 4E

Malak – 6J



Week 1  
w/b 13/04/2026



## Sports Personality of the Week

Alfie L



## Parent/Carer Survey

In our bid to both highlight the schools success and continually improve, we would like as many of you as possible to complete the attached survey. These questions are ones which would be provided by Ofsted during an inspection and will inform our school development plan.



**As part of Essex County Council's Health and Safety policy, all jewellery must be removed for PE, including earrings. Children must not wear earrings or other jewellery during the school day, unless for religious reasons.**

- Sleeper studs must be removed before PE/Games – they can no longer be covered with tape or plasters.
- To help, please ensure earrings are removed before school on PE days.

**Thank you for supporting us to keep children safe.**

# In Other News...



## Term Dates:

Please see term dates for the remainder of the school year listed below. Ensure any holidays are booked during the period of times highlighted in red:

Autumn 1	2/9/25	23/10/25
Autumn Half Term	27/10/25	31/10/25
Autumn 2	3/11/25	19/12/25
Christmas Holiday	22/12/26	2/1/26
Spring 1	6/1/26	13/2/26
Spring Half Term	16/2/26	20/2/26
Spring 2	23/2/26	27/3/26
Easter Holiday	30/3/26	10/4/26
Summer 1	13/4/26	22/5/26
Summer Half term	25/5/26	29/5/26
Summer 2	2/6/25	17/7/26

## Inset Days

1/9/25

24/10/25

5/1/26

1/6/26

20/7/26

Please may we remind you that we do not authorise any holiday during term time.

## Outdoor Learning

Please can we ask for donations of old wellington boots or old pairs of trainers for outdoor learning. These will be kept on site for children to use if needed. We are committed to supporting learning in all weathers, particularly during the wetter months, and having appropriate footwear helps keep children comfortable and safe when outdoors.



# In Other News...



## Celebration Corner

Well done to both Ronnie and Andrew in 4K who took part in Witham Rugby Clubs first ever Minis Ruby Festival. The event welcomed 16 teams from five clubs, with children competing in the under-seven, under-eight and under-nine categories.

Organised as a celebration of rugby, teamwork and play, the day gave children the chance to play rugby, make new friends and build confidence in a fun and supportive environment.



Well done and congratulations to Scarlett who attended Basildon's Carnival Crowning Dance on the 14<sup>th</sup> March. She competed in the visiting Junior Princess Competition and came in 1<sup>st</sup> Place.

Scarlett has been amazing representing Witham Carnival Association as their 2025/2026 Junior Princess.

Well done to Teddy (3A) and Ben (3P) who made it into the Braintree and Witham Times newspaper recently along with their rugby team for all their hard work, commitment and progress which shone through at a tri-match against Colchester and Harwich.

We love to celebrate the amazing things our students accomplish both in and out of school! Please send us photographs and a brief description of their achievement, so we can feature it in here in our **Celebration Corner**. It's a great way to celebrate their hard work and dedication, and to share their success with our school community!

You can email your photos and information to [adminwoa@inspiresmat.co.uk](mailto:adminwoa@inspiresmat.co.uk)

## Reading

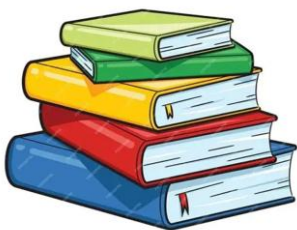
Well done! Great effort in reading.

Tommy – 3A, Olivia – 3B, Ben – 3P, Oliver W – 4E

Jack E – 4K, Peyton – 4Z, Jacob – 5K,

Aria – 5S, Isaac – 5T, Cain – 6C,

Oliver B – 6I, TJ - 6J



# In Other News...



## Spring Dates 2025-26

5/1/26	<b>NON-PUPIL DAY</b>
12/1/26	Year 3 Barleylands Trip
13/1/26	4 Kenya Class Lunch
21/1/26	Young Voices at the O2
5/2/26	6 China Class Lunch
6/2/26	Number Day - £1 donation
11/2/26	Valentine Disco
	Years 3 & 4 4-5.30pm
	Years 5 & 6 6-7.30pm
<b>16/2/26 – 20/2/26</b>	<b>- HALF TERM</b>
24/2/26	6 Japan Class Lunch
24/2/26	Parent Consultation Evening 3.30pm – 5.30pm
26/2/26	Parent Consultation Evening 3.30pm – 7.00pm
3/3/26	India Class Lunch
5/3/26	World Book day
9/3/26	Year 6 SATs Parents Meeting 3.30pm
16/3/26	Class Photographs
17/3/26	Ladies Day Lunch
20/3/26	Red Nose Day
24/3/26	Year 4 Easter Assembly
26/3/26	PTA Easter Trail £2 Entry (3.30pm)
<b>30/3/26 – 10/4/26</b>	<b>- EASTER HOLIDAYS</b>



## Summer Dates 2025-26

14/4/26	Non-uniform Day for Cereal
<b>4/5/26</b>	<b>BANK HOLIDAY</b>
11/5/26 – 14/5/26	- Year 6 SATs Week
19/5/26	5 Korea Class Lunch
<b>25/5/26 – 29/5/26</b>	<b>- HALF TERM</b>
<b>1/6/26</b>	<b>NON-PUPIL DAY</b>
1/6/26-12/6/26	- Year 4 Multiplication checks
9/6/26	5 Singapore Class Lunch
16/6/26	Year 3 & 4 Sports Day (AM)
16/6/26	5 Thailand Class Lunch
17/6/26	Year 5 & 6 Sports Day (AM)
18/6/26	Gentleman's Day Lunch
25/6/26	Year 6 Lift Maltings & Lift New Rickstones Academy Induction Day
25/6/26	Year 2 Transition Visit (all day) & Parent Picnic
25/6/26	Year 2 Parent Meetings 1.30pm & 5pm
3/7/26	Summer Fete 2.30pm
6/7/26-8/7/26	Year 6 Residential
9/7/26	End of Year Disco Years 3 & 4 4-5.30pm Years 5 & 6 6-7.30pm
10/7/26	Year 6 Play Dress Rehearsal
15/7/26	Annual Progress Reports sent out
15/7/26	Year 6 Performance to Parents 1.30pm & 5.30pm
16/7/26	Year 6 Leaver's Lunch
17/7/26	Year 6 Leaver's Ceremony (details to be confirmed)

## Year 2 to 3 admissions

Applications for Year 3 children starting in September 2026 opens on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> November.  
To apply for a place please visit [www.essex.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.essex.gov.uk/admissions)  
The closing date for applications is  
**Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2026.**

# What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

# YOUTUBE

Almost anyone with an internet connection knows YouTube. The Google-owned site lets anyone upload videos to be shared around the world, and as a result, it's an incredible resource with instant free access to material covering every conceivable topic. But with over 500 hours of video uploaded every minute, not all of it will be appropriate for young eyes.

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

YouTube is free and can be accessed via numerous devices, even without creating a YouTube account. Some content is flagged as 'age-restricted' (requiring the user to be logged into an account with a verified age of 18), but children can still view some mildly inappropriate content. This can include profanity and violence, which some young users may find upsetting.

### CONNECT WITH STRANGERS

YouTube recommends videos related to what the user has previously watched on their account, aiming to provide content that will interest them. This is intended to be helpful but it can also lead to binge-watching and screen addiction – especially if 'auto-play' is active. Users without an account are shown popular videos from the last 24 hours, which might not always be suitable for children.

### RADICALISATION

YouTube's algorithm tends to promote content that's getting the most traffic – a lot of which can be quite extreme. This can be fine for harmless topics, but YouTube isn't regulated like television, and that means that conspiracy theories, fake news and hateful ideologies can occasionally surface to warp impressionable minds all too easily. Remember – the more they watch, the more they'll be recommended.

### CONNECTING WITH STRANGERS

YouTube is a social media platform which allows people to interact with other (usually unknown) users. Account holders can leave comments on any video they have access to, as well as message other users directly. Connecting with strangers online can potentially lead to children being exposed to adult language, cyberbullying and – in the worst cases – online predators. If a child is creating content themselves, this can increase the likelihood of them becoming a target.

### TRENDS AND CHALLENGES

YouTube is teeming with trends and challenges, some of which are fun to watch and join in with. Children often find these immensely entertaining and might want to try them out. Most challenges tend to be safe, but many others may cause physical or emotional harm. Children who watch or copy them. The painful 'salt and ice challenge' – where people use these two ingredients to burn their skin – is just one of many examples.

### SNEAKY SCAMMERS

The comments sections of popular content creators regularly have scammers posing as that influencer, attempting to lure users into clicking on their phishing links. Scammers impersonate YouTubers by adopting their names and profile images, and often offer cash gifts or 'get rich quick' schemes. Children may not realise that these users aren't who they claim to be.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### APPLY RESTRICTED MODE

For older children, Restricted Mode is an optional setting that prevents YouTube from showing inappropriate material (such as drug and alcohol abuse, graphic violence, and sexual content) to underage viewers. To prevent children from changing across age-inappropriate content on the platform, we would recommend enabling Restricted Mode on each device that they use to access YouTube. It's worth also turning the auto-play feature off, to prevent YouTube's algorithm automatically recommending something inappropriate.



### TRY GOOGLE FAMILY

Creating a Google Family account allows parents and carers to monitor what their child is watching, uploading, and sharing with other users. It will also display their recently watched videos, searches, and recommended videos. In general, a Google Family account gives a parent or carer oversight of how their child uses sites like YouTube and helps to ensure that they are only accessing appropriate content.



### MONITOR ENGAGEMENT

YouTube is the online viewing platform of choice for billions of people, many of them under 18. Younger children will watch different content to older ones, of course. You may want to keep an eye on how children interact with this material – and, if applicable, with content creators – to understand what they're interested in. Remember that creators often share content outside of YouTube, so don't ignore their web presence elsewhere!



### CONSIDER YOUTUBE KIDS

It's possible to sidestep most inappropriate content completely via Google's own YouTube Kids app for Android handsets and iPhone. This lets you filter content by "preschool" (4 and under), "younger" (ages 5 to 8) and "older" (ages 9 to 12). This isn't a perfect substitute for personal supervision, as the app's filtering system is automated, and Google can't manually review all videos.

### CHECK PRIVACY SETTINGS

YouTube gives users the option of uploading videos as 'private' or 'unlisted' – so they could be shared exclusively with family and friends, for example. Comments on videos can also be disabled and channels that a child is subscribed to can be hidden. If the child is only uploading videos set as 'private', they are far less likely to receive direct messages from strangers.



### LIMIT SPENDING

Although YouTube is free, it does offer some in-app purchases. For example, users can rent and buy TV shows and movies to watch. If you'd like to avoid children purchasing content online, limit their access to online payment methods. Many parents have discovered the hard way that a child happily consuming a paid-for series quickly leads to an unexpected bill!



## 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.



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