

AUTUMN EDITION 2023

Walton Priory Middle School



THE BEACON

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A LETTER FROM OUR HEADTEACHER

Mrs Taylor-Potts

Dear Parent/Carer

It's been a long but rewarding term and we have certainly got to know our 'new' Year 5s both in the classroom and on our recent residential. We are very pleased with how they've settled in and become Walton Priory children.

One of our key priorities this year is parental engagement with all aspects of school life. I'm pleased to say an average of 77% of parents attended the Parents' Evenings this term to discuss their child's progress.



We've also welcomed parents in KS2 to two meetings to explain how they can support their child at home-this has been followed up with maths workshops to share how we teach different parts of the maths curriculum. Other successful events for parents held just in the last week include the excellent Year 7 Science Fayre where children presented their investigations into questions such as "Is vegetarian dog food appetising to different breeds?" and "Are designer cosmetics really better than budget dupes? (I'm afraid the answer to the first one was no and to the second one was yes!). Our SEND coffee morning in December was also informative and sociable and included an input from the Autism Inclusion Team. Walton Priory children have benefited from a range of additional provision this term. This included presentations and talks in KS3 on different cultures and religions and a visit to the church in Y6 to celebrate festivals of light. 300 children attended the pantomime 'Beauty and the Beast' and were a credit to the school. They have also been busy raising money for charity via events such as Poppy Day and Children in Need. Our Christmas Jumper Day resulted in goods being donated to food banks. Rehearsals are in full swing for our production of "Alice The Musical" and we look forward to an entertaining performance of this fantastic show in the summer term.

With best wishes to you and your families at Christmas and New Year!

Best Wishes

Lindsay Taylor-Potts

MESSAGES FROM THE OFFICE

Miss Richardson, Mrs Wilson
Mrs Warrilow & Ms Johnstone

First Day Back in January: The school will re-open to students on Monday 8th January.

Appointments & Emails: When your child has an appointment booked within school hours, which can't be avoided, please inform us by emailing the school office at office@waltonpriory.staffs.sch.uk and please write a note in the students planner. When sending in emails, please can you remember to include your child's full name and their class.

full name and their class.

Change of Circumstances: If your contact details change, you need to inform us as soon as possible. The quickest and easiest way is to update the details on Arbor. If you can't do that then please email the school office informing them.

Labelling of Uniform & Belongings: Every year our lost property corner grows at an unbelievable rate. Where uniform and belongings are labelled, we can often return items to the child on the same day or at least the next day. Please can you ensure that all uniform and belongings coming into school is labelled clearly with your child's full name to help manage the problem.

Nut Free School: Just a reminder that we are a nut free school. We have a number of children with severe allergies. We ask that no nuts in any form are brought onto the premises and that everyone checks the ingredients list for any food items they may bring into school.

School to home communications: All communications from the school are sent to you via e-mail or Arbor. Please remember to check regularly and also please check your junk folder.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Speed Restrictions

Please can we remind all parents/visitors of the site speed restrictions we have in place if you are bringing your vehicle onto the school grounds. This is in place to protect the safety of all staff and children who may be anywhere on our school site. Failure to follow our site safety rules may result in permission to enter the site being withdrawn.

Parking

Please be mindful of local residents when parking/collecting children from school. The area by the top gate is increasingly busy and there have been accidents caused by congestion. Remember that children can access school by the bottom gate where parking may be easier.

DIARY DATES

DECEMBER

22nd Last day of term

JANUARY

8th Back to School

FEBRUARY

27th AND 29th Y5 and Y7

Parents' Evening

APRIL

15th-19th Year 7 PGL Dorset

JUNE

3rd-7th Year 8 France Trip

JULY

8th-12th Year 6 PGL Boreatton Park

TERM DATES

AUTUMN TERM 2023

Term Ends: Friday 22

December

Christmas Break: Monday 25

December - Friday 5 January

SPRING TERM 2024

Term Starts: Monday 8 January

Half Term: Monday 12 February

- Friday 16 February

Term Ends: Friday 22 March

Easter Break: Monday 25 March

- Friday 5 April

Easter Sunday: Sunday 31
March

SUMMER TERM 2024

Term Starts: Monday 8 April

May Day: Monday 6 May

Half Term: Monday 27 May -
Friday 31 May

Inset Day: Monday 3 June

Term Ends: Friday 19 July

Inset Day: Monday 22 July

Summer Break: Monday 22 July
- Monday 2 September



ACADEMIC INFORMATION

Messages from Heads of Year Groups

Y5- MISS ROOBAERT

Dear Parent and Carers

As we approach the end of another wonderful term, I find myself reflecting on the incredible journey we've taken together in Year 5. The festive season is upon us, and it brings with it a unique opportunity to pause, celebrate, and express our gratitude for the growth, achievements, and camaraderie we've experienced as a school community.

First and foremost, I want to extend my heartfelt appreciation to our exceptional students. Year 5 has been a time of exploration, discovery, and personal development as they have transitioned from their various First Schools to Walton Priory Middle School. Their enthusiasm for learning, resilience in facing challenges, and kindness towards one another have truly made our classrooms vibrant and positive spaces! All children, parents and carers have contributed to the rich community of our Year 5 family, and I am immensely proud of the individuals the students are becoming.

To the dedicated and talented teaching and support staff, thank you for your unwavering commitment to nurturing the potential within each child. Your creativity, passion, and tireless efforts have not only imparted knowledge but also fostered a love for learning that will undoubtedly continue to flourish in the years to come.

May this holiday season be filled with laughter, love, and moments of shared joy. Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! May the coming year bring new opportunities, continued growth, and even more memorable experiences for our Year 5 family.

Thank you once again for your ongoing support, and I look forward to the exciting adventures that await us in the upcoming term.

Miss S Roobaert
Head of Year 5



ACADEMIC INFORMATION

Messages from Heads of Year Groups

Y6 MRS STRINGER

It seems a long time ago that we welcomed back our now seasoned Year 6s. They are no longer the youngest group in the school and we are proud to see many setting a great example to our younger pupils. It is clear they have grown so much in maturity and confidence over the last few months and they are working hard to reach their goals.

The year started with music enrichment in the form of a visit by Junior Andre! He answered the many questions thrown at him by the children with humility and it was clear they very much enjoyed the experience. Shortly after, we were lucky enough to be visited by Rent a Beast where the children took part in an interactive workshop linked to their learning about classification in Science. More recently, our very well-attended Year 6 SATs open evening was a great opportunity to link up with parents and carers, hopefully clearing up any myths about SATs. Following on from this, we launched our new parent maths workshops to help parents work with their children through the often very tricky requirements in Upper Key Stage 2. The support from parents is much appreciated and with this in mind, please remember to get in touch at the earliest opportunity if any issues arise.

Christmas will soon be upon us and I know the children (and maybe one or two staff) are very much looking forward to the upcoming pantomime - oh no they're not! Sorry...couldn't resist!

Wishing you all a very Happy Christmas

Mrs J Stringer

Head of Year 6



ACADEMIC INFORMATION

Messages from Heads of Year Groups

Y7 & Y8 - MR OXLEY

As Christmas approaches at speed, it's a good time to reflect on the term that has gone. Year 7 pupils have transitioned well into Key stage 3, quickly learning the expectations of a variety of staff, new to them. Our Year 8 pupils were invited to apply for Subject Leadership roles and have been doing a sterling job representing our school at various events around school and within our community.

We've had lots of team and individual sporting successes, and entered a range of external competitions and challenges. I encourage all pupils to get involved with all the opportunities that will come their way!

Next year promises to bring more excitement with trips to enhance our curriculum, extra-curricular activities, sporting fixtures and transition visits in the summer term. Over 50% of the pupils have signed up for the residentials to PGL Dorset in April (Yr7) and PGL France (Yr8), which I'm sure will be great fun!

I wish you all a safe and relaxing Christmas break, hopefully a chance to recharge ready for next year!

Best Wishes
Mr Oxley



YEAR 5 NEWS

Miss Roobaert

Dear Year 5 Parents, Carers, and Pupils

It's been a vibrant and eventful time in Year 5, and I am excited to share some of the highlights with you.

The Laches Wood Residential trip this December has undoubtedly been a tremendous success! Our Year 5 students embarked on an adventure filled with learning, camaraderie, and personal growth. The trip not only provided them with an opportunity to explore the great outdoors but also allowed them to develop crucial leadership skills and enhance their resilience. I extend my heartfelt appreciation to the dedicated staff who accompanied our Year 5 pupils, ensuring their safety and enriching their experience. The memories and lessons gained from this residential trip will undoubtedly stay with our Year 5 students for years to come!



YEAR 5 NEWS

Miss Roobaert

Our Year 5 Open Evening in November was a fantastic event that welcomed parents to our school for an informative evening. It served as an invaluable opportunity for parents to stay updated on key dates and upcoming events in the Year 5 calendar. We believe that a strong partnership between school and home is essential for the success of our students, and events like these contribute to building that connection. Thank you to all the parents who attended the open evening. Your engagement and support are fundamental to the academic and personal development of our pupils.



In October, our Year 5 students had the unique opportunity to visit Parkhill Farm in Market Drayton, where they delved into the wonders of agriculture and the natural world. These visits provided a hands-on experience, allowing our students to gain insight into the workings of a farm, understand the life cycles of animals and plants, and connect with the environment in a meaningful way. We extend our gratitude to the farm staff for hosting our students and creating an immersive learning environment. Such experiences are invaluable in broadening the horizons of our students and fostering a love for learning beyond the classroom.



As we approach the end of the year, I am confident that the experiences and knowledge gained by our Year 5 students will serve as a strong foundation for their continued growth. Thank you for your ongoing support, and we look forward to more exciting ventures in the months to come!

Wishing you all the most joyful festive season!

SATs OPEN EVENING: AN INFORMATIVE AND WELCOMING EXPERIENCE

Miss Roobaert

We are delighted to share the wonderful news of our SATs Open Evening that took place on 8th November, 2023. This event was a resounding success, and we would like to express our heartfelt appreciation to all of you who joined us to make it a wonderful evening of learning and collaboration.

Empowering Parents with SATs Knowledge

The SATs Open Evening was an invaluable opportunity for us to provide parents and carers with a comprehensive understanding of the SATs (Standardised Assessment Tests). We understand that you play a vital role in supporting your children's education journey, and this event aimed to equip you with the knowledge and resources you need.

Throughout the evening, we offered informative sessions where our dedicated staff explained the SATs in detail. Parents gained insights into the format of the tests, what to expect, and how best to support their children's preparation. We believe that informed parents and carers are better prepared to support their children effectively.

The Launch of Parent Workshops: Arithmetic Practice

One of the highlights of the evening was the launch of our Arithmetic Practice Parent Workshops, where parents are now provided with the opportunity to participate in arithmetic practice sessions. These workshops provide parents with a first-hand experience of the types of questions that their children may encounter in the arithmetic section of the SATs.

The workshops are led by our skilled and experienced teachers who guide parents through various mathematical concepts and problem-solving strategies. The active engagement and participation from our parents and carers with this is truly inspiring. It's essential to note that these workshops are a great way for parents and carers to bond with their children over learning, reinforcing the importance of education within the family.

This practical experience not only demystifies the test but also allows parents to identify areas where their children might need additional support. By working alongside their children and experiencing the challenges first-hand, parents leave the workshops with enhanced confidence in assisting with SATs preparation.

A Heartfelt Thank You

We would like to extend our sincere gratitude to all the parents and carers who attended the SATs Open Evening. Your presence and active participation made the evening a resounding success. We truly appreciate your commitment to your children's education and your willingness to be a part of this informative event. We additionally thank you for your support with our SATs arithmetic workshops which are proving to be a resounding success.

We encourage you to continue your involvement in your child's educational journey. The SATs are just one milestone, and your continuous support and encouragement are essential as we work together to help your child reach their full potential.

Thank you for being an integral part of our school community, and we look forward to future opportunities for collaboration and growth.

TRANSITION

Miss Roobaert

Dear Parents and Carers

As we begin to navigate the exciting journey of transitioning from Year 4 to Year 5, it has been a dynamic period filled with engaging events and activities, and I am thrilled to share some of the highlights with you.

Transition Open Days

As with each year, our Transition Open Days have once again been a resounding success, and it was a pleasure to welcome parents to our school to explore the vibrant learning environment that awaits our Year 4 students as they transition to Year 5 here at Walton Priory Middle School. These events provided an excellent opportunity for parents to meet our dedicated staff, understand our teaching philosophy, and learn more about the fantastic opportunities we offer. We believe that a smooth transition is crucial for the success of our students, and the open days facilitated meaningful connections between parents, staff, and the school community. Your presence and engagement during these events contribute significantly to the positive transition experience for your children.



TRANSITION

Miss Roobaert

Marble Run STEAM Challenge

The Marble Run STEAM Challenge has captured the imagination of our future Year 5 students, and it has been a tremendous success thus far. This engaging activity not only provides an exciting introduction to the world of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM) but also emphasises essential skills such as resilience, teamwork, and healthy competition.

Our prospective Year 4 students have embraced the challenge with enthusiasm, showcasing their creativity and problem-solving abilities through the construction of amazing marble runs. Additionally, the opportunity to design and create their own badges has allowed them to delve deeper into the engineering process, fostering a love for innovation and learning!

It has been a pleasure meeting our prospective students at their first schools during the Marble Run STEAM Challenge, witnessing their curiosity and passion for discovery. I look forward to meeting more students in the coming months as we continue to engage in activities that make the transition to Year 5 an exciting and enriching experience.



SOCIAL MEDIA ROUND UP

Miss McClarence



Junior Andre came in to speak to the school and share his music and was amazing! We're so grateful to him for sharing his journey with us (and signing about a million different things and taking even more photos!)



For World Mental Health Day we took time to talk and wore our brightest colours!



Incredible community spirit from one of our own organising a huge, festive donation to local food banks!



Extra-Curricular activities are as varied as ever and Art Club did some incredible Autumnal work with these pumpkins!

SOCIAL MEDIA ROUND UP

Miss McClarence

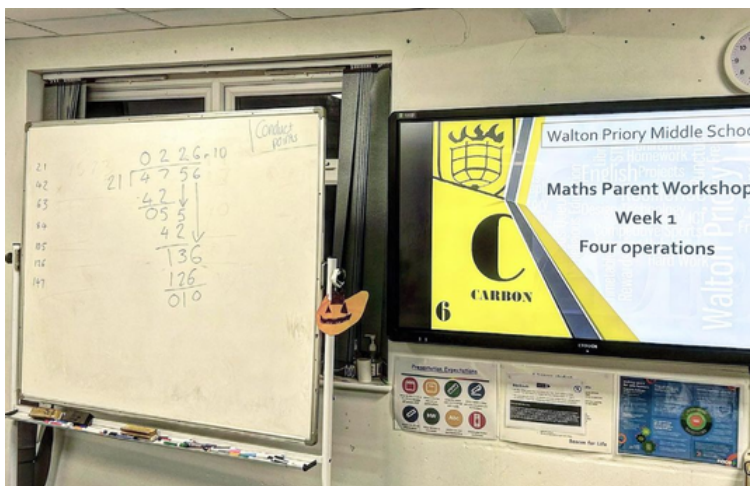
We celebrated Black History Month and our library stepped up- as always- with an incredible selection of books to support children in understanding why this is so significant. We also enjoyed assemblies, discussions and a research contest!



We have eaten A LOT of tuck this term! Croissants and sausage rolls remain firm favourites!



KS2 took part in one of the most hilarious, engaging and physically active poetry workshops I have ever seen with Ian Bland.



We also opened our doors to more of the community, inviting you in for our parent Maths workshops! These have been brilliant sessions and we love how many of you are involved either in person or digitally!

SOCIAL MEDIA ROUND UP

Miss McClarence



We have celebrated pupils each and every week!



Implementing Deliberate Practice for Arithmetic in KS2 has been a total game-changer for everyone. Especially our Y8s who get to mentor Y5s to support their developing practice. Experts!



We had creepy-crawly mini-beast visitors in KS2 Science to go along with our learning about lifecycles and classification!

We saw spots, wore our Pudsey merch and laughed lots while we raised money for Children in Need



English Update

Miss Bartlett

The English Department are having a focus upon reading for pleasure and research this year.

We know that you support us in this endeavour, and we are so grateful for your efforts in encouraging and guiding your child/children with reading. To support this theme, our World Book Day focus for 2024 is going to be 'Love Your Libraries' and we are both promoting our own wonderful Library and Librarian, Mrs Hickling, as well as our local public libraries which pupils can use over the holidays, and for research tasks. There will be more to follow on this after Christmas with a letter outlining how we are going to get more involved with our local libraries. For now, please see the following information on our local library in Stone, and please go in and register your child for free if you can! Stone Library is right in the heart of the town and a great way to get a brilliant range of books for your children to read.

To join the library is completely free, to take out books is free and if the child is under 18 there are no overdue fines on late books (with their own library card), so it's completely worth you getting a library card for your child if they don't have one, it won't cost you a penny.

The library has all the latest titles so rather than buying books save yourself some cash and borrow. The library service also offers a free E-Book service Borrow Box which again has a great range of kids books and also adult if you fancy something for yourselves. Also on offer are free E-Audio books and E-magazines and comics. For more information please see [eLibrary -](#)

[Staffordshire County Council](#)

Stone Library is so welcoming with their lovely, approachable staff so if you are not a member of the library do pop in or you can also join online [Join your library - Staffordshire County Council](#)

For more information on Staffordshire's Library Service please visit [Libraries and arts -](#)
[Staffordshire County Council](#)



REMEMBRANCE DAY

Mrs Peach



Over the course of this day, we had a remembrance assembly that was organised inside the school by Mrs. Peach. The assembly was conducted by the Royal British Legion and the National Literacy trust. We went around the school and collected money for the Royal British Legion. The assembly involved members of the armed forces, historians and even a virtual visit to Number 10 Downing Street! Anybody in the uniformed services could come to school in their uniform. The whole school took part in a 2-minute silence at 11 o'clock. Some activities we did were: Year 5 and 6 did art based activities focusing on the difference between peace and war. In Years 7 and 8, we did creative work on poetry in the context of war.

Matthew Kane, Year 8



HEADTEACHER AWARDS

Autumn Term 1

Year 5

Liam W 5KM
Henry B 5KM
Eleanor W 5KM
Jeet Rehal 5HS

Year 6

Abbie S 6EF
George P 6EF
Sienna W 6SC



Year 7

Ellie D 7GC
Cayden E 7GC
Hughie H 7GC
Alfie B 7GC
Eliot B 7GC
Noah H 7GC
Amelia W 7mco
Sophie B 7mco
George W 7mco



Year 8

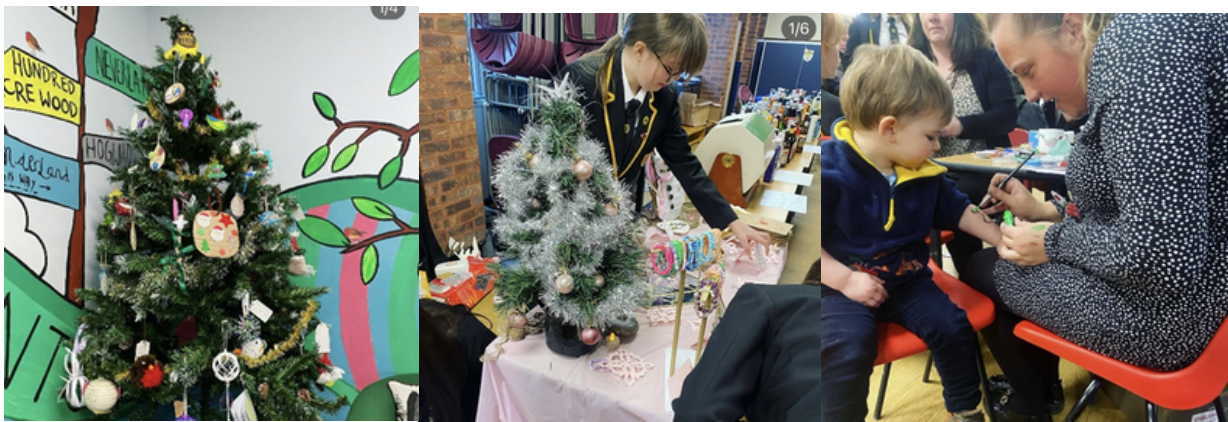
Ebony K 8LB
Hannah S 8KT
Martha H 8KT
Milo P 8KT
Sharna C 8OA



CHRISTMAS FAYRE

Miss Smith

We kicked off our Christmas festivities with the annual Walton Christmas Fayre. Families were greeted by the beautiful sounds from Busker's corner and moved down the corridor past many more stalls, games and tombolas. The school was full to the brim with families buying gifts and treats, winning items and having their faces painted. We really do appreciate your support at this event and you helped to raise over £1100 for the school.



The Christmas Fayre was a huge success! Thank you to Miss Smith for organising such a fantastic festive event for us all.

Sweet cones and lucky dip stalls helped to fundraise for a trip to India for Alleyne's. Fundraising stalls for the school included; The Hamper Raffle, Monster Slime and Craft, Hot Chocolate Cones, Elf on the Shelf, Cake Sales (where all the cakes for the cake sale were made by pupils from our school!), jewellery stalls and many many more.

50% of the profits goes to the school so we can help provide more exciting trips and opportunities for everyone and 50% goes to the people running the stall.

Parents thought the Christmas Fayre was fantastic!

'It was very busy and very successful'

'It has been so busy and there is a wide range of things to do'

'Great' 'Amazing'

'There has been lots of effort put into it'

'It is festive fun and there are lots of activities'

I feel that the school fayre this year school fair was so fun and successful!

Molly Philpott Year 8

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Miss Smith

Mental Health and Wellbeing

On 10th October we recognised 'World Mental Health Day' by wearing a colourful top and also learning about it in tutor times and PSE lessons during this week. Your kind donations helped us to raise a wonderful £325.20. We also added the money raised from the bracelet sales back in the Summer to this amount. We halved the total and sent £208.12 off to the charity 'Mental Health Foundation' and received a lovely thank you email and certificate from the charity. The other half of the money was put into school fund to support our Mental Health resources to support the children in school.

In other news, Mrs Knight has recently completed her ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) training which means we are able to start delivering this programme in school which is a fantastic resource. We have invested in some new Mental health and wellbeing books that are available in the library for pupils to loan.

Online Safety Workshop

Mr Davies

At the end of the first Autumn Half Term, parents & carers were invited into school to take part in a workshop aimed at helping parents navigate the often confusing world of online safety. Mrs Clarkson (our Safeguarding Lead), Miss Roobaret (Associate Assistant Headteacher) and Mr Davies (Computing & E-Safety Lead) presented a number of places to receive help and advice when dealing with issues involving online safety as well as providing parents & carers with the opportunity to ask any questions and address any concerns they may have. The presentation from the event is available on the school website and is full of helpful links to assist with this area of safeguarding children. If anyone has any specific questions or concerns then please do contact the school office and ask to make an appointment or arrange a call with a member of our online safety team.



SAFEGUARDING

Mrs Clarkson

Safeguarding Update

Get to know Age Ratings

Age ratings are in place to help protect your child, so we thought we'd provide you with a little reminder of how important it is to check the age ratings of what your child is accessing online. Here are the age ratings of some of the more popular apps that young people are accessing. **Did you know that WhatsApp has an age rating of 16?**



Whether your child is viewing films, accessing apps, playing games online, using social media or downloading other apps – check the age rating first to see if your child is old enough. In addition, the likes of PEGI include further content descriptors, which will give you an indication of the type of content that your child might view e.g. violence if accessing the app/game etc.

It is important to note that whilst age ratings do allow you to see if something may be appropriate for your child, it is also important to review the content yourself. This will allow you to make an informed decision as to whether it is suitable for your child to access and if it would be beneficial to apply further parental controls.

Further information

Parent Zone have published this article about why age ratings matter:
<https://parentzone.org.uk/article/age-ratings>

If you have any safeguarding concerns please get in touch
safeguarding@waltonpriory.staffs.sch.uk

WPMS COMMUNITY NEWS

Job Vacancy

Casual Supply Teachers

We are seeking experienced supply teachers who hold a teaching qualification. You will be able to teach at KS2 and/or KS3 in a variety of subjects.

We usually require supply teachers for full or half days.

Candidates should be able to offer: Experience and knowledge of teaching and learning. High expectations of behaviour and learning and commitment to raising standards and achievement for all pupils.

Effective organisation and planning, working well within a team.

Commitment to providing high quality education.

The closing date for application is 15th January 2024.

For further details please visit our school website <https://www.waltonpriory.staffs.sch.uk>

UNTIL NEXT TIME...

GIVE US A FOLLOW

A goal of ours this year was to improve our social media presence so that parents/careers and the local community would be able to stay up-to-date with everything that is happening in school on a daily basis!

The school has an Instagram and Twitter page where we post daily with insights to lessons, upcoming trips and general news from within the school. The Sports department also have an Instagram page to highlight all things sports!



@WaltonPriory



@waltonpriorymiddleschool
@wpms_pe



GET IN TOUCH

We are extremely proud of our students achievements in and outside of the classroom. If your child participates in any sports or clubs, we want to hear about it!

This might be an emailing a photo of your child in their activity environment to marketing@waltonpriory.staffs.sch.uk or sending them into school with a recent certificate, medal or trophy!

The same goes for any previous WPMS students, even though you've left, we would love to hear about any achievements.



This serves as a great mechanism to encourage pupils to be curious about different opportunities outside of school.