Westhouses Primary School Autumn 1

Newsletter

Dear Parents and Carers,

It has been a really positive start to the academic year. We have welcomed new pupils and had visits from our former students – Well done to Alice who got the linguist award in her first term at secondary school. We were delighted to catch up with some of the Y7 children who joined us at Matlock Bath Illuminations to watch the launch of the Westhouses Bathtub candlelit boat! Children from last year's Trailblazers class designed the winning entry which took to the water first, opening the unique record-breaking parade of boats.

We have started the year with other brilliant opportunities: Diwali workshops, African dance workshops, a workshop and assembly by Severn Trent, a trip to Eyam, a trip to Cresswell Craggs, Young Carers workshops and football tournaments, to name just a few.

As part of our school improvement this year, we are focusing on reading fluency, inclusion and further developing oracy and after Christmas maths development will be included to the improvement plan. After half term we are running reading fluency workshops for parents in addition to our usual phonics workshops. Our 'Aye up me duck Friday' will now include a golden duck trophy for the winning class.

Congratulations to our newly elected Pupil Voice members—they have already met to decide their priorities for the year including writing another child friendly policy (British Values) and raising money for the nature area.

This week marks the end of an era, as Mrs Newborough retires after twenty-four years at our school. I'm sure you will join me in thanking her and wishing her a happy, well-served retirement. We will miss you Carole but remember you will always be part of our Westhouses family, so keep in touch! Have a spooktacular half term break and we'll see you on the 2nd November.

ATTENDANCE
From September

Little Explorers		100%
Big Explorers		94.55%
Pioneers	Y1	98.81%
	Y2	90%
Philosophers	Y3	96.45%
	Y4	97.92%
Trailblazers	Y5	99.16%
	Y6	97.92%

Total Attendance: 96.69%

Attendance target is 97%.

Moments Matter, Attendance Counts

Pupil Voice Election Results



Reception: Aubrey
Year 1: Finley G
Year 2: Elsie
Year 3: Ariella
Year 4: Jacob
Year 5: Henry and Tommy
Year 6: Benjamin and Renee



Monday 2nd November	Back to school
Tuesday 3rd November	Fluency workshops for parents
Wednesday 4th November	Phonics workshops for parents Friends of Westhouses meeting (PTA) newcomers welcome
Wk. Beg. 19th November	Arts Mark Celebration Week
Friday 13th November	Children in Need—non-uniform (bring £1 donation) Flu immunisations Parents open afternoon for Arts Mark Celebrations
Wk. Beg. 16th November	Anti-bullying Week
Friday 20th November	Building Bridges project Y5/6 reading mentors in school Non-uniform - Bring a bottle for the Christmas Fayre
Thursday 26th November	Cake donations for the Christmas Fayre Pupil Parliament at Pilsley Primary School—Cooperatively play and managing risk
Friday 27th November	Cake donations for the Christmas Fayre 2:30—4:00pm Christmas Fayre
Monday 7th December	Panto—oh yes, it is!
Tuesday 8th December	Valley CIDS assembly
Monday 14th December	Philosophers' Christmas Performances
Tuesday 15th December	Explorers' and Pioneers' Nativity Performances
Thursday 17th December	Christmas Parties
Friday 18th December	Carol Concert Break Up

Explorers





What a brilliant start to the new school year we have had! We are so proud of how well the children have settled into the Explorers class. We have spent this half term getting used to our school routine and our class rules and expectations. The children have been working really hard to follow these and have been earning lots of stickers and dojo points.
We have started our phonics lessons. Nursery have been learning different nursery rhymes, listening to sounds from the rhymes and identifying them and having a go at clapping syllables in words. Reception children have started learning phase 2 sounds and using these to read CVC words.
All of the children have really enjoyed playing outside, riding the bikes, climbing up the grass hill and going down the slide and digging in the sand pit.
Our topic this half term has been 'Into the Wild'. We have enjoyed learning about different animals and making different animals in the craft area. We talked about our favourite animals and made them using playdough. It has been exciting to see the season changing from Summer to Autumn and we have enjoyed playing with conkers and pinecones and collecting leaves from our outdoor area.






Pioneers

Pioneers have blown us away with how hard they have worked this half term. We have earned so many stars in the jar, we have even earned our treat – making pizza! We have had a great time learning about the 'Space Race'. We enjoyed learning about how astronauts drink, eat, sleep and even use the toilet on the International Space Station.

We have also been learning about the artist Peter Thorpe and were inspired to create out own fantastic space paintings using block printing! We were also very lucky to have Bema (an artist from Ghana) come to work with us to make African Art linked to the book Handa's Surprise. We were so proud of the children making their own African style homes using fabric and printing methods. Well done, Pioneers!








Philosophers





In Philosophers Class, a big highlight this half term was our trip to Creswell Crags. The children bravely explored the deepest and darkest cave at the Crags and we even had a few moments 'seeing' what it would be like with no torch lights! The children had the chance to learn some vital Stone Age survival skills, including shelter building and even a spot of bison hunting! The group leader was incredibly impressed with the children's knowledge of the Stone Age and commented on how enjoyable the day had been with the class.

We have continued with this historical theme in English, drawing inspiration from the book *The First Drawing.* The children have been busy exploring speech and experimenting with different sentence types.

We have also been fortunate enough to take part in two very different workshops this half term. We welcomed a visitor from the Derby Open Centre for a vibrant Diwali workshop, where the children learnt about the story of the Ramayana and had the opportunity to try on traditional Hindu celebration clothes.

In a slightly messier session with Severn Trent Water, the children had great fun creating simulated 'sewage', as a memorable way to learn what items should not be flushed down our toilets or poured down the sinks.

In Science with Mrs Green, the children have been exploring how shadows are formed when a light source is blocked by an opaque object, and they observed how the length and position of their own shadows change at different times of the day.

In Music, our Year 3 children have begun playing their fifes, whilst the Year 4 children have now moved onto playing the flute. They have been exploring pitch and rhythm, alongside learning their first few notes.

Finally, in Art, the children have been getting creative with different ways of creating artwork. They experimented with using paint made from everyday items, such as coffee, crushed berries and spinach.



Trailblazers

What a fantastic start to the year we have had in Trailblazers! We have been learning about the Plague and the impact it had on life back in the 1600s with a trip to the Derbyshire village of Eyam. We've linked our artwork to this topic too, by sewing a plague inspired patch for a class patchwork quilt.

In English, we've been reading 'The Odyssey', we've loved reading all about Odysseus' adventures and it's inspired our writing for the last few weeks, our final pieces were some amazing alternative chapters!




PE

Over the summer we were awarded our third consecutive Gold award for School Games. This award recognises our participation in extra-curricular sport, our physical activities during school lunch and break times and our commitment to keeping children active. We are very proud of this achievement and thank everyone for their ongoing support with physical activity and sport.

This half-term has been all about football competitions!
Our Year 5/6 football team competed in a competition at Tibshelf Community School. They represented the school really well. They showed resilience and team-work as well as other sporting values.

Our Year 3/4 team also competed in a football tournament. For some children this was their first time representing the school. They all did a wonderful job and showed great spirit and determination. After playing in 2 long matches, the team finished second! Well done to all!





Governing Board

The full board met this month. We would like to thank the Friends of Westhouses who have raised funding to continue the development of our outdoor spaces.

We received feedback on our sports premium funding, hearing how it is enabling fantastic activities, including additional swimming, dance workshops, drumming, etc.

We decided to raise our attendance target from 96% to 97%. This is ambitious, but we hope you will support us in meeting this target in order to maximise the learning for all our children.

Parents will also be glad to hear that our school scored a spotless 5-star food hygiene rating!

Finally, recent governor visits praised our pupils' brilliant attitudes, noting that our classrooms are wonderfully calm, positive, and happy places to learn.

Thank you for your continued support in making our school such a vibrant place to learn

Online Safety



Our online safety focus for this half term was **Privacy and Security**

Our focus for next half term is **Online Bullying and Self image and identity.**

Computing and Online Safety Updates:
🎮 **Roblox Safety Changes**
Roblox remains one of the most popular platforms used by primary-aged children. During 2026, Roblox introduced new age-based accounts and enhanced parental controls, including improved content restrictions and communication settings for younger users. Parents are encouraged to review their child's account settings and ensure age information is accurate.
See page 6 of this newsletter with information on how to set up parental controls for Roblox.

For further help and advice take a look on our Online Safety page on the school website:
https://www.westhouses.derbyshire.sch.uk/online-safety-parents

A question to discuss as a family:
"If an app, game or chatbot told you something surprising, how would you check whether it was true?"

Parent Support

Our next SEND parents networking is booked for Thursday 10th December – information to follow, but please do come and speak to either myself or Mrs Tomlinson if you need advice or support with anything.

We are still able to provide food parcels, and with the winter months ahead, fuel costs and the cost of Christmas can be a strain on budgets. Just pop into the office or email if you need a parcel making up.

Neurohubs provide a support and information service for neurodivergent children, young people and their families. This support can be accessed in-person, over video chat or on the phone. These hubs are based in Buxton, Chesterfield, Derby and Heanor. Find out more click here.

Moments Matter, Attendance Counts

There is clear evidence to show that days off school impact on your child's attainment and progress.

365 days in each year	**175 non school days a year** To spend on family time, visits, holidays, shopping, household jobs and other appointments				
	190 school days in each year	12 days absence **178 days of education**	19 days absence **171 days of education**	29 days absence Half term missed **161 days of education**	38 days absence **152 days of education**
	100% to 95%	**94%**	**90%**	**85%**	**80%**
	GOOD Best chance of success.	**WORRYING** Less chance of success		**SERIOUS CONCERN** Not fair on your child Possible legal action	

PARENT GUIDE · STEP BY STEP

Setting up Roblox parental controls

Easy to follow instructions for making your child's Roblox safer. You don't need to be good with technology – just follow each step in order and tick it off as you go.

About 20–30 minutes | Works on phone, tablet or computer

Why this matters

Roblox's parental controls only work once **your own Roblox account** is linked to your child's. Until you do that, you can't set limits on chat, games, time or spending. The old 4-digit "Parent PIN" no longer exists – if a guide mentions it, it's out of date.

Before you start, have ready:

- [ ] Your child, sitting with you
- [ ] Your child's device, signed in to their Roblox account
- [ ] Your own phone or computer
- [ ] An email account you can open right now
- [ ] **Photo ID** (passport or driving licence) **or a credit card** – Roblox uses this only to check you are an adult. You won't be charged.

Words you'll see

Experience
Roblox's word for a game.

Robux
Roblox's money, bought with real money.

Connections
Your child's friends on Roblox.

Age check
A quick selfie video (or ID) that Roblox uses to estimate age. **No chat works without one.**

Roblox Kids / Roblox Select
Account types for ages 5–8 and 9–15, which limit games automatically.

Opening Roblox on your own phone, tablet or computer

Your child's device will usually already have the Roblox app – just open it. For **your own** device, you have two choices. Both give you exactly the same parent settings.

Option A – use a web browser (easiest for most parents)
Open your web browser (Safari, Chrome or Edge), tap the address bar at the top and type **www.roblox.com**, then **Log In**. Nothing to install, and the game won't end up on your phone. Best on a computer or tablet, where the screen is bigger.

Option B – download the app
iPhone/iPad: open the **App Store**. Android: open **Google Play**. Search **Roblox** and install the one made by **Roblox Corporation**, then **Log In**. Handy if you'll mostly check settings on your phone.

Watch out: Only ever sign in at **roblox.com** or the official app. Ignore links in messages, videos or adverts promising "free Robux" – fake sites copy the Roblox login page to steal accounts.

How to find “Settings” (you’ll need this a lot)

In the app (phone or tablet): tap **More** (three dots, bottom-right of the screen), then tap **Settings**.
On the website: click the **cog/gear icon ⚙** at the top-right, then click **Settings**. On a phone-sized screen it may be inside the menu ☰ instead.

Everything after that is the same, whichever you use.

1 Check your child’s age on their account

Roblox decides which games and chat your child gets based on their age, so it needs to be right.

1. On your child’s device, open Roblox and go to **Settings**.
2. Tap **Account Info** and look at the **Birthday**.
   If it’s wrong, don’t change anything yet – you’ll fix it from your parent account in Step 3.

Watch out: A linked parent can only correct a child’s age **once**, so double-check the date before you save it.

2 Create your parent account and link it

This is the most important step. Do it from your child’s device – it’s the easiest way.

1. On your child’s device, go to **Settings** › **Parental Controls**.
2. Tap **Add parent**.
3. Type in **your** email address and send it.
   Roblox now sends an email to you.
4. On your own phone or computer, open the email from Roblox.
   Can’t see it? Check your junk/spam folder and wait a few minutes.
5. In the email, choose **Create account**. If you already have a Roblox account, choose **Use existing account** – its email address must match the one you typed in.
6. Follow the on-screen steps to prove you’re over 18, using your **photo ID** or a **credit card**.
   For ID: lay it flat in good light so all four corners are visible.
7. When the page refreshes, tap **Agree** to link to your child.
   Done! You’ll now see your child’s name in your own Parental Controls.

Tip: Two parents can each link their own account to the same child. If you have more than one child, link each child’s account separately.

3 Open your parent dashboard

From now on, you change everything from **your own** phone or computer – you don’t need your child’s device.

1. On your own device, open **www.roblox.com** in your web browser (or open the Roblox app) and log in to **your** account – not your child’s.
2. Go to **Settings** › **Parental Controls**.

3. Tap your **child's name**.
   Most options are under a heading called "Settings you manage". Screen time and Connections are further down the same page.
4. If your child's birthday was wrong in Step 1, correct it here now.

4 Choose who your child can chat with

Path: **Settings you manage** › **Communication**. You'll see these switches:

Setting	What it means
Game chat	Typing messages to other players inside a game (Roblox only lets them talk to people of a similar age).
Game direct chat	Private one-to-one messages to another player inside a game.
Friends chat	Messages with people on your child's friends list.
Party / Group Party	Group chat and voice with friends. Set to **Friends** or **No one**. Only for age-checked 13+.

Not sure what to choose? Many families start with chat **off** for younger children, then allow **friends chat** only once you know who their friends are. You can change this at any time. Remember: **no chat works at all** until your child has done an age check.

5 Control which games they can play

Set the age level of games

1. Go to **Settings you manage** › **Content restrictions** › **Content maturity**.
2. Drag the slider. A description of each level appears underneath as you move it.

Level	Roughly what it allows
Minimal	Occasional mild violence or mild fear.
Mild	Repeated mild violence, cartoon-style blood, mild crude humour.
Moderate	Moderate violence, some realistic blood, moderate fear. Highest level for under-16s.
Restricted	Strong violence, strong language, romantic themes. Adults only – not available to children.

Block a particular game

1. Go to **Content restrictions** › **Blocked games**.
2. Tap the **+** button and type the game's name.
3. Tap **Block** and confirm.
   The game may still appear in search, but it won't open.

Answer requests from your child

If your child asks to play something above their level, you'll get an email and see it under **Pending requests**. Tap **Allow** or **Don't allow**. You can undo an approval later under **Allowed games**.

6 Check their friends

1. On your Parental Controls page, scroll down to **Connections** and tap **Manage**.
2. Tap a picture to see that person's profile.
3. If you don't know them, tap the three dots **⋯** and choose **Block** or **Report**.
   Blocked users can't chat with your child or send another friend request without your permission.

Tip: **Trusted friends** are a closer level of friend who can use voice chat together. For under-13s you approve each one (by email or under Pending requests) – requests expire after 24 hours. Only approve people your child knows in real life.

7 Set a daily time limit

1. On your Parental Controls page, scroll down to **Screen time**.
2. Tap **Manage** next to the chart.
3. Tap **Screen time limit** and pick an amount from the **Daily limit** list.
   When the time runs out, Roblox shows a message and stops them playing for the rest of the day.

Tip: The same screen shows **Top games** – the 20 games your child played most last week. It's a great conversation starter.

8 Stop surprise spending

1. Go to **Settings you manage** › **Spending restrictions** › **Monthly spending limit**.
2. Type in the most you're happy for them to spend each month (you can enter 0).
3. Tap **Update**.
   The limit resets each calendar month; unused amounts don't carry over.

You'll automatically get emails if spending gets high. In the same menu you can switch to an email for **every** purchase.

Watch out: Roblox **gift cards** from shops get round the spending limit, and purchases on **Xbox or PlayStation** are controlled by the console's own family settings.

9 Optional: add device controls too

These sit "above" Roblox and can limit total screen time or stop new apps being installed:

Device	Use this
iPhone / iPad	**Settings › Screen Time** (Family Sharing)
Android phone/tablet	**Google Family Link** app
Xbox	**Xbox Family Settings** app
PlayStation	**Family Management** in your PlayStation account

What changes as your child gets older

Age	What changes
13	Your child takes over their own screen time limits and blocking. Spending limits stop applying. You can still manage direct chat and games, and see their friends and screen time. *Spending emails switch off – turn them back on under Parental Controls › Spending Insights › Spending Notifications.*
16	Chat settings and game blocks stop applying; it becomes a standard account. You can still see friends, screen time and spending.
18	Your accounts unlink automatically.

What the controls can’t do

- Some games have their **own chat** built by the game’s creator – your chat settings don’t reach it.
- Once someone persuades your child to move to **another app** (Discord, Snapchat, WhatsApp), no Roblox setting helps. This is a common grooming tactic.
- Blocking works one game at a time – new or copied games appear all the time.
- The time limit only covers Roblox, not the rest of the device.

If it doesn’t work

Problem	Try this
The email from Roblox hasn’t arrived	Check junk/spam, wait 10 minutes, then tap **Add parent** again and check the email address carefully.
The ID check keeps failing	Use good light, no glare, all four corners in view – or use a credit card instead.
I can’t see a setting mentioned here	Update the Roblox app. Some settings only appear for certain ages.
My child has more than one account	Link every account – controls only apply to the linked one.

How to report something in a game

1. Tap the **Roblox menu** button at the top-left of the game screen.
2. Tap the **flag** next to the person's name, or the **Report** tab.
3. Choose **Person** or **Experience** and describe what happened.
   Report the actual message or game, not just their profile – Roblox can't act on a profile alone. Take a screenshot first.

Talk about it

Settings help, but talking helps more. Ask which games they enjoy and who they play with. Agree a family rule: **"Nobody we only know from a game gets moved to another app – and you can always tell me, you won't be in trouble."**

Worried about something? Report it in the game, then: **CEOP** ceop.police.uk · **Childline** 0800 1111 · **Report Remove** childline.org.uk · In an emergency call **999**.
Official Roblox help: **about.roblox.com/parental-controls**. Roblox changes often – button names may differ slightly on your device.