

17 January 2025

GORDONBROCK WEEKLY

Dear Parents/Carers,

We've had another wonderful week at GB!

Some of our green-fingered Year 3/4 children have started developing an area of the school grounds near to the community entrance on Gordonbrock Road. We'll share more about this exciting development in a future edition of the GB Weekly, and can't wait to see what plans they team have in store. Thank you to all involved – including Mrs Barber for organising and a parent, Miss Luxton, who is volunteering her time to support!

Our Year 6 pupils thoroughly enjoyed their Freshwater Theatre workshop on Tuesday, which proved to be a brilliantly immersive way to launch their new history unit about the Stone Age to the Iron Age.

Please keep a look out for your child's achievement ladder, which has been sent home in your child's bookbag today. A covering letter has been emailed to you which includes information that will support you in understanding the ladder. If you have any questions, please do speak to your child's class teacher.

Looking ahead to next week, we have more enrichment planned.

On Tuesday, Year 4 visit the British Museum, which will provide a fantastic opportunity to ignite their new history unit, The Maya: Marvellous or Macabre?

Year 3/4 parents, please don't forget, we have a Maths event at 8.20am on Thursday. Please see separate letter for details.

Later on Thursday morning, we are thrilled to welcome British saxophonist and flautist, Tony Kofi. Widely recognised as one of the leading Jazz saxophonists in the UK, he will perform for both KS1 and KS2 as part of Trinity Laban's 'Jazz on Tour' project, offering a unique cultural experience.

Finally, on Friday, Year 6 will participate in Talk Consent workshops, which will be a valuable session supporting their personal and social development.

It's shaping up to be another great week at GB and we're really looking forward to it!

Wishing you all a lovely weekend.

Mrs Wright

Christmas Jumper Donation Day

We know we've only just got back into the swing of things and we're certainly not thinking about Christmas 2025 already, however, we need your help!

We'd love for you to donate any Christmas jumpers that your children may have outgrown.

We need a variety of sizes, from 4- to 16-years-old.

All jumpers must be in washed and good condition.

Please bring in any donations to your child's class on **Friday, 7 February 2025**.



Thank you for your support!

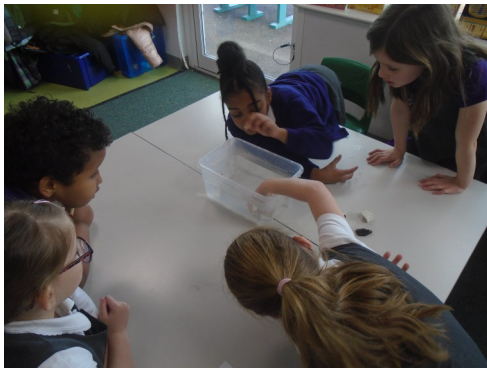
From Smiles to Sirens: Discovering People Who Help Us!

This week in nursery, we delved into the theme of People Who Help Us, with a special spotlight on dentists! The children discovered the vital tools dentists use, what to expect during a dental visit and how these professionals help keep our teeth strong and healthy. Our little learners had a fantastic time playing pretend dentists, practising tooth care and learning the importance of good oral hygiene in a fun, interactive way. Creativity was in full swing during our junk modelling activities, where the children crafted incredible vehicles like ambulances, boats and police cars—just like those used by other everyday heroes in our community. It's been an exciting week of hands-on exploration, imaginative play and gaining a deeper understanding of the wonderful people who work to keep us safe, healthy and happy!



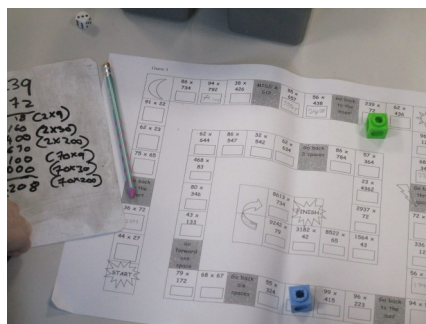
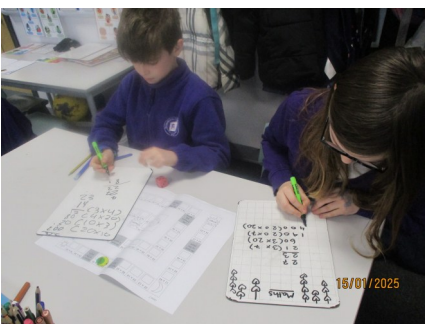
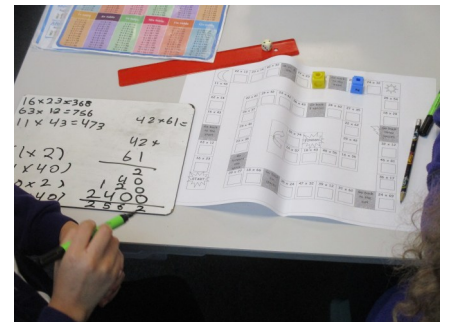
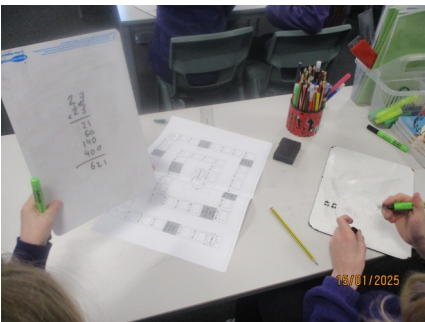
Exploring the Past: Year 3's Day at the Imperial War Museum!

In Year 3 this week, we have been writing recounts about our fantastic trip to the Imperial War Museum. We reflected on our favourite experiences, such as squeezing into the Morrison and Anderson shelters, counting the number of WWII vehicles we saw and listening to a fascinating talk about keeping safe during the Blitz. Later on in the week, we began exploring the different properties of rocks during an investigative science lesson, where we tested out the durability, permeability and density of metamorphic, sedimentary and igneous rocks, enabling us classify them in different ways. In English, we started a new class text called 'Frog Belly Rat Bone' and enjoyed creating our own sock monsters in response. We will then use these monsters as a creative tool to help us begin writing our own non-chronological reports.



Year 5 Multiplying with Maths Board Games!

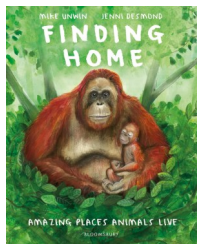
This week in Year 5, we mastered the art of multiplying large numbers using the expanded column method in Maths. To showcase our skills and practise the technique, we played exciting board games filled with maths challenges along the way. While we competed against our partners, teamwork and collaboration were encouraged—helping each other out whenever someone got stuck! It was a fun and engaging way to build confidence in our learning.



Mrs Wright's Recommended Reads



Finding Home: Amazing Places Animals Live by Mike Unwin



Finding Home is a celebration of animals and their drive to survive no matter the odds - finding shelter in every nook and cranny on Earth, from the obvious to the unusual. With rich, vivid non-fiction storytelling and arresting illustrations, this is an essential collection for anyone fascinated by animals and the wild ways they live.

Age 7-9

A stunning sequel from Mike Unwin and Jenni Desmond, the internationally bestselling duo behind Migration.

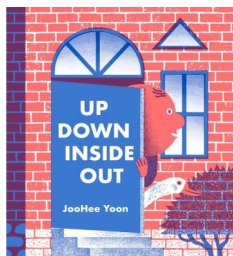
Olivetti By Millington

Being a typewriter is not as easy as it looks. Surrounded by books (notorious attention hogs) and recently replaced by a computer, Olivetti has been forgotten by the Brindle family - the humans he's lived with for years. The Brindles are busy: Dad and Mum work constantly, three of their children put the extra in extra-curriculars, and Ernest, their shy twelve-year-old, goes off alone to read. When Olivetti learns Mum has mysteriously gone missing, he believes he can help find her. He breaks the only rule of his 'kind' and types back to Ernest, who must face what he and his family have been running from, The Everything That Happened. Only by working together will they find the parts of themselves they've lost.



Age 8-12

Up Down Inside Out Written by Joohee Yoon



Up Down Inside Out is another innovative and surprising book from artist and bookmaker JooHee Yoon. This time, she takes up aphorisms and gives them wit and playfulness through visual explanation. Graphically gorgeous and mentally stimulating, this is a book for all ages, as well as for the ages.

Age 6-10

UN Convention on the Right of the Child

Article of the Week

We are very proud to be a Unicef Rights Respecting School, having achieved the **Unicef UK Silver - Rights Aware Award**.

To help children carry on the discussion at home, we will be focussing different articles of the convention in each newsletter so that our families can explore the rights and meanings together.

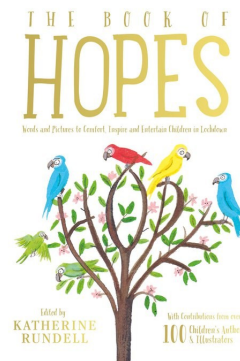


AIMS OF EDUCATION

Article 29 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) outlines the fundamental aims of education, emphasizing its role in the holistic development of children. Education, as articulated in this article, goes beyond academic achievement, aiming to nurture children's personality, talents, and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential.

This week, we explored the importance of building self-efficacy and resilience by connecting the **UNICEF Rights of the Child** to strategies for overcoming challenges.

In our KS1 assembly this week, we shared the inspiring story of *Hope-a-potamus*— from *The Book of Hopes*— helping our younger learners understand how hope and perseverance can help them navigate difficulties.



For KS2, we focused on practical strategies to face challenges, using a butterfly drawing activity to symbolise growth and transformation.



Miss White demonstrated these techniques, thoughtfully incorporating feedback from the children and Miss Barry, to empower children with tools to tackle obstacles and thrive.

unicef UNITED KINGDOM
RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOLS

The rights of a child, as outlined by UNICEF, are fundamental principles designed to ensure every child can grow, develop and thrive in a safe, healthy and supportive environment. These rights, enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), focus on protecting children from harm, promoting their well-being and empowering them to participate in decisions that affect their lives. Key rights include the right to education, healthcare, protection from exploitation and the right to express their opinions. UNICEF works globally to ensure that these rights are upheld for all children, regardless of their background or circumstance.

CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

TIKTOK



WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Adults tend to associate online videos with YouTube – but among teens, TikTok is king. The app provides a stream of short clips tailored to users' interests, based on what they've already watched. Around half of British children use TikTok, and while much of the content is benign, Ofcom considers it the app where youngsters "were most likely to encounter a potential harm".

AGE-INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

While TikTok's Following feed only displays videos from familiar creators, For You is a collection based on a user's previously watched clips. Most of these videos will probably be inoffensive, but the app could potentially show something unsuitable. If children then engage with this content, more like it will follow. TikTok's guidelines prohibit the sharing of illegal or inappropriate content, but the huge number of uploads means that a small amount inevitably slips through.



CONTACT WITH STRANGERS

With more than 1.5 billion users globally, the potential for contact from strangers on TikTok is high – especially as accounts created by over-18s (or young people using a fake date of birth) are set to public 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 enables anyone to download or comment on them.



BODY IMAGE AND DANGEROUS CHALLENGES

According to Ofcom, most online harms for teens are body image related for girls (promoting unhealthy eating, body shaming and so on) and dangerous stunts for boys. Both are prevalent on TikTok. One extreme example of the latter was the "blackout" trend, which encouraged users to hold their breath until they passed out from a lack of oxygen. This led to two families filing lawsuits against TikTok over the tragic deaths of their children.



MISINFORMATION AND RADICALISATION

Although the short videos on TikTok tend to be more frivolous than the longer ones on YouTube, clips can still influence impressionable minds in a negative way. Not only is there plenty of dangerous misinformation on TikTok, but Ofcom reports that nearly a third of 12 to 15-year-olds use TikTok as a news source – so you should be wary of misogynistic, racist or conspiracy-themed material shaping how they see the world.

IN-APP SPENDING

TikTok is free, but users have the option to buy TikTok coins, which can be used to purchase gifts for content creators. Coin bundles range from £9.99 to an eye-watering £99; while that may not sound appealing, the app still generated £7.9 billion in user spending in 2023. TikTok's policy is that under-18s can't make in-app purchases, but it's possible to bypass this with a fake birth date.



ADDICTIVE DESIGN

With its constant stream of eye-catching videos, TikTok can be addictive to young brains. In 2024, UK children spent an average of 127 minutes per day on the app; that's twice as much as in 2020. Excessive use can interfere with young people's sleep patterns – often leading to irritability – and distract them from other, healthier activities. The instantly skippable nature of bite-size videos may also impact children's ability to maintain focus.



Advice for Parents & Educators

ENABLE FAMILY PAIRING

Family Pairing allows parents to link their TikTok account to their child's, and control 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 can't alter these settings without parental approval.



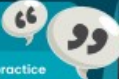
BLOCK IN-APP SPENDING

If a child is using an iPhone or Android device to access TikTok, you can alter their settings to prevent them from making in-app purchases. We'd recommend enabling this feature, as it can be quite easy for a young person to spend a significant amount of real money buying TikTok coins to unlock more features of the app – sometimes without even realising.



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 that they don't share any identifying personal information, 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 also worth talking about misinformation and propaganda, and how to identify it.



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.



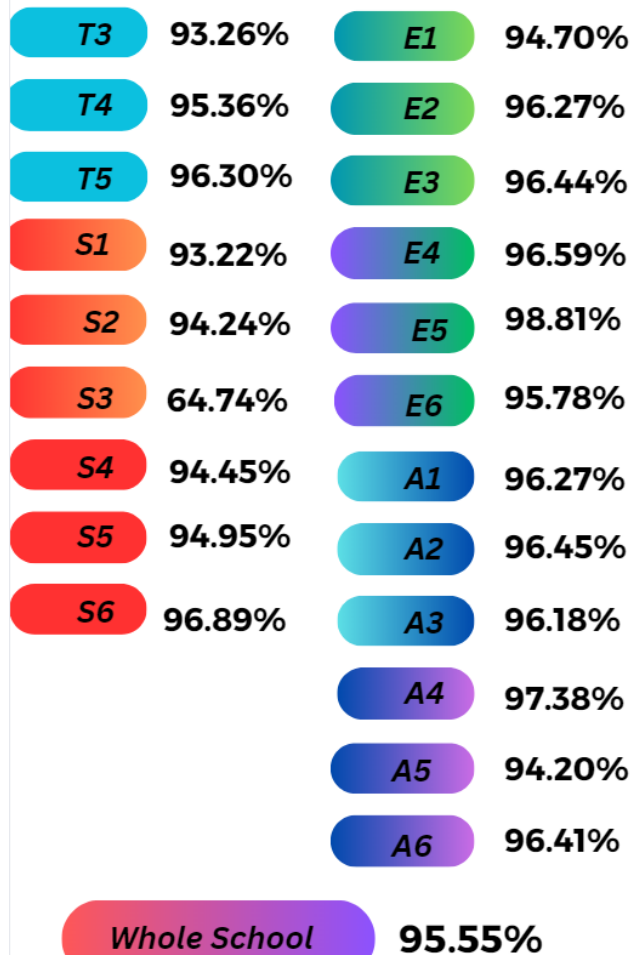
Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/tiktok-2025>

IMPORTANT DATES

21/01/2025	Y4 British Museum Trip
23/01/2025	Year 3/4 Maths Parent Event (8.20-8.45am) Jazz on Tour Performance
24/01/2025	Y6 Talk Consent Workshop
27/01/2025	School Journey Meeting for Y5 Parents only (5.30pm)
27/01/2025	Buddy Week
29/01/2025	Year 1 Assembly (9.10am)
01/02/2025	LGBT + History Month
03/02/2024	Children's Mental Health Week
04/02/2025	Y1 Victorian House Workshop
06/02/2025	Reception Astronomy Roadshow
12/02/2025	Open Morning
13/02/2025	Parents' Evening No After-School Clubs
wb. 17/02/2025	Half Term Break
24/02/2025	Children back to school
03-07/03/2025	Y5 School Journey
07/03/2025	International Women's Day

GB ATTENDANCE WEEKLY CHALLENGE

FROM THE 6TH TO THE 10TH OF JANUARY 2025



Uniforms

School Uniform orders are processed on Thursdays. We will send you a text message to let you know your order is ready to collect from the office pick up time. You will be able to check the sizes or make changes. If you are unable to pick it up we can send it with your child the next working day.

[Click here to go to the GB Shop](#)