



The Phoenix Flier

The Yarm Preparatory School Newsletter

Issue 790—Friday 8th November 2024

A message from Mr Sawyer

Welcome to this week's edition of the Phoenix Flier. I hope everyone had a restful and rejuvenating two-week break. We kicked off this half-term in jubilant spirits with our whole-school Diwali Day! The joy, colours, and sense of togetherness truly highlighted the incredible diversity we enjoy celebrating as a school community. It was fantastic to see pupils of all ages embracing the traditions, learning about the festival, and engaging in such vibrant activities. Thanks go to the YPSSC for their support of our cultural festivals. In other areas of school this week, things have been suitably productive and enjoyable. Preparations for our second informal music concert are underway, our cross country team have been in action and we have started to turn our thoughts towards Remembrance Day next week.

You may notice our staff are proudly supporting Movember, raising awareness and funds for men's health – please cheer us on as the facial hair grows! We will culminate our Movember efforts with a whole school crazy hair day on Friday 29th November. If you would like to sponsor our efforts please go to our [team page](#). Looking further ahead, next weekend brings our much-anticipated Christmas Indoor Market, a perfect opportunity to get into the festive spirit and do some holiday shopping while supporting local businesses and school initiatives. We hope to see many of you there!

Bill Sawyer

Head's Challenge: You answer me, although I never ask you questions. What am I?

Photo of the Week: We celebrated Diwali on Monday, taking part in a whole school bhangra dance led by Mrs Ladhar and Mrs Gupta Bhalla!



Tes Schools Awards 2024

Winner

Independent
Prep School
of the Year



Diwali

We celebrated Diwali on Monday, with the children wearing tradition Indian dress or colourful clothing. 3B enjoyed the assembly on Diwali with Mrs Ladhar and Mrs Gupta Bhalla. Here are our thoughts:

Annabel - Diwali is a festival. It is celebrated all over the world.

Violet - Diwali is about Rama and Sita and how they got back from the forest.

Matthew - I know that Diwali is the celebration of light.

Ada - During Diwali they do fireworks.

Abeer - When we do Diwali we do fireworks and firework fountains.

Wilfred - We loved to do the bhangra dancing.

Oliver - People make rangoli patterns to bring good luck .

Louie - People light lots of little candles called 'Diyas'.

Ava - When I was at home I lit the little candle and it smelled so beautiful.

Mrs Barton



CEOP

The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) aims to keep children and young people safe from sexual abuse and grooming online.



Parents, carers and children can report a concern about child sexual abuse or online exploitation to the CEOP Safety Centre.

ANY CHILD IN IMMEDIATE DANGER SHOULD ALWAYS CALL 999 FIRST.

You can contact CEOP by clicking on the logo on this page. This links to the CEOP website where you can report any concerns you may have. Alternatively, click www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/.

Mr Stone

HELP! Plastic Bottles

Our DT department would be grateful for any donations of clear plastic empty 2 litre drinks bottles. Please send any in with your child. Thank you.

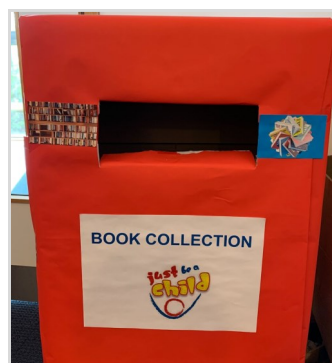
Mrs Smith

Just Be a Child Book Collection

We were delighted to welcome 6th Formers and former Prep pupils, Ameen Khunda and Haider Ali, to give an assembly last week. They spoke about the *Community Action Group* project they are working on, on behalf of the charity **Just Be a Child**. The charity's focus is to give children in Kenya the chance to experience a childhood of imagination by giving them toys, books and taking them on trips.

Ameen and Haider have asked the Prep School community to come together and collect our old children's books to give hope to children who are less fortunate by donating them to the charity. All of us have old children books lying on our shelves, so why not give them to benefit those in need?

If your child (or you!) have some books you would like to donate, please bring them to school **on Monday**. We have



set up some book collection boxes in the library for the books to be dropped into. The boys will then come and collect them on Friday November 15th.

Mr Stone

Smartphone Free Childhood

In our increasingly digital world, concerns about smartphone use among children are growing. You [will no doubt have seen recent news articles](#) exploring how parents in some school communities are getting together to run an initiative to work together, ensuring children are not given such devices before the age of 14, with [Smartphone Free Childhood](#) launching as a grassroots campaign to support parents in this.

Many studies suggest that early exposure to smartphones can negatively impact mental health and social development. To address this, we encourage parents to consider joining a community-wide initiative to delay smartphone use until their children are at least 14 years old. By coming together and setting this common standard, we can better protect our children's wellbeing. If you are interested in learning more or need support with this initiative, please [get in touch with Mr Stone directly](#).

Mr Stone

Partnerships HELP!

As part of our partnerships work, we are running a project with Stockton Borough Council to get 1000 Year 4 children across the borough to produce a clay figure of themselves. These will be used for an art installation on the steps cascading down to the River Tees that will be made when the Stockton riverside development is completed in Summer 2026.

Naturally we are a fair distance from that point, meaning we will need to store the figures as the children make them! As such, **we are desperately looking for old wine boxes (wooden or card) with the bottle separators, wine glass cases (with the separators) and bubble wrap**, so we can preserve the models as safely as possible until then.

If you are able to help out, please send any [donations in or contact Mr Stone](#).

Mr Stone

Flu Vaccinations

The School Aged Immunisation Service will be visiting School on Friday 22nd November to deliver the nasal flu spray vaccination. [Please visit the link here to provide your consent online](#).

Mrs Wheatley

Year 4 in the Library

The Year 4 children have thoroughly enjoyed choosing their first books from the library. They were VERY excited and have been discussing the books with each other.

Mr Frank



Christmas Letter

Our 'Everything you need to know about Christmas in the Preparatory School' letter will be going out next week, featuring all of the key details for the important events coming up before the end of term, including how to order tickets for the Festival of Carols and Year 3 Christmas Play. Keep an eye on your inboxes!

Mr Stone

Coming Up at the PAA

[Astronomy Talks – Exploding Stars—26th November 2024, 7pm](#)

Exploding Stars – Supernovae, neutron stars and black holes.

In this talk we will consider the life cycles of stars more massive than the Sun. These explode at the end of their lives as spectacular supernovae – so bright that they can be seen across the universe. Their endpoints are either dense exotic objects known as neutron stars or, for the most massive stars, the enigmatic black hole.

[Snow White Panto—Thursday 12th—Tuesday 24th December](#)

Mirror mirror on the wall....

What's the fairest pantomime of them all?

It's Snow White of course, and it's heading to us this Christmas.... Oh yes it is!

Tom Rolfe Productions are delighted to be back with a brand new production bursting with dazzling costumes, hilarious comedy, sensational singing, beautiful scenery and the coolest

Magnificent Seven ever! Will the wicked Queen Horibella manage to win the hand of Prince Charming? Will Snow White find the secret cottage? Will everyone live happily ever after?

Find out by booking your tickets today! **Please note:** Monday 23rd December 11am, is our relaxed and BSL performance.

Holiday School Dates

Christmas 2024: - 16th—20th December 2024

Easter 2025: - 7th—11th April 2025

Summer 2025: - 14th July—1st August 2025

YPSSC

PreLoved Uniform

Nursery, Pre Prep, Prep & Senior Uniform

PE and Games

See Listings on [Classlist](#) or
Email Us

YPSSC@Yarmschool.org

Donations of good condition, clean uniform and PE & Games items accepted all year. Kindly bag them and label them with 'YPSSC PreLoved Donations' and drop them at either Pre Prep, Prep or Senior School Reception.

Thank you!!

Christmas Art Competition 2024!

This year the challenge is to create an *Advent calendar*. You can use any materials to create your masterpiece. The more unusual and original the design is, the better!

I can't wait to see them! Please hand entries to Mrs Shepherd by 6th December. All entries must have your name and form clearly written on them.



Tooled Up Education

Tooled Up has always featured a broad range of voices and resources relating to neurodiversity. We want to support families who have neurodiverse children, inform people who are coming to the topic for the first time, and help to challenge common “neuromyths” that still dictate much of what people think about issues such as autism and ADHD.

Our popular [Busting Neuromyths](#) webinar is a great place to start. Dr Jo Van Herwegen is a Professor in Developmental Psychology and Education at UCL. In the webinar she tackles some of the common myths relating to learning styles, sides of the brain and our expectations of neurodiverse people.

If you're the parent of a child with ADHD, Toolled Up has a wealth of resources that can help you. From last year's ADHD conference, Dr Ned Hallowell's session [How to Live Joyfully and Successfully with ADHD](#) and Dr Vilas Sawrikar's [ADHD Positive Parenting Toolkit](#) are sources of reassurance and inspiration, full of practical ideas and first-hand experience.

Most recently, we hosted Consultant Psychiatrist Professor Peter Hill for [A Parents' and Educators' Guide to ADHD Medication](#). Watch to learn more about how medication works and what the research says about potential side-effects.

Our webinar [The Autistic Child: What Every Parent or Carer Needs to Know](#) offers valuable insight into autism diagnosis and what it means for the child and the family. A brilliant accompaniment would be this guide to [Neuro-Affirming Resources](#) that are all aimed at helping young people understand neurodiversity.

More information and links to helpful Toolled Up resources can be found in our [Quick Guide to Neurodiversity](#). This offers an overview of the subject together with practical information and a guide to all the ways that Toolled Up can help.

The Toolled Up library is already packed with almost 350 evidence-based resources, including interviews with over 80 leading experts from around the world. But, it's your library and we want to know how else we can help you? What new resources would you like to see? Which ones do you love? What could we do better?

We always value your feedback and want to ensure that we are giving you the resources that you need. Email us at research@tooledupeducation.com to let us know how we are doing!

A quick reminder As a parent at a Toolled Up school, you have full unlimited access to the Toolled Up library. If you have not created your account yet, click [here to register for an account](#). It takes less than 2 minutes to enter your details and unique school PIN: YPSII03 and if you need assistance, we are always happy to help. If you already have an account and you have forgotten your password, then simply click on any of the resource links above, click "Lost your password" and follow the instructions.

Dr Kathy Weston



Neuro-Affirming Resources

TOOLED UP[®]

BECAUSE EVIDENCE MATTERS

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

FORTNITE



WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Fortnite was launched back in 2017, but it remains massively popular – with more than 650 million active players. That’s partially due to the competitive nature of its player-vs-player combat, its pop culture crossovers and its constantly shifting map. Significant updates are rolled out with each new version of the game – known as ‘chapters’ – and within these sit shorter ‘seasons’.

ALWAYS ONLINE

There’s no single-player offline mode in Fortnite: it can only be played online. Internet access can sometimes be an issue when you’re out and about (both in terms of connectivity and using up data), so you may find that dedicated young Fortnite players are often less enthusiastic about trips away – such as days out and holidays – than you might expect.

IN-GAME COSTS

Fortnite is free to download and play, but it does offer various additional purchases – cosmetic ‘skins’, music tracks and LEGO items – which don’t really impact on gameplay but can cost a significant amount. These items are bought with in-game currency, V-Bucks – earned through completing the Battle Pass (which also costs V-Bucks) and can also be purchased from the game’s store for real money.

POP CULTURE REFERENCES

Part of Fortnite’s appeal is its ongoing crossovers with other popular franchises, ranging from movies and TV shows like Family Guy and Avatar: The Last Airbender to comic book characters including Batman to other games such as Street Fighter. This means you could have children asking questions about the monster from Alien or Geralt from The Witcher a little sooner than you otherwise might have.

CROSSPLAY AND PARTY CHAT

Fortnite is popular with many gamers of various ages. ‘Crossplay’ lets friends play with each other, regardless of whether they’re on an Xbox, PlayStation, Nintendo Switch or PC – while the ‘party chat’ feature allows them to talk to each other during the game. This can, however, put youngsters at risk of hearing inappropriate language from older players in the heat of virtual combat.

VIRTUAL VIOLENCE

At its core, there’s no avoiding that Fortnite is about shooting other players to eliminate them from the contest. That said, there’s no blood or gore. The violence is rendered in a cartoonish style, and there are frequent comical touches to lighten the mood, such as fishing mini-games and dancing emotes. Machine guns, shotguns and other weapons often look and behave realistically, however, so discretion is advised.

FREQUENT UPDATES

The game’s developers release content in ‘seasons’ that usually run for around ten weeks. Each fresh update sees items added to the in-game store, changes to the environment’s map and a different over-arching theme (such as ‘medieval’, ‘pirates’ or ‘party’). These regular renewals help to hold players’ interest – but also give young gamers plenty of reasons to keep coming back.

Advice for Parents & Educators

MATCH GAMING TIMES

Younger players tend to play Fortnite with their friends. With that in mind, it could be worth speaking to the parents and carers of a child’s social group and coordinating their gaming around certain times of day. Safety in numbers is obviously a factor here, but it will also help children feel that they’re getting adequate opportunities to socialise with their friends online.

SET SPENDING LIMITS

Fortnite’s rotating store is a not-so-subtle mechanism for coaxing players into buying sought-after items before they disappear for weeks or months. This could lead to surprise transactions on bank cards if children are tempted into an impulse purchase. Parents could consider getting a prepaid card for the child or ensuring that purchases require adult authorisation. This can be done through parental settings on a console or account settings in the Epic Games app on PC.

USE UPDATES AS REWARDS

Fortnite’s seasonal updates are free, but each also brings the option of a ‘battle pass’, unlocking exclusive rewards for playing the game and completing set challenges. The passes cost around £8 and are also available as part of larger bundles. The purchase of passes can be an effective reward to young Fortnite fans for good behaviour or academic performance, or as an incentive for completing chores like tidying their room.

BE WARY OF SCAMS

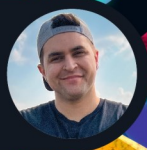
The immense popularity of Fortnite with younger audiences – that are generally more trusting – means there’s no shortage of scammers looking to fraudulently obtain passwords and other personal data through techniques like phishing. As the developers point out on many of Fortnite’s loading screens, they never ask for a player’s account password outside of the game: make sure any young player knows this.

ENJOY FORTNITE TOGETHER

Fortnite also offers split-screen gameplay, meaning that two people can play simultaneously on the same console or computer. This can be a good option for siblings or for when a child’s friends visit, but it also offers an opportunity for parents and carers to do something fun with their child, while also making sure they’re playing the game safely. Who knows? You might even teach them a thing or two!

Meet Our Expert

Lloyd Coombes is Editor in Chief of gaming and esports site GGRecon and has worked in the gaming media for around four years. A long-time gamer, he is also a parent and therefore a keen advocate of online safety. Writing mainly about tech and fitness, his articles have been published on influential sites including IGN and TechRadar.





Yarm School Association

CHRISTMAS INDOOR MARKET

SATURDAY 16TH NOVEMBER

10AM - 4PM, YARM SCHOOL

ADULTS £4, CHILDREN FREE, PAY ON THE DOOR

SANTA'S GROTTTO

CRAFT STALLS

UNIQUE GIFTS

FOOD & DRINK

CHILDREN'S GAMES



VISIT SANTA'S GROTTTO

Just £7.50 per child

Coming Up

[You can find the Yarm School calendar for the Autumn Term by clicking here](#)

NOVEMBER 2024

Mon 11	Remembrance assembly Anti-Bullying Week Activities Carousel 2 begins (Y4-6) YPSSC (6pm; Library)
Tue 12	NEJS Chess Tournament (QEGS; 8.15am depart, 5.30pm return)
Wed 13	***NEW DATE*** Informal Concert (4-5pm)
Thu 14	Stephenson Charity Morning
Fri 15	U10 Girls' Hockey v Barnard Castle (away; 2.15pm start, 4.30pm return) U11 Girls' Hockey v Barnard Castle (home; 2.15pm start)
Sat 16	Senior School Christmas Craft Fair
Tue 19	Curiosity Emporium (1pm; Library) U8 Rugby training with Durham (away; 2pm start, 4.15pm return) Y2 Silver Stories visit to Middleton Hall (4.45pm return)
Wed 20	Year 6 Senior School Taster Afternoon (3-6.30pm)
Thu 21	U9 Girls' Hockey v Durham School (away; 2pm start, 4.30pm return) U9 Rugby Festival at DCSF (1.30pm start, 4pm return)
Fri 22	NEJS Mass Participation Sports (Green Lane/Senior School; 11am-3pm) Flu Vaccinations for Reception-Year 6
Sat 23	Prep Ball (PAA; 7pm)
Mon 25	ABRSM examinations Y3 Activities Carousel 2 begins (Arkwright/Brunel still swimming)
Tue 26	Beatbox workshops
Wed 27	Beatbox workshops
Thu 28	Beatbox workshops
Fri 29	U10/11 Hockey v Red House (away; 2.15pm start, 3.55pm return) U10/11 Rugby v Durham School (home; 2.15pm start)

DECEMBER 2024

Mon 2	Clubs and activities finish this week No Year 3 swimming today Reports to parents
Tue 3	EYFS Nativity Performance (Prep Hall; 2.230pm) Nursery Information Event for new starters

Wed 4 Prep Carol Service (PAA; 5.30pm)

Thu 5 Pre-Prep Nativity (Prep Hall; 5pm)

Term Dates

Autumn Term 2024

Half term begins	Friday, 18th October 2024 (after school)
Pupils return	Monday, 4th November 2024
Term ends	Friday, 13th December 2024 (after school; no after school care)

Spring Term 2025

Pupils return	Monday, 6th January 2025
Half term begins	Thursday, 20th February 2025 (after school)
INSET Day Friday	21st February 2025
Pupils return	Monday 3rd March 2025
Term ends Friday	4th April 2025 (after school)

Summer Term, 2025

Pupils return	Wednesday, 23rd April 2025
Bank Holiday	Monday, 5th May 2025
Half term begins	Thursday, 22nd May 2025 (after school)
Pupils return	Monday, 2nd June 2025
Term ends (after Prize Giving)	Thursday, 3rd July 2025

Celebration Assembly

	Values	Endeavour
3B	Chloe X.	Rose S.
3J	Ethan S.	Honey C.
3P	Poppy C-W.	Isabelle F.
4F	Senon W.	Buddy T.
4J	Edie P.	Oscar W.
4SU	Jayden W.	Ahaana C.
5G	Austin O.	Henry F.
5S	Harrison G.	Dara J.
5W	Amani R.	Mana H.
6H	Rory B.	Rosa W.
6K	Jack A.	Manha A.
6L	Aice W.	Angus F.

Head Teacher Award: Year 4—Felicity T. **Year 5**—Hattie P. (2), Beatrice T. **Year 6**—Annabelle M.