

HEADMASTER'S WELCOME

I watched the Fifth Year Play last night - Journey's End - and cannot praise the pupils and staff involved enough for the powerful and moving production of this tense and challenging piece. A stunning set in the Studio Theatre with atmospheric sound and lighting, and an intense, broody yet movingly human performance by all of the cast, some of whom had hundreds of lines to read. All in all, a triumph... and I believe there are a few precious tickets left for tonight, if you can get to the PAA website quickly enough!

Last weekend's Christmas Indoor Market was a roaring success, with a huge number of visitors coming to take advantage of the shopping and Father Christmas opportunities. A real community effort, with parents, staff and pupils all pitching in to make the event run smoothly - thank you to all.

Monday saw a fascinating Careers Cluster event, with a busy Friarage Theatre exploring the various avenues into and innumerable paths through a career in computer science. I am grateful to all the panellists, including current and former pupils,

and parents, as well as friends of the school from industry and academia.

We welcomed Year 6 pupils from the Prep for a taster afternoon and another opportunity to familiarise themselves with the Senior School and throw themselves into sessions in DT, Science and a (very chilly indeed) Outdoor Education session, before a welcome BBQ in the warmth of the dining hall. Pupils and staff at the Senior School made their visit welcoming and fun, and I'm grateful to all involved.

The newsletter provides yet another meandering tour through a busy week

at Yarm, with news of a Christmas shoebox appeal, an opportunity to be involved in/on a singing Christmas Tree and carols on the cobbles, Alex's terrific piano success, details of Giving Week, the latest episode of The House of Comments, Artists' Corner, careers, student societies and other fascinating updates.

Dr Huw Williams



Year 6 pupils from Prep School visited for a taster session!

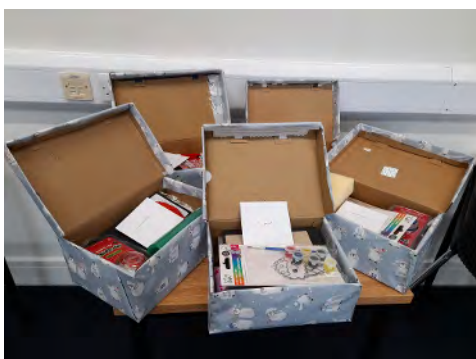
CHRISTMAS SHOEBOX APPEAL!



Last week, the Community Action Group purchased and packed a good number of Christmas shoeboxes containing gifts and essential items for the charity Children in Distress. The charity has been running the 'Love in a Box' scheme for 35 years, delivering these presents to vulnerable children and senior citizens in Romania for Christmas. For many, their shoebox is the only gift they'll get at Christmas.

Thank you to all pupils and staff who supported our Bonfire Night stall and activities which enabled us to support this very worthwhile cause.

Ms H Blakemore



WHAT HAVE ELON MUSK, MISS RHODES, THE ILLUMINATI, DONALD TRUMP AND THE POPE GOT IN COMMON?

Well these were just some of the "most powerful people in the world" suggested by the EconBus Soc audience last week. Ok, ok I'll confess that I put myself forward!!!

With a pre session "blurb", asking "Who has the power to shape the beliefs of generations without them realising?" EconBus Soc Chair Harvey had already instilled curiosity into the Sixth Form and he was quick to ask if they were one of the many who have been unintentionally influenced by those in power.

In a fascinating and thought provoking presentation, which raised as many questions as it answered, Harvey explored whether in truth it is the media who are actually the most powerful people in the world and he suggested that we need to be mindful of bias, persuasion and influence affecting our decision making. Indeed we must remain open minded and inquisitive.

We are really grateful to Harvey for provoking us to think!

Miss C Rhodes



ALEX TRIUMPHS AT THE WHARFEDALE PIANO COMPETITION!



We are delighted to celebrate the remarkable success of Third Year Pupil and Music Scholar, Alex Benstead, who achieved first prize in the highly esteemed Dame Fanny Waterman Recital category at the Wharfedale Piano Competition. This category, named after Dame Fanny Waterman, a world-renowned piano pedagogue and co-founder of the Leeds International Piano Competition, is a highlight of the Wharfedale Festival. It challenges young pianists to showcase technical brilliance and musical maturity. Alex

rose to the occasion, performing a program of three demanding pieces for an audience of 150 people, leaving everyone in awe of his artistry and composure.

Months of dedicated preparation preceded this accomplishment. Alex's meticulous practice involved mastering challenging repertoire, refining his technique, and expressing nuanced musicality. His commitment and resilience shone through on the day, impressing the judge and audience alike.

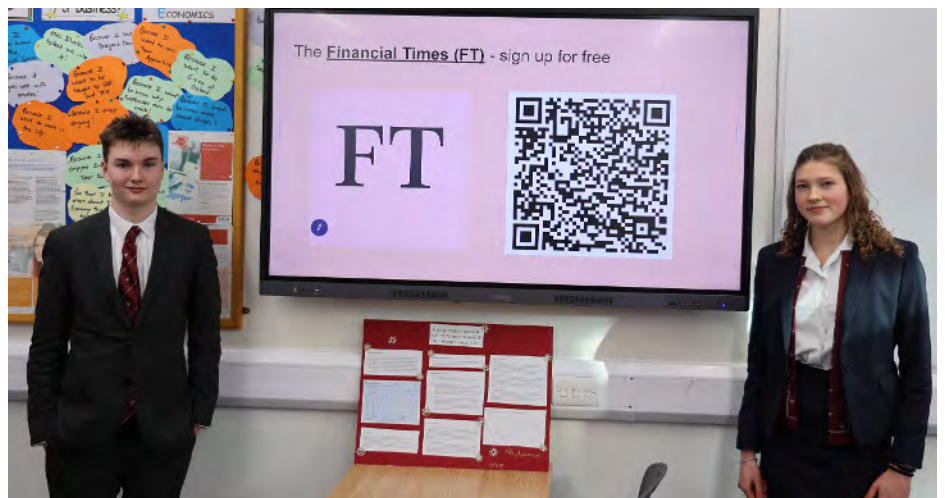
As part of his prize, Alex has been invited back to Ilkley next year for a unique opportunity to be mentored by a professional concert pianist. He will also perform in a special recital alongside his mentor, marking another exciting chapter in his musical journey.

Alex's success is an inspiration to aspiring musicians across the school. Congratulations, Alex—your hard work has truly paid off, and we can't wait to see what you achieve next!

Mr R Williams

FT FOR GEN Z

Not one but two talks at EconBus Soc on Thursday, as Megan and Noah introduced the Sixth Form to the benefits of the Financial Times (arguably less bias than some other media and free readership for students!). They also explained their role as Student Advocates and detailed the benefits of the programme.



Miss C Rhodes

Click here for tickets!



COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS CONCERT

IN THE PAA

SATURDAY, 7TH DECEMBER, 6:30PM

SUNDAY, 8TH DECEMBER, 2:00PM

Yarm School's annual festive favourite - don't miss it!

TICKETS £6 - WWW.THEPAAONLINE.ORG - 01642 792587



NIGERIAN MUSICIAN SPEAKS TO POLITICS SOCIETY



In Nigeria the name Eedris Abdulkareem is instantly recognisable. Our guest wrote many years ago what is considered to be the unofficial national anthem of his country - Jaga Jaga (or Shambles) describes the deteriorated state of public services, staggeringly high levels of corruption, and the failure of the state to serve its citizens. Eedris was one of the earliest and biggest voices of rap in Nigeria and continues to make music to this day. He has an enormous following online, his music

is instantly recognisable, and he is a leading figure in counter-cultural movements. In 2000 he was chosen to carry the Olympic torch for Nigeria. Paradoxically it is this fame and recognition that have helped, most of the time, to keep Eedris safe from a state too sensitive to endure his public criticism of its corruption. When he walks in the street he is swiftly surrounded by followers, making his disappearance all the more challenging. On another occasion orders given to soldiers at a

checkpoint to dispose of him led to his release when the soldiers realised who he was, and shared their sympathy with his messages. Eedris told an amusing anecdote of an occasion when the President of the country whilst attending an international economic conference, hearing the song Jaga Jaga play, got up and started dancing, not realising until the deputy President alerted him to the fact, that the song was famously critical of the behaviour of the President.

Eedris is visiting the UK for a few months, networking with human rights organisations, conducting research, writing music and also performing some benefit concerts for the victims of flooding in northern Nigeria. Our audience were clearly awestruck by the life and times of our guest, asking a heap of probing questions and even joining Eedris for an inspiring sing along at the end of the session. Really not a typical Friday lunchtime!

Mr S Edwards

THIS HOUSE SUPPORTS THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A FOUR-DAY SCHOOL WEEK

On Monday, the school's afternoon assembly was the scene of a compelling debate - 'This House supports the implementation of a four-day school week'. This debate entailed two-minute speeches from the two speakers on either side of the argument, whose points were subject

to one question each from one of the debate's Judges, Dr Williams. The proposition succinctly and successfully argued the benefits of the motion, such as the positive impact on many students' mental health and the relief it could bring to a teacher's workload. Equally, the

opposition raised some pertinent questions about the increased cost of childcare and a potential decrease in students' productivity. Ultimately, both sides' reasoning was persuasive and the school eagerly awaits the debate's outcome next week.

Liv Gosney, Lower Sixth

CAREER CLUSTER IN COMPUTER SCIENCE



This week the Career Department's latest offering, focused around Computer Science, turned out to be as much of a celebration as it was an evening of information. Around seventy members of the audience gathered to listen to a number of panels of guests. Computer Science is very much an established subject at Yarm School, with the GCSE in its fourth year and the current Lower Sixth in the inaugural year of the A Level. The cluster event began with representation from the A Level cohort with Alice, Freya and Dheeraj answering a raft of questions about their experiences. This was followed by four former students all now working in various fields of Computer Science, with each having pursued

different routes to their current position, including working at Skyscanner and Meta. It was then the turn of those more well established in their careers with representation from IBM, Microsoft as well as academics from universities.

There really was a celebratory atmosphere to the evening with all participants enthusing about their work, and the many opportunities that exist in this field, with all concurring that these opportunities are only set to expand in the future. There was a good deal of sharing of advice and experience, not least during the final part of the evening, a networking session whilst enjoying a tasty buffet.

We were delighted to welcome a good number of pupils and their parents from other schools, and there was a clear and evident excitement around the enjoyment, utility and longevity of this rapidly evolving area of employment. I would like to thank all of our guests for their generosity in agreeing to participate, and we very much look forward to welcoming back at some point in the future current Yarm students as they establish themselves in significant careers focused around Computer Science.

Mr S Edwards

[To access the booklet, click here.](#)



PAA Gift Vouchers - Now Available!

Stuck for a special gift idea?

Share the magic of theatre this Christmas with a PAA voucher you can use to see everything from fantastic music, moving live theatre, NT screenings and more!

Buy online at: bit.ly/paa-voucher

GIVING WEEK

Our first whole-school charity week is Giving Week from Monday 2nd to Friday 6th December.

The Giving Week is an opportunity to consider the impact that material objects have on people's lives and how donating unneeded things to those less fortunate than ourselves can make a big, positive difference.

This is especially true for the festive period, where we are all exposed to many adverts focusing on buying and owning more "things". When considering this along with the increasing cost of everyday items and food, we have chosen as a school to focus on supporting food banks this year.

Each house has a different focus, as detailed below, in order to cover the range of items that are needed and in high demand.

Friday 6th is Christmas Jumper Day! Please bring in £2 to wear a christmas jumper with your normal school uniform to raise money for the House charities.

AIDAN HOUSE - CANNED GOODS

These should be any canned food such as:

- ★ Soup
- ★ Tomatoes/ pasta sauce
- ★ Meat
- ★ Vegetables
- ★ Fruit



BEDE HOUSE - Drinks

- ★ Tea/coffee
- ★ UHT milk
- ★ UHT Fruit juice



CUTHBERT HOUSE - DRY GOODS

Any boxed or packaged food such as:

- ★ Cereal
- ★ Pasta
- ★ Rice
- ★ Lentils, beans and pulses
- ★ Biscuits



OSWALD HOUSE - TOILETRIES

- ★ Toiletries – deodorant, toilet paper, shower gel, shaving gel, disposable razors, shampoo/conditioner, soap, toothbrushes, tooth paste, nail clippers
- ★ Household items – laundry detergent, sponges/cloths, washing up liquid
- ★ Period products – sanitary towels and tampons
- ★ Baby supplies – nappies, baby wipes, baby wash



THE HOUSE OF COMMENTS POLITICAL PODCAST: EPISODE TWO

We are delighted to bring you the latest episode of the House of Comments. The team were delighted with the response to their first episode focused on the UK Party Political Conferences after the General Election, and have more swiftly to pull together an episode on the US Presidential Election. It

explores unsurprisingly the result, but digs into the reasons for this, and perhaps more importantly, the consequences. This episode Sophie Jewitt (U6) and Adam Elliott (L6) welcome Dan Townsend (U6) into the recording studio to share his reflections on the geopolitical and military implications of the Trump

victory. We hope you enjoy this episode and encourage you to share it with others who may find interest and enjoyment in it.

Mr S Edwards

[To access the podcast, click here.](#)



MED DEN SOCIETY TALK PUBLIC HEALTH POLICY

This week we had our first presentation from a Lower Sixth member: Harry D'Ambrogio. He talked about current public health policies including the 2018 soft drinks levy (known as the sugar tax) and fluoridation of water for dental health. Harry examined how the government addresses these public health issues in the UK.

Harry's presentation delved into the effectiveness of these interventions and raised important questions about the role of the government in shaping public health policies. He explored the pros and cons, providing a well-balanced perspective that sparked discussion among the audience. By presenting both the benefits and potential drawbacks of

each measure, he encouraged everyone to think critically about the balance between government regulation and personal responsibility.

He also allowed for audience interaction when asking for their opinions on the topic. We discussed what we would all prioritise our

money on to help enhance dental care. The conversation highlighted the importance of addressing the social factors that influence both dental hygiene and diet, suggesting that

education on these issues could be as crucial as the policies themselves.

Thanks to Harry for presenting this week and please get in touch if you would like to do a presentation in MedDen too. We look forward to seeing you all next week and keep watching this space!

Nila Baskar, Upper Sixth



A PICTURE TELLS A THOUSAND WORDS...

If you were at the Christmas Fair on Saturday I am sure you will have noticed the fabulous framed photos of Yarm that were being raffled by the two Yarm Apprentice teams as their subtask on the day.

Well, the draw was made by the Headmaster that afternoon and both winners were delighted with their prizes, but I am also delighted to reveal that the winning team for the Raffle Challenge was Nancy's Santa's Helpers who secured a tremendous £72.50 of profit from ticket sales, narrowly beating Freya's Team

Phoenix, who raised a fabulous £65.

Both teams must be commended for their outstanding salesmanship!!

As is traditional the proceeds from this subtask will go to the Music School who I am sure will be delighted with their £137.50 gains. This brings the total of money raised from the raffle of the two images since 2015 to a phenomenal £2,358.78!

I am extremely grateful to Paul Menzies for running this subtask each year and for once again providing us with such superb photos!



Miss C Rhodes

CHRISTMAS INDOOR MARKET 2024

We were delighted that the Yarm School Association's Christmas Indoor Market was a huge success last weekend. Huge thanks to the YSA and volunteers who helped put on such a lovely community event. Much fun was had by all! Here are a selection of photos from the day.



ARTISTS' CORNER

An amazing piece of digital art this week by Will McGee, Second Year.

Thank you to all for your wonderful submissions to Artists' Corner, please do see Ms Stebbings, Mrs Thompson or Miss Street in the Art Department if you have a piece of work you'd like to share.



THE FINAL COUNTDOWN

3 pm Tuesday - The Econs left and B1 was transformed into the Board Room, with two teams nervously awaiting the arrival of Lady Sugar in the form of Mrs Dodds.

2 presentations ensued, followed by intense questioning and a cameo appearance from James Muir (as Ishita's Financial Advisor).

1 winning team - Lady Sugar declared Team Phoenix the victors and to them went the spoils (Bespoke Snackshack Vouchers).

Blast off - Of course, with it being YA, someone was fired, and this week after Nancy was forced to bring teammates back to the Boardroom, Isobel heard the infamous words, "You're Fired!"

We are very grateful to Mrs Dodds for her generosity of time and continued support of the School.

Miss C Rhodes



YARM APPRENTICE: TELL ME MORE... TELL ME MORE...

So where are the Yarm Apprentice points going this week?

Well, Freya and Chloe respectively secured Winning PM and Subteam Manager of the main task, with Nancy and Elsa securing these for the Sub Task

Main winning team points went to all members of Team Phoenix, with contribution points going to Santa's

Helpers for the SubTask.

Noah and Olivia gained the Karren and Tim outstanding apprentice accolades, with Elsa, Freya and Tom being similarly commended by their peers.

So, where do we go from here...

Watch this space for Task 3... coming soon to a place near you!!?

Miss C Rhodes



SPORT WEEK AHEAD

The weeks ahead are now available online. You can [view them here](#).

Yarm Town Council working with Yarm School, present:

Christmas Lights Switch-On

CAROLS ON THE COBBLES WITH THE SINGING CHRISTMAS TREE

**SUNDAY 1ST DECEMBER
YARM HIGH STREET**

From 2.30pm onwards, enjoy:

- Festive food & drink
- Christmas trinkets
- Children's fair rides
- Face painting
- Strolling musicians and performers
- Solo artists
- Panto banter from Tom Rolfe's Snow White
- A special visit from Father Christmas!



Find all the songs and lyrics by scanning this QR code.



This QR code takes you to yarmschool.org/singing-tree



Photo credit: Ian Allcock, EnA Photography



Yarm Town Council



Stockton-on-Tees
BOROUGH COUNCIL



YARM SCHOOL
EDUCATING FOR LIFE



SNOW WHITE PANTOMIME

Limited tickets for the many shows!

Join Tom Rolfe Productions for their fairest pantomime, Snow White.

Bursting with dazzling costumes, hilarious comedy, sensational singing, beautiful scenery and the coolest Magnificent Seven ever!

12th - 24th December: Various times

[Book Online Here](#)



THE CRAZIEST SHOWMAN

In the latest high energy adventure, "The superstars of slapstick", CBBC's favourite and brightest comedy Stars Danny & Mick bring their particular brand of lunacy to the show, causing chaos on stage and bringing screams of laughter from the whole family.

With a full supporting cast of international circus acts, dancers and singers, "The Craziest Showman" is like no other touring family adventure.

Saturday 22nd February, 2pm

[Book Online Here](#)



AN AUDIENCE WITH A CRICKETING LEGEND, SIR ALASTAIR COOK

Hosted by Ex England cricketer and England cricket selector Geoff Miller. England's second highest test run scorer of all time Alastair played in 161 test matches scoring 12,472 runs. Alastair scored a century on his test debut made 175 catches and captained England in one of their most successful periods of English cricket becoming the number one ranked test cricket team in the world.

Monday 24th February, 7.45pm

[Book Online Here](#)



What Parents & Educators Need to Know about GROUP CHATS

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On messaging apps, social media and online games, group chats are among the most popular ways that young people engage with their peers online. Involving three or more individuals, these groups allow users to send messages, images and videos to everyone in one place. While they can be great for connecting with others, there are several risks posed by these tools.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

BULLYING

Teens are often trying to find their place in their social group. Unfortunately, group chats can sometimes lend themselves to unkind comments being shared freely, putting people down to make their peers laugh – often creating a vicious circle that encourages others to join in. Being bullied so publicly – in front of friends and acquaintances – can also amplify the hurt, embarrassment and anxiety that the victim feels.

EXCLUSION AND ISOLATION

This common issue with group chats can happen in several ways: for instance, starting a new group, but deliberately excluding a certain child. Likewise, the chat may take place on an app which one person doesn't have access to, meaning they can't be involved. A child can also feel isolated when a group chat is used to discuss events that exclude them – for example, sharing photos from a day out that they didn't attend.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Some discussions in group chats may include inappropriate words, swearing and unsuitable images or videos. These could be viewed by a child if they are part of that group, whether they actively engage in it or not. Some apps have features that cause messages to disappear after they're viewed, so children may be unable to report something they've seen, as it can only be viewed once or for a short time.

SHARING GROUP CONTENT

Group chats can feel more private and protected, allowing children to share inside jokes and video calls with a smaller group of friends. It's important to remember that while the chat's content is private between those in the group, individual users can easily share material with others outside of the group, or screenshot what's been posted. The risk of something a child intended as private becoming public is higher if there are strangers in the chat.

UNKNOWN MEMBERS

Within larger group chats, it's more likely for children to communicate with people they don't know. These strangers may be friends of the host, but not necessarily friendly towards everyone present. It's wise for young people to avoid sharing personal details and remember that they have no control over what others do with the material they send into the chat.

NOTIFICATIONS AND FOMO

A drawback of large group chats is the sheer number of notifications they tend to generate. Every time someone sends a message, each member's device will be 'pinged' with an alert. This could result in hundreds of notifications a day. This is often highly distracting, and young people's fear of missing out (FOMO) can cause increased screen time as they try to keep up with the conversation.

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Advice for Parents & Carers

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CONSIDER OTHERS' FEELINGS

Group chats can become an arena for young people to compete for social status. This could cause them to do or say things on impulse which could upset others. Help children consider how people might feel if they behave in this way. If the child does upset someone, encourage them to reach out, show empathy and apologise for their mistake.

GIVE SUPPORT, NOT JUDGEMENT

Group chats are an excellent way for children to connect and feel like they belong. However, remind them that they can confide in you if they feel bullied or excluded, instead of responding to the person who's upset them. Validate their feelings and empower them by discussing how they'd like to handle the situation. You can also encourage children to speak up if they witness others being picked on.

BLOCK, REPORT AND LEAVE

If a child is in a chat where inappropriate content is being shared, advise them to block whoever sent the material, report that person to the host app or platform and exit the group. If any of this content could put a minor at risk, contact the police. Emphasise that it's OK for children to simply leave any group chat that makes them feel uncomfortable.

PRACTISE SAFE SHARING

In any online communication, it's vital for young people to be aware of what they're sharing and who might potentially see it. Ensure children understand the importance of not revealing identifiable details like their address, their school, or photos that they wouldn't like to be seen widely. Remind them that once something is shared in a group, they can't be certain where it might end up and how it might be used.

AVOID INVITING STRANGERS

Sadly, many individuals online hide their identity to gain a child's trust and serve their own ends – for example, to gather information on them, to exchange inappropriate content or to coax them into doing things they aren't comfortable with. Ensure the child understands why they shouldn't add people they don't know to a group chat – and why they should never accept a group chat invitation from a stranger.

SILENCE NOTIFICATIONS

Having a device bombarded with notifications from a group chat can be an irritating distraction – especially if it's happening late in the evening. Explain to children that they can still be part of the group chat while disabling notifications – and that it would be healthier for them to do so, avoiding a situation where they could feel pressured to respond.

Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

Sources: <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/11-18/lets-talk-about/socialising-online/group-chats/> | <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/social-media/chat-apps/>

“The cure for boredom is curiosity. There is no cure for curiosity.” These words by the American writer Dorothy Parker perfectly describe our belief in the importance of inspiring children with curiosity and a spirit of inquiry.

Peter Worley is the CEO of the Philosophy Foundation, a charity dedicated to promoting philosophy to young people. In this fascinating [podcast](#), he describes how we can introduce philosophy at home, and the benefits it can have.

Peter also gave us these [top tips](#) for unlocking children’s thinking, from phrasing questions the right way to embracing silence and using visual cues.

The world of philosophy offers plenty of insight into how to become an effective learner. The key idea to embrace here is “aporia” – a feeling of confusion or perplexity over a problem that seems to be unsolvable. We might instinctively think that such a feeling hinders learning, but philosophers recognise aporia as fertile ground for new ideas and discoveries. Find out more in this [article](#) on what philosophy tells us about learning.

The children’s philosophy charity SAPERE joined Tooled Up for this interactive [webinar](#) with trainer Emma Leeson, demonstrating what it’s like to philosophise and introduce the ethos of Philosophy For Children. This session is packed with ideas you can use at home to inspire your own young philosophers.

You might also enjoy this short [video](#) on what it means to be inquisitive, and these [links](#) to Tooled Up resources that help to cultivate children’s curiosity.

Don't forget to follow us on social media to stay up-to-date with all of our latest updates and resources. Find us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#).





Doing Philosophy With
Children Podcast



Unlocking Children's
Thinking



Learning Tips From
Philosophy



Philosophy For Children



Being Inquisitive



Cultivating Young Children's
Curiosity

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