



# The Phoenix Flier

The Yarm Preparatory School Newsletter

Issue 803 — Friday 7th March 2025

## A message from Mr Sawyer

Welcome to another edition of The Phoenix Flier, offering a glimpse into life at Yarm Prep. It has been a real pleasure to see pupils return after the break, full of their characteristic energy and drive. In a week focused on celebrating a love of reading, it's hard not to think of the enduring strength of fictional characters like Matilda Wormwood from Roald Dahl's Matilda, whose sharp intellect and determination help her rise above adversity, or Huckleberry Finn, whose adventurous spirit guides him through life's challenges.

On Monday, we donned our jeans as part of our fundraising efforts for Jeans for Genes. A wonderful assembly from former parent, Kate Blackmore, helped to raise awareness of rare diseases, with a particular focus on Kabuki syndrome. The annual Pancake Races on Tuesday brought out a sense of healthy competition, with pupils flipping their way to the finish line amidst cheers — always a joyful and unifying community event! Shortly afterwards, we welcomed a team from the Independent Schools Inspectorate for a routine visit. Their thoroughness was greatly appreciated, and we look forward to sharing their findings with you in due course. The inspectors enjoyed their time here and got a strong sense of the school's vibrant atmosphere. A huge thank you to all the parents who completed surveys, and well done to the pupils and staff for their fantastic efforts throughout the inspection. The week ended on a colourful note, filled with creativity, as everyone embraced the spirit of World Book Day with an array of imaginative costumes.

I hope you enjoy reading the articles and updates in this newsletter, which highlight the many opportunities and exciting experiences we share at Yarm Prep. Inside, you'll find a detailed report on our fantastic STEAM Week, discover two new millionaire readers, and learn useful Tooled Up and online safety tips, alongside much more. Enjoy!

*Bill Sawyer*

**Head's Challenge:** I was born into hardship and poverty, then found myself among thieves and scoundrels. Though I did not seek riches, my true wealth was in the family I found. Who am I?

**Photo of the Week:** One of the highlights of an action-packed first week back were our annual House Pancake Races. Find out who won inside.



**Tes Schools Awards 2024**

**Winner**

Independent  
Prep School  
of the Year



# House Pancake Races

An epic morning of flipping and tossing saw Arkwright come out on top in our annual House Pancake Races, winning the title for the first time since 2022. Victories in the Year 3 and 4 races saw them build up a strong lead but it all came down to the final—Year 6—race with the green house and Brunel both still in the running. Whoever finished ahead of the other would end up as victors and although Stephenson won that race, it was Arkwright who came second to take the overall honours by the most slender of margins.

Our thanks to Mr Simpson for running the races this year and to Pippa and the kitchen team for their indestructible pancakes!

Mr Stone



	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
Year 3	Arkwright	Brunel	Telford	Stephenson
Year 4	Arkwright	Brunel	Stephenson	Telford
Year 5	Brunel	Telford	Stephenson	Arkwright
Year 6	Stephenson	Arkwright	Brunel	Telford
<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>Arkwright—14</b>	<b>Brunel—13</b>	<b>Stephenson—10</b>	<b>Telford—7</b>

**Reduce- Reuse- Recycle**

**New Pre-Loved Uniform Shed!**

YPSSC are excited to announce our Pre-Loved Uniform Shed is officially up and running!

**We are located near to the entrance for Nursery on the Pre Prep site.**








**We provide & Collect Pre-Loved Uniform**

**Summer- Winter – PE – Games – Accessories**

**Nursery, Pre-Prep, Prep, Senior & Sixth Form**

Come and have a browse-The shed will be manned periodically throughout the week by volunteers and enquiries can still be sent by email or **classlist**.

[ypssc@yarmschool.org](mailto:ypssc@yarmschool.org)  
Ypssc.co.uk



# STEAM Week

A few more highlights from an incredible STEAM Week just prior to half-term.



5W have loved STEAM week! They have worked collaboratively to create train stations of the future and they even made a promo video to sell their stations to other cities!

*Miss Whitehouse*





## 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/](http://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/).

*Mr Stone*

## Arts Award

Roland was delighted to receive a stunning print and handwritten card from the artist he interviewed as part of the Arts Award course. David Miller was Roland's artist of choice, and he has offered guidance and support and has sent him photos of his works in progress as well as sending him a print of his choice! What an inspiring artist he is, thank you, David Miller!



*Mrs Shepherd*

## Yarm Cricket Club Girls Team

We are excited to inform you that Yarm Cricket Club is launching its very first all-girls cricket team! This is a fantastic opportunity for girls of all abilities (in Years 5&6) to learn and enjoy the sport in a fun and supportive environment.

The coaching sessions will be led by Chris Gibbons, an ECB-

accredited coach, ensuring top-quality training and guidance. The weekly cost will be approximately £6.25 per hour.

Here are the dates for the upcoming sessions: March: 1st, 15th, 22nd, 29th; April: 5th, 12th.

We warmly invite all interested girls to attend. Whether your daughter is new to the sport or has experience, these sessions are a great way to learn new skills, make friends, and be part of an exciting new team.

Please feel free to get in touch with Chris directly if you have any questions or need more information. He can be contacted on [chrisgibbons@sky.com](mailto:chrisgibbons@sky.com).

*Mrs Redhead-Sweeney*

## Millionaire Readers

Well done to Beatrice and Faye, the latest recipients of our *Millionaire Reader* badge, which is achieved after reading 1,000,000 words, as tracked by *Accelerated Reader*.

*Mr Pengilley and Miss Whitehouse*



## Jeans for Genes Day



We enjoyed celebrating Jeans for Genes Day on the first day back after half-term (Monday). We were delighted to hear from Kate Blackmore in assembly, who spoke about a rare condition called Kabuki, and her work with the Kabuki UK charity. On the day we raised **£230.65**, with all proceeds going to Kabuki UK.

*Mr Stone*

## Spring Term—Second Half Events

*This is a copy of the email sent out to parents earlier this week, detailing all of the key events taking place over the second half of the term.*

By way of a reminder, we wanted to keep you abreast of a number of key events coming up in the coming weeks here at Yarm and hope you find this information useful. Please keep an eye on the *Phoenix Flier* as well for any future updates and events.

### **Friday 14th March - Red Nose Day (Y3-6 only)**

For Comic Relief, all children can come into school in the morning wearing an item of red clothing, along with their usual school uniform and should bring in £1 to donate to the charity.

### **Friday 14th March - Pre-Prep Holi Festival Celebrations**

In Pre-Prep, we will be celebrating this festival with a 'colour run' in the Pre-Prep Garden! Please send your child to school wearing home clothes that you don't mind getting covered in paint!

If your child is in Nursery and does not usually attend Nursery on a Friday afternoon, you are more than welcome to drop them off at 2pm and collect at 3.30pm so that they can join in with the celebrations.

If you have any questions, please feel free to get in contact with any of the Pre-Prep team.

### **Monday 17th and Tuesday 18th - Parent Consultations**

Details to follow of how you can book an appointment with your child's form tutor to discuss their progress this term.

Thank you as always for your support.

Mr Stone

## Coming Up at the PAA

**[Janis Joplin the Musical - Live Stream—Thursday 13th March, 7pm and Sunday 16th March, 2pm](#)**

This multi award-winning show captured recently at the Sadler's Wells Peacock Theatre is an extraordinary musical journey paying

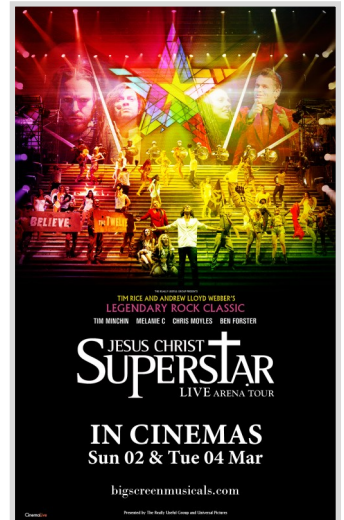


homage to Janis Joplin and her biggest musical influences. Like a comet that burns far too brightly to last, Janis Joplin exploded onto the music scene in 1967 and, almost overnight, became the queen of rock & roll.

The unmistakable voice, filled with raw emotion and tinged with Southern Comfort, made her a must-see headliner from Monterey to Woodstock.

**[Jesus Christ Superstar Live Arena Tour \(2012\) - Friday 14th March, 7pm and Saturday 15th March, 2pm](#)**

Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber's rock classic Jesus Christ Superstar returns to its roots with this sensational performance filmed in the UK during the Live Arena Tour.



An incredible cast including Tim Minchin as Judas Iscariot, Melanie Chisholm as Mary Magdalene, Chris Moyles as King Herod and Ben Forster as Jesus Christ, perform hit songs including "I Don't Know How to Love Him," "Gethsemane," "Heaven on Their Minds," "Everything's Alright," "King Herod's Song" and "Superstar" in an exciting and contemporary interpretation.

**[The Wrong Trousers: Wallace and Gromit Live, with The EverReady Band—Sunday 13th April, 2.30pm](#)**

Experience The Wrong Trousers Like Never Before!



Join us for a truly unique evening as the EverReady Band brings Wallace & Gromit: The Wrong Trousers to life with a live brass band performance.

This family favourite film, renowned for its charm and wit, will be accompanied by the exhilarating sounds of a live brass ensemble, along with an unforgettable selection of family film music.

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 WHATSAPP



With more than two billion active users, WhatsApp is the world's most popular messaging service. Its end-to-end encryption only allows messages to be viewed by the sender and any recipients: not even WhatsApp itself can read them. The UK's Online Safety Bill proposes to end such encryption on private messaging, but for the time being, this controversial feature remains.

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### EVOLVING SCAMS

WhatsApp's popularity makes it a lucrative hunting ground for scammers. Recent examples include posing as the target's child, requesting a money transfer because of a spurious 'emergency' – plus a scam where fraudsters trigger a verification message by attempting to log in to your account, then (posing as WhatsApp) call or text to ask you to repeat the code back to them, giving them access.

### CONTACT FROM STRANGERS

To start a chat, someone only needs the mobile number of the WhatsApp user they want to message. Therefore, if a child has ever given their number out to someone they don't know, that person could then contact them via WhatsApp. It's also possible that the child might be added to a group chat or community (by one of their friends, for example) containing other people they don't know.

### FAKE NEWS

WhatsApp's connectivity and ease of use allow news to be shared rapidly – whether it's true or not. To combat the spread of misinformation, messages forwarded more than five times on the app now display a "Forwarded many times" label and a double arrow icon. This makes users aware that the message they've just received is far from an original ... and might not be entirely factual, either.

### CHAT LOCK AND SECRET CODES

In 2023, WhatsApp introduced a feature that lets users keep their chats in a separate 'locked chats' folder, saved behind their phone's passcode, fingerprint or face ID. There is an additional feature – 'Secret Code' – where users set a unique password for locked chats. Unfortunately, this creates the potential for young people to hide conversations and content they suspect their parents wouldn't approve of.

### VIEW ONCE CONTENT

The ability to send images or messages that can only be viewed once has led to some WhatsApp users sharing inappropriate material or abusive texts, knowing that the recipient can't reopen them later to use as evidence of misconduct. People used to be able to screenshot this disappearing content – but a recently added WhatsApp feature now blocks this, citing protection of privacy.

### VISIBLE LOCATION

WhatsApp's Live Location feature lets users share their current whereabouts, which can be helpful for friends meeting up or parents checking that their child is safe while out, for example. However, anyone in a user's contacts list or in a mutual group chat can also track their location – potentially letting strangers identify a child's home address or journeys that they make regularly.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### EMPHASISE CAUTION

Encourage children to treat unexpected messages with caution: get them to consider whether it sounds like something a friend or relative would really send them. Make sure they know never to share personal details over WhatsApp, and to be wary of clicking on any links in messages. Setting up two-step verification adds a further layer of protection to their WhatsApp account.

### ADJUST THE SETTINGS

It's wise to change a child's WhatsApp settings to specify which of their contacts can add them to group chats without needing approval. You can give permission to My Contacts or My Contacts Except.... Additionally, if a child needs to use Live Location, emphasise that they should enable this function for only as long as they need – and then turn it off.

### CHAT ABOUT PRIVACY

Check in with the child about how they're using WhatsApp, making sure they know you only have their safety at heart. If you spot a Locked Chats folder, you might want to talk about the sort of content they've stored in there, who they're talking to, and why they want to keep these chats hidden. Also, if children send any View Once content, it could be helpful to ask them why.

### DISCUSS GROUP CHATS

Make children aware that there could be members of a group that they don't know well and that words can be misinterpreted. Encourage them to leave a good impression, to avoid joining in if conversations turn towards bullying, and to respond to such situations in an appropriate way. Make sure they know that it's OK to leave a group chat if it makes them uncomfortable – or for any reason, in fact.

### THINK BEFORE SHARING

Help children understand why it's important to stop and think before posting or forwarding something on WhatsApp. It's easy – and all too common – for content that a user posts to be shared more widely, even publicly on social media. Encourage children to consider how an impulsive message or forwarding might damage their reputation or upset a friend who sent something to them in confidence.

### 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.



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



Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 19.02.2024

## Tooled Up Education

This week, many Tooled Up schools will celebrate World Book Day 2025. Whether dressing up as a favourite character, learning new words, enjoying online readings or taking extra time to share best loved books, this is a great opportunity for children to be excited about becoming enthusiastic readers.

Research shows that having a wide reading habit can bring many benefits for children. Reading for pleasure is associated with better outcomes at school, improved wellbeing and enhances skills such as empathy. So it's no surprise that here at Tooled Up we're passionate advocates for reading and literacy.

If you'd like some inspiration for your next library or bookshop trip, or you want help choosing up-to-date titles visit: [Brilliant New Fiction for World Book Day 2025](#). This resource includes book suggestions for children of all ages from five years to older teens.

Some children need help and encouragement to become regular readers. Find advice for making reading a more central part of family life in [Ten Tips to Promote Reading at Home](#).

For younger children, set them on the path to becoming confident, proficient readers with these [Tooled Up Resources on Developing Literacy](#).

The Tooled 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](mailto:research@tooledupeducation.com) to let us know how we are doing!

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A quick reminder :

As a parent at a Tooled Up school, you have full unlimited access to the Tooled 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: YPS1103 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*



Brilliant New Fiction for  
World Book Day 2025



Tips to Promote Reading at  
Home

**TOOLED UP<sup>®</sup>**  
BECAUSE EVIDENCE MATTERS



# Coming Up

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

## MARCH 2025

- Mon 10** Year 4 Drama Week commences
- Tue 11** **Year 5 London trip departs**  
U8 Netball v Queen Mary’s (home; 2pm start)
- ~~**Wed 12** Year 4 trip to EDF Teesmouth Centre~~
- Thu 13** NE Area U11 Girls’ Hockey Finals (details TBC)
- Fri 14** Year 5 return from London  
Red Nose Day for Comic Relief  
(Wear an item of red; bring in £1)  
Pre-Prep Holi Celebrations  
NEJS Boy’s Hockey competition  
(at Pocklington; 11am start, 4.30pm return)
- Mon 17** Neurodiversity Celebration Week  
LCM examinations week  
**Parents Evening (4-6pm)**  
No after school clubs run by form teachers this week
- Tue 18** **Parents Evening (4-6pm)**
- Wed 19** Year 6 Sports Tour—[Zoom Meeting for Parents](#)  
(sign up by clicking on the link)  
Peter Knutsford (wildlife photographer) visit
- Thu 20** U9 Netball v Durham School  
(home; 2.15pm start)
- Fri 21** U10/11 Netball v Durham School  
(away; 2pm start, 4.15pm return)  
U10 Hockey v Ashville  
(away; 2pm start, 4.30pm return)  
U11 Hockey v Ashville (home; 2pm start)
- Mon 24** Clubs and activities finish this week  
(except for Year 3 swimming)  
ABRSM examinations
- Tue 25** Year 2 Silver Stories visit to Middleton Hall  
Prep Duologues performance  
(Prep Hall; 4pm)  
National Schools Quiz semi-final (10am)
- Thu 27** U11 Sports tour departs
- Fri 28** Sports tour returns
- Mon 31** Last Y3 swimming of the term  
House assemblies

## APRIL 2025

- Tue 1** School Eid celebrations  
Show Racism the Red Card workshops for Y5  
House Paper Planes competition
- Wed 2** Choristers visiting Park Rest Care Home  
Lost Property assembly

- Thu 3** Dance assembly for parents (9.50am)
- Fri 4** End of term  
No after school care today
- Mon 7** Easter Holiday Club begins
- Fri 11** Easter Holiday Club finishes

# Term Dates

## 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

## Autumn Term, 2025

Preparation Day 1	Tuesday, 26th August 2025
Preparation Day 2	Wednesday, 27th August 2025
All Pupils Return	Thursday, 28th August 2025
Half Term Begins	Friday, 17th October 2025 (after school)
Pupils Return	Monday, 3rd November 2025
Finish	Friday, 12th December 2025 (after school)

# Celebration Assembly

	Values	Endeavour
3B	Rose S.	Ava B.
3J	Poppy B.	Dylan H.
3P	Jack B.	Julia W.
4F	Darcie M.	George M.
4J	Zoyaa S.	Hinako Y.
4SU	Eliza S.	Austen F.
5G	Hattie P.	Paari M.
5S	Francesca S.	Bertie H.
5W	Hugo K.	Harriet A.
6H	Imogen C.	Rory B.
6K	Martha L.	Felicity W.
6L	Jenson C.	Holly B.

**Head Teacher Awards: Year 4**—Faye M., Ray M., Karunya G., Edward W., Bertie H. **Year 5**—Hattie P., Andres O., Emma W., Azlan U., Felix M., Freddie W. **Year 6**—Jack S.