



Whinstone Weekly

Academic Year 2025/2026 - Spring term

Friday 13th February 2026

Whinstone Wide - General school information

OPAL (Outdoor Play and Learning)

We are now well underway on our OPAL (Outdoor Play and Learning) journey and have already seen a positive impact across the school. There has been a noticeable reduction in lost learning time and a decrease in accidents, which is wonderful to see.



As with any well-loved resources, our equipment naturally becomes worn or damaged over time, so we regularly need to refresh and replenish our supplies. We are currently looking to source a number of items and would be very grateful for any donations.

If you have any of the following items at home that are no longer in use and could be donated, please do send them into school. Your support makes a real difference to the children's play and learning experiences.

Pushchairs

Dress up for older boys

Musical instruments (not wind)

Gardening tools

Bikes

Clothes rail



Plant pots (plastic)

Tubing and pipes

Wellies

Tarpaulin

Wallpaper

Toy cars



Bike helmets

Felt tip pens



Flexi tubs and storage boxes

Mud, pebbles and play sand

Lego Duplo

Fidget toys

SEND update on the Diverse Paths Project

This week saw the start of the exciting year-long Diverse Paths project, launched in partnership with Stockton to bring enhanced support, expert guidance, and specialist training for staff and families. We hosted our first Stockton Parent and Carer Coffee Morning where we welcomed Vickie Herron, our SEND Navigator, who gave families a valuable space to connect and share experiences. Vickie also spent time in school gathering pupil voice to ensure children's perspectives shape our provision. This is just the beginning, with more workshops, training, and collaborative events planned throughout the year.

Thank you to all parents and carers who joined us - your involvement is key to making this project a success.



Sporting Chance Football Sessions held at Whinstone Primary

Sporting Chance is a well-established, sport-focused company currently working with many schools across Darlington, Durham, Hartlepool and the Teesside area. The company employs both male and female coaches, all of whom are fully DBS checked.

During term time, Sporting Chance runs a football session at school every Thursday evening for boys and girls aged 4-11. Sessions take place in the community hall during the winter months or in adverse weather, and on the school field throughout the summer.

The session runs from 4:45pm to 5:45pm and costs £4.00 per hour.

If you are interested in booking a place or would like further information, please contact:

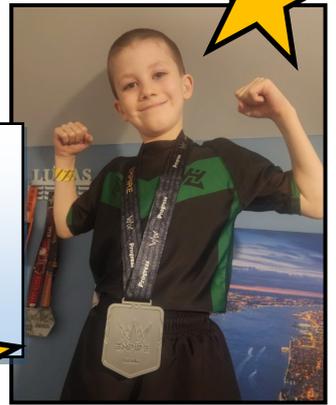
Kevin Johnston on 07704969845 or email: info@sporting-chance-north.com.



Whinstone Stars

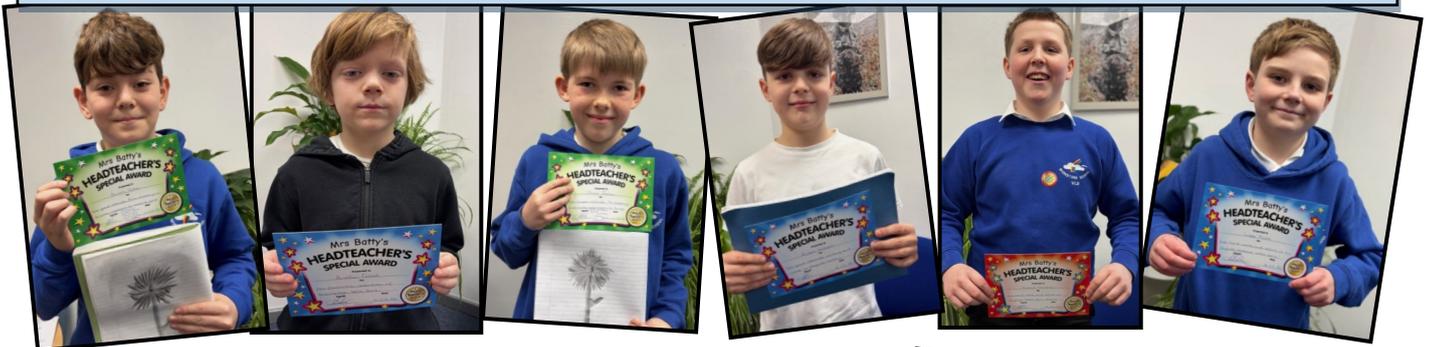
At the weekend, Lucas competed in the North East Open Jiu-jitsu competition. Despite being nervous, Lucas did really well and won a silver medal.

What a fantastic achievement - well done, Lucas!



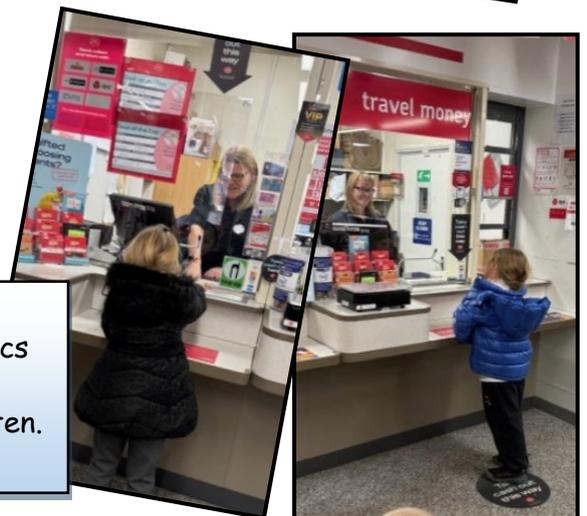
Around Whinstone this week.

Well done to those who earned a Headteacher's certificate from Mrs Batty this week.



Year 5 enjoyed making models of 'The Green Man' in their Forest School session this week.

One of the Year 1 phonics groups went to post postcards they had written.





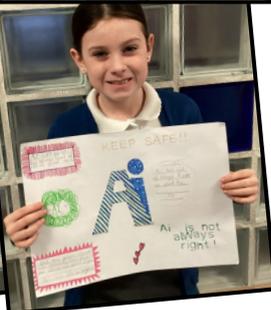
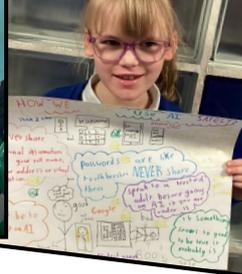
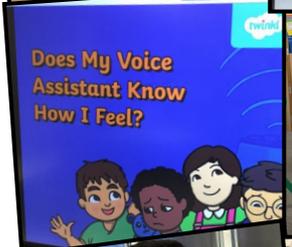
Well done to our brilliant OPAL Play Leads who work in the Build Zone.



Enjoying the OPAL Show Zone and disco.



We celebrated Safer Internet Day with this year's theme being: 'Smart tec, safe choices - Exploring the safe and responsible use of AI'.



The Year 5 and 6 girls' football team competed in the Stockton competition and came a fantastic 2nd place.



Year 6 played their own compositions using basic rhythms on the glockenspiels.

Children's Mental Health week saw a dance-off with teachers versus children, activities in classes and 'You made me smile' stickers.



Pre-school had a Valentine's theme.



Would you rather...?

Oracy

Oracy - talk matters!
This week's random question to discuss with your child.

WOULD YOU RATHER WEEK BEGINNING 16/02/26

Play games with your favourite cartoon character?

Go on an adventure with your favourite book character?

OR

Whinstone next week

Year 5 Forest School

The Forest School sessions will take place on Monday. Don't forget a warm coat and wellies!

Stockton Borough Council Air Quality assembly

On Monday, Stockton Borough Council are delivering an assembly for Y1 to Y5 children on what we can do to improve the air quality around our school and community.

Spark Education Trust Year 5 Ambassadors are visiting Whinstone

We are hosting the Trust's Year 5 Ambassadors for a morning on Thursday.

WE CLOSE FOR THE HALF TERM BREAK ON FRIDAY

We return on Monday 2nd March.

Safeguarding and Family Support

HOLIDAYS ARE FUN

Free activities for eligible school age children from Reception to Year 11.



Book now at www.stockton.gov.uk/haf

To be eligible, families must be in receipt of benefits-related free school meals.



Holidays are Fun (HAF) scheme

The booking system is now live for the February Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) programme! There are a wide range of activities on offer across Stockton for eligible children from Reception to Year 11 including: Multi sports, gymnastics, horse riding, Youth clubs, SEND specific sessions, bushcraft and dance

The main eligibility criteria for the HAF programme is that families are in receipt of benefit related free school meals (FSM), however there are a small number of discretionary places for families who meet other criteria which is outlined on the Stockton webpage.

Bookings can be made using the following link
[Holidays Are Fun \(HAF\) programme - Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council.](#)

Safeguarding :

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for the school is **Mrs Batty**.

Our other safeguarding leads in school are:



Mrs Wilson- Dukes

Mr Carlton

Mrs Squires

Mr Ford

If you are worried about a child, please call the Hartlepool and Stockton-on-Tees Children's Hub on **01429 284284 / 01642 130080** or out of office hours call **01642 524552**

In an emergency, please contact the Police on **101** or **999**.



Attendance

This week, our attendance has stayed the same. Let's see if we can get it up again next week.

Miss Owens is available to support and help with any issues you have regarding attendance or to support around other matters such as financial difficulties, bereavement and abuse.

Contact the school if you would like to speak with her.

Whole school attendance
(year to date)

➔ **94.8%**

National average = 94.5%