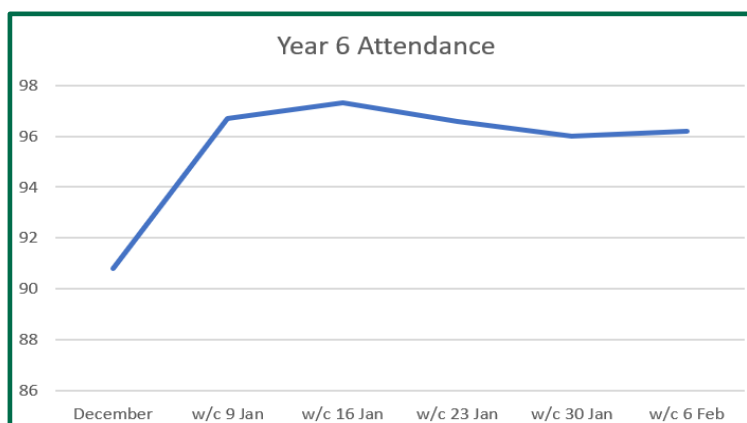




## Ark Atwood: Newsletter, Friday 10<sup>th</sup> February

Dear Parents,

**Attendance** At the start of term, we made improving attendance our New Year's Resolution. We know that each and every day matters and that missing days at school has a significant detrimental impact on children's learning. We have made some changes in how we monitor and drive improvements this term and I want to share with you a case study involving our Year 6s. Every school year is important but clearly the focus for our eldest children is to ensure they leave us in July ready, both academically and socially, for secondary school. We can only do this if the children are with us so it is really great to see the significant improvement in attendance for this key year group.



### Atwood Uniform

A significant number of children are coming to school in PE kit on days when it is not PE for their class.

**Children must wear full school uniform on non-PE days.** Please can we have a big push on this after half term.

PE days are:

- Year 1: Tuesday and Friday
- Year 2: Wednesday and Friday
- Year 3: Monday and Thursday
- Year 4: Wednesday and Friday
- Year 5: Tuesday and Wednesday
- Year 6: Tuesday and Wednesday

**Turkish/Syrian Earthquake** We have all been shocked by the terrible earthquake to have hit Turkey and Syria. We know many of our families have connections to this area – our hearts go out to you all. Clearly we want to do what we can as a school to support and raise money for the relief effort which the British Red Cross are supporting with. Today we held a non-uniform day. The money is not yet counted but a huge thank you in advance for your generosity. We're also thinking about what else we can do after half term – **do please get in touch if you have ideas and/or suggestions.**

Half term is now upon us. It has been another busy term but a successful one. Have a wonderful break with friends and family and we will see you on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> February when the gates open at 8.25am.

Best Wishes

James Evelyn  
Headteacher, Ark Atwood Primary Academy

## Term Dates

The term dates for the academic year 2023/24 have now been published. The document is on the Atwood website here: <https://arkatwoodprimary.org/sites/default/files/Ark%20Atwood%20Term%20Dates%202023-24.pdf>

## Term dates 2023-24



## Sing into Spring!

On Monday, some of our Year 5 and 6 children attended the Ark music event, Sing into Spring, at Cecil Sharp House in Camden. They enjoyed performing a collection of songs with other Ark schools and even composed their own music in preparation for the Gala in June. It was amazing to see so many children singing and celebrating together.



## London Zoo



London Zoo is running a Community Access Scheme providing discounted tickets for eligible local households. Tickets are available for as low as £3 if you meet the criteria. If you are looking for some activities for half term, this would be a great option!


Further details: <https://www.londonzoo.org/plan-your-visit/community-access-scheme>

## People who Help Us

Last Friday, our Nursery and Reception children had a visit from our local Metropolitan Police officers and two officers and their horses from the Met's Task Force. I don't think any of us have seen horses in the Atwood playground! This visit tied in with the children's learning about 'People who Help Us'.



## Attendance Numbers – w/c 6<sup>th</sup> February

Nursery	86.2	<p>Well done to this week's top class:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Australia Class</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>99.2%</b></p>  <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Attendance Top Tip</b></p> <p>To support working families and parents juggling other priorities, we run a breakfast club from 7.45am each day and provide onsite after school provision until 5.50pm. Please contact P3 to sign up for After School Club</p> <p>If you need support and suggestions to help with school run challenges, please contact an Atwood Senior Leader who will be able to help.</p>
Mexico	90.0	
India	86.0	
Italy	83.1	
France	92.0	
China	93.3	
Barbados	92.5	
Norway	94.0	
Belgium	94.6	
Ghana	93.6	
Brazil	96.7	
Greece	95.5	
Spain	88.9	
Canada	93.7	
Australia	99.2	
Whole School	91.9	

## Achievement Assembly

As always on Friday, we celebrated two wonderful scholars from each class who have either personified the Atwood Values or been true Atwood scholars producing great work. Congratulations to these children (we are switching each week between Upper School and Lower School).

Class	Children
Ghana	Muhammad E & Moustapha
Brazil	Nyla & Kaissar
Greece	Kaevon & Koray
Spain	Micah & Jacopo
Canada	Vera & Yusuf
Australia	Lola & Alex



## Atwood Football Team

Atwood FC visited Ark Franklin on Wednesday to play two friendly games of football. The girls played first, putting in a valiant display as they went down to a 3-1 defeat. A special mention must go to to Almour for scoring the goal of the afternoon - an absolute rocket into the top left-hand corner. Then it was the turn of the boys who lost to Franklin last season by double-digits! This time round, it was a different story as every player put on a great performance to ensure we battled our way to a thrilling 3-3 draw.

The boys then followed this up with a fixture against Queens Park Primary on Thursday. There were no signs of fatigue in the legs as the boys cruised to a 9-3 victory with Mr Eb singling out Mayass, Joel & Liam for potential Man of the Match awards. Well done Atwood on a great footballing week. We are all incredibly proud of you!

*Match report from Mr Bowden*

## Early Years Parents Tea and Coffee



It was lovely to have lots of Nursery and Reception parents with us yesterday afternoon for an informal meeting and a chance to get to know other parents and meet with Atwood staff.

One feeling that emerged from the meeting was that parents preferred these meetings to take place at 3pm rather than after drop off. We will look to run more events at this time.

Thank you to Andrew Abdulezer for organising everything!

## House Points



The House Points for this week have been counted. Totals for this week:

Aspiration & Achievement	Scholarship	Perseverance	Integrity	Respect & Responsibility	Enthusiasm
<b>299</b>	<b>436</b>	<b>249</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>342</b>	<b>287</b>

Well done to Scholarship House on a very successful week!

## E-Safety

We share E-Safety information with parents in the Atwood newsletter. This is to help you in ensuring that your child can use technology safely. Please read the following information.

At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one of many issues which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit [www.nationalonlinesafety.com](http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com) for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

# 10 WAYS GAMING CAN SUPPORT POSITIVE OUTCOMES in Children and Young People

Gaming, of course, is phenomenally popular with children and young people. In 2021, for instance, more than three-quarters of teenagers played online games, with almost 70% of primary school aged children doing likewise. If engaged in moderation and supported by a healthy routine (staying hydrated, good sleep habits, taking breaks and so on), gaming can actually benefit a person's mental health. As long as we stay alert for potential risks, games can be much more than what we see on the surface: they can be a way to socialise, an avenue for creativity and a route to solving problems. Check out our top ten tips on how gaming online can sometimes work to your child's advantage ...

### THE FEEL-GOOD FACTOR

Gaming is so popular because at the base level, it's enjoyable for the player. Succeeding in any game or contest releases dopamine in our brains: the 'feel-good' chemical that makes us happy or excited. These emotions can be incredibly beneficial for mental wellbeing – as long as young players don't become reliant solely on playing video games to make themselves feel happy.

### ACHIEVEMENT & PRIDE

A sense of achievement is incredibly important to all of us and can be particularly valuable to someone who's feeling unhappy or distracted. It's easy to get caught up in our thoughts, which can sometimes take a negative turn. So even achieving something small – like finishing a difficult level in a Mario or Sonic game – can feel like conquering Everest and give us renewed optimism.

### SOCIAL SALVATION

Gaming can be an incredibly social activity. When playing online with trusted friends, what usually start out as chats specifically about the game can often develop into conversations about school and life. Even if they've had a bad day, simply knowing that a friend is there, on the other end of their headset, can provide young gamers with a sense of security and some welcome laughs.

### TEAMWORK MAKES THE DREAM WORK

In many online games, teamwork is crucial to winning. Often, people who are struggling with their mood tend to feel like they fall or let others down a lot. Working as a team with trusted friends or family in a game can reinforce a young person's self-importance: striving for a common goal and succeeding together can remind them that they're an integral part of something bigger.

### REAL-WORLD RELATABILITY

Because many major releases are shooting or action games, when some people fear "gaming" they think of guns, explosions and violence. What's less recognised is how many titles explore relatable issues such as overcoming anxiety or coping with grief. These games allow young players to understand their emotions more deeply and realise they aren't alone in how they might be feeling.

### A DIGITAL COMFORT

Video games can provide a reliable constant. No matter what happens in school or between friends, playing a favourite game is something that youngsters can look forward to all day and can help them de-stress. Let's not forget, games are fun – and, when approached safely, an interactive activity in which the player has a degree of control over what happens next can feel immensely reassuring.

### PROBLEM-SOLVING PRACTICE

It can be difficult for young people to handle the feeling that nothing is going right or that their problems are insurmountable. Gaming can help alleviate that by presenting challenges to be overcome, either solo or alongside trusted friends. Defeating a powerful monster or solving a tricky puzzle reminds young gamers that even the most daunting obstacles can be faced and conquered.

### THE GREAT ESCAPISM

A certain amount of escapism is fabulous – allowing us to temporarily park some stress while exploring a world other than our own. For children, gaming can be like reading a novel or watching a film: a moment in the day when the fantastical becomes real, firing their imagination and immersing them in a story. Who wouldn't want to venture to the stars? Or battle monsters to save the planet?

### TRIED & TRUSTED

There can be reassurance in repeating tasks. It often promotes a controlled outcome, which is ideal when life feels overwhelming or out of control. Replicating an experience, such as playing the same level of a game over and over to perfection, gives the player a sense of control and familiarity: it's like listening to a favourite song that always makes you feel happy or confident.

### ENCOURAGING CREATIVITY

Inventiveness is a huge part of many modern games: in Minecraft and Roblox, for example, players regularly dream up amazing structures or new ways to play. Using our imagination to create something (whether digitally or physically) is massively beneficial for the brain: that's why Lego is sometimes used in the medical sector as both a stress reliever and a brain injury rehabilitation tool.

## Meet Our Expert

Daniel Lipscombe is a writer who specialises in technology, video gaming, virtual reality and Web3. Author of 15 guidebooks for children on games such as Fortnite, Apex Legends, Valorant, Roblox and Minecraft, his work has also been published in the likes of PC Gamer, Kotaku, Pocket Gamer and VG247.



**NOS** National Online Safety®  
#WakeUpWednesday

Source: <https://www.ofcom.gov.uk/consult/condocs/childrens-media-use-and-attitudes-report-2022.pdf>