

Parental Communication & Engagement



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Message from Headteacher

It's been the end of another busy but exciting week in school.

We have our Year 11 Parents' Evening on Thursday and we are looking forward to seeing lots of parents/carers at this important event. Appointment booking lines for this face to face evening close on Wednesday at 3.00pm.

We have sent out our Term Dates for 2024/2025 this week as we know lots of parents/carers are thinking about planning holidays. Further INSET days, other than those stated, cannot be confirmed at this stage. We will confirm any further INSET dates as soon as we are in a position to do so.

Don't forget to buy your tickets for the school production, it's going to be amazing!

Best wishes.

Mrs Sutton
Headteacher

Key Letters/Information Sent Out Recently

The vast majority of all letters are now emailed home and we use electronic reply slips as much as possible. The criterion for 'selected student only' opportunities are based on various factors depending on the trip and its focus. Unfortunately, we are unable to allow every student the opportunity to be involved with every activity which we understand sometimes causes disappointment. If you require more details about the selection process for any opportunity please contact the event organiser.

- January/February Monthly Update Sheet;
- Term Dates 2024/2025;
- Year 10 RS Debate Permission Letter **Selected students only*;
- Year 11 Parents'/Carers' Evening Letter - Thursday 25 January 2024.

Events/Reminders

- Year 10 RS Debate Permission Slip Deadline - Monday 22 January 2024;
- Year 11 Parents'/Carers' Evening Booking System Closes - Wednesday 24 January 2024 at 3.00pm;
- Year 11 Parents'/Carers' Evening (Face2Face) - Thursday 25 January 2024 from 3.30pm - 6.30pm.

Updates

Sanitary Products Collection! Citizenship Campaign – WC 29 January 2024

Some of our GCSE Citizenship students are doing a collection of sanitary products for their Citizenship Campaign and want to spread the word. The collection will be held all week in the atrium as students enter school **WC 29 January 2024**. Students can bring in any type of sanitary product and can leave them near the River Café. These donations will then be passed on to a local charity. Thanks for your support with their campaign.

HELP! Reporting Absences/Appointments *PRESS OPTION 1

We appreciate that sometimes trying to get through to the school via telephone can be difficult due to how busy the phonelines can be. Can we please ask that if you wish to report an absence or inform us of a future medical appointment or leave request that you press Option 1. **You can press Option 1 as soon as the welcome message starts.** You just need to leave a message on the answerphone if nobody answers. Your message will then be quickly picked up and actioned/responded to. By doing this it will REALLY help allow the phone lines to be much clearer for the other callers to get through who are ringing on non-attendance related matters.

Smartphone Safety Tips

Please see below smartphone safety tips!

SMARTPHONE SAFETY TIPS
for young people

You may have been lucky enough to have unwrapped a smartphone at Christmas, or you might be eagerly anticipating getting a new one at some point during this year. Whether it'll be your first ever phone or an upgrade on your old model, it's always useful to have a refresher on how to set it up and adjust the settings to keep yourself – and your valuable personal info – safe and secure. We've collected some expert tips to help you enjoy your smartphone in the healthiest way possible.

NEVER SHARE YOUR PASSCODE
Alongside face or fingerprint recognition, your passcode is crucial to unlocking your phone and accessing your apps and personal information. You should never give it out, even to close friends – offer it, you wouldn't then be able to get it back to your house and let them go in for a messy weekend! If friends want to use your phone, ask them why and make sure you can see what they're doing with it.

RESPECT PARENTAL CONTROLS
If you're allowed to have a smartphone, it's because your parents or carers feel that you're mature and responsible enough to use it safely. They may have set controls and boundaries on your device – not to spoil your fun but to help you avoid hazards like too much screen time or costly in-app purchases. Following these rules means you can enjoy using your phone while respecting their wishes.

TALK TO A TRUSTED ADULT
Whether it's to listen to music, play games, create content or chat with friends, using a smartphone should be fun. If you're ever feeling anxious, worried or scared about going on your phone, then something isn't right. It's important not to ignore these feelings. Instead, talk to a trusted adult about what's happening and how it's making you feel.

STAY ALERT
Two words: look up. It might sound obvious, but it's so easy to get immersed in what we're looking at or listening to on our phones that we can become unaware of our surroundings – or who might be around us. Keep your eyes on their heads down, focusing on their phone, and forget to check for potholes in their path, cars or other pedestrians coming towards them, which is clearly dangerous.

ONLY USE AGE-APPROPRIATE APPS
Before downloading a new app or game, check what age rating it has. Don't feel pressured into getting a particular game or app just because your friends are using it. It's intended for older people, there's a definite risk that it could include content (which is violent or frightening) or language which isn't suitable and may leave you feeling upset or disturbed.

REMOVE TEMPTATION
A good night's sleep is so important for concentration, mood and overall health. Unwinding properly before going to bed – which means not checking a screen late at night – can often improve sleep quality. Put your phone on charge overnight, but not in your room. This means you'll have a lot less temptation to check any notifications, reply to messages or get caught up scrolling on social media.

THINK ABOUT OTHERS
Watching videos, listening to music or calling someone can all help to pass the time while we're on the bus, waiting in a queue or working down the street. It's important to remain mindful of other people, though: they might not want to hear your tunes or your conversation. Likewise, if you're calling from a public place then don't forget that anyone could overhear something personal about you.

DEVELOP HEALTHY HABITS
Phones offer a vast amount of content and the chance to chat with friends whenever we feel like it, which can make it difficult to take time away from the screen. If that's something you struggle with, you could try setting time limits on custom apps. Putting our phones down for a while gives us more time to interact with others or do something physical that helps keep us fit and healthy.

IGNORE UNKNOWN NUMBERS
There are some scammers who might call or text asking you to share personal data or to click on a link and provide your details. Some may claim to be from a genuine company, but trustworthy businesses don't spontaneously call or message to ask for your information. It's safest to ignore calls or texts from unknown numbers, and never give your personal details out over the phone.

SWITCH OFF GEOLOCATION
In your phone's settings, you'll be able to disable geolocation for individual apps and photos: this means that people online (including strangers) can't see information about where you are when you share or post a pic. On the subject of images, it's also important to ask permission before taking or sharing a photo of someone – and don't share embarrassing images of your friends with others.

Meet Our Expert
Dr Claire Goodwin is a senior lecturer, educator and specialist who has developed and implemented our cutting-edge cyber safety resources for schools. She is a member of the National Online Safety Trust and research for the Australian government comparing internet use and online behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.

The National College | National Online Safety | #WakeUpWednesday

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Congratulations/Well Done

Headteacher Commendations

Congratulations go to the following students who received Headteacher Commendations this week.

Miley Wright	Shay Leigh Whale		
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