

# Whitchurch Weekly

11th July  
2025  
Issue 38



## The Whitchurch Woodland

### GRAND OPENING CEREMONY

It has been an incredible month for the woodland, as you have no doubt seen from the update videos and photos sent via WhatsApp to your class groups. There was a complete overhaul of the pond and thanks to Joshua's family, we had over 12 tonnes of pebbles and shingle delivered. They also helped to rebuild the sides of the pond. It is now full and awaiting pond life to find its way there. Many thanks for their kind and generous donations.



The decking was completely ripped out and rebuilt thanks to Paris's family who spent many evenings and weekends to get it just right! Thank you so much for working so hard to bring us a fabulous viewing and working area.

The Woodland was ready just in time for the Major's visit! Last September, when we started the project, feels like such a long time ago!

On Wednesday, the Mayor of Harrow, Cllr Anjana Patel, came to Whitchurch to officially open our new Woodland Forest School. The event was marked with speeches from the Mayor, the Headteacher and our Head Boy and Head Girl.



The Year 6 Legacy Group, Year 2 forest children, parents, and a representative from our Governing body also attended to share all of the incredible contributions and projects. The scheme of work is now ready to roll out in September and Mr Coutinho, our Forest Lead, will be running these sessions on a rota for each year group. First to have lessons will be Year 3. Every half term, this will change to another group.

# The Whitchurch Woodland

## GRAND OPENING CEREMONY



The rolling costs to keep the forest school going are laid out as items on the Amazon wish list. Please click on the link if you would like to make a contribution!

Take a look at some of the feedback and words of kindness about the project:

View our  
Whitchurch  
Woodland  
Amazon wish  
list here

**“It’s such a wonderful initiative, and it’s clear how much thought and care has gone into creating a special space for the children.” Parent**

**“I would personally like to thank all the individuals who have been a part of the great woodland forest school with a huge thank you for getting this project done, particularly for the school children, it will open so many doors for the kids to venture out into the outdoors with a secured environment and learn in so many aspects.” Parent**

**“What a transformation! We didn’t even know this space was here a year ago and now every child will benefit.” Parent**

**“I would like to extend our warm congratulations to the entire school community for your dedication and vision in bringing this fantastic project to life. It’s truly inspiring to see how an unused space has been transformed through community collaboration, generosity, and the enthusiasm of pupils and parents alike.”  
Mayor of London**

**“This project is truly at the heart of my own love of the outdoors and I see the passion the school has dedicated to bringing this to life. Green spaces in Harrow are abundant, it’s how we use them for schools and the community that count. I am proud as Mayor of Harrow to share this occasion today and it’s amazing to see how it has brought together the school community. Well done to everyone. You should all be very proud of your school.” Mayor of Harrow**

**“I am delighted to announce the official opening of the Whitchurch Primary School Woodland area. We were honoured to have the Mayor of Harrow visit the school to perform the opening ceremony. Forest School is an immersive approach to learning that helps children grow in confidence, creativity, and resilience by connecting with**

# The Whitchurch Woodland

## GRAND OPENING CEREMONY



the natural world. This incredible project to revitalise our woodland area has only been possible thanks to the dedication of many volunteers from our staff, parents and wider community. I have been amazed how everyone has given their time, skills, and energy so generously. Our Year 6 Legacy Group have been instrumental in helping us develop, what was a disused space, and the unwavering drive of Assistant Headteacher, Mrs Portou has ensured our dream has become a reality. I am excited to see the pupils of Whitchurch Primary School benefit for years to come from the enriching, nature-filled outdoor space we've created together." Ms Inniss, Headteacher

"Leading on this project has been a dream come true. To know that staff, Governors, parents/carers and pupils have been following the progress and contributed so much, has really brought Whitchurch together as a community. This area will grow with the children." Mrs Portou

Many thanks to:

- The class reps for sending out the videos and photos
- Victoria Olarte for the truck
- Joshua and family for the very generous Amazon haul and pond materials
- Jayne and Stagecoach for the generous sponsorship of the pond
- Rithvi's mum for the bird table
- Sachin for the bricks
- Anisha and family for the bricks
- Veronika Vaghji for helping clear weeds on a hot Sunday afternoon
- Jay the carpenter for the fabulous teacher's tables and log cutting stand
- Emily's and family for the herbs
- Mr Burt for collating all the newsletter articles and taking the Mayor's visit photos
- The Whitchurch finance and admin team for the support with orders and packages
- The Whitchurch site team for their patience and support throughout the year
- Dhiru, Doodle and Tony for their many weekends of help.



**Mrs Portou**



# The Whitchurch Woodland

## GRAND OPENING CEREMONY





# Enrichment Highlights



## Year 4 Football Tournament

A huge well done to some of our Year 4 boys who represented the school at a football tournament at Roxbourne Primary. The team showed fantastic teamwork and determination, making it all the way to the Plate Final! Although they narrowly missed out on victory after a tense penalty shootout, we're incredibly proud of their performance and sportsmanship throughout the tournament. Well done, boys!



## Cricket Tournaments

This week our Year 5/6 cricket teams took part in tournaments against Harrow schools. Both teams worked hard together to score some amazing runs and display some great bowling. It was an amazing day of fun and excitement!

### *Miss Byrne and Miss Wong*



# Enrichment Highlights



## Year 4 visit to Cineworld

Year 4 visited Cineworld in Wembley to see the film Elio, which they thoroughly enjoyed. They were able to follow the main character's emotional journey, helping them to plan their own narrative back in class. Everyone then enjoyed a visit to the shaded playground - a lovely end to a lovely day!

*Mrs Solanki*



## Year 6 Bowling Visit

Year 6 had a fantastic time at Hollywood Bowl to celebrate their achievements and have some well-deserved fun! It was an unforgettable day of laughter, friendly competition and lots of strikes - a perfect way to create lasting memories with their friends and teachers!

*Miss Thomas*



## Comic Artist Kev F visits Year 6

Comic artist Kev F held a wonderful workshop with Year 6, creating and publishing their own comic strip! Children learnt the skill of comic art and how it is possible to turn any idea into something amazing!

*Miss Hogberg*



# Enrichment Highlights



## Rock Band Performance

Our Rock Band put on fantastic performance during our music assemblies today! They had children and staff cheering and clapping along - a brilliant atmosphere! Many thanks to our lead guitar teacher, Mr Massey, for his amazing work with the band!

*Mrs Leutfeld*



## Newton Farm Rights Respecting Ambassadors visit Whitchurch

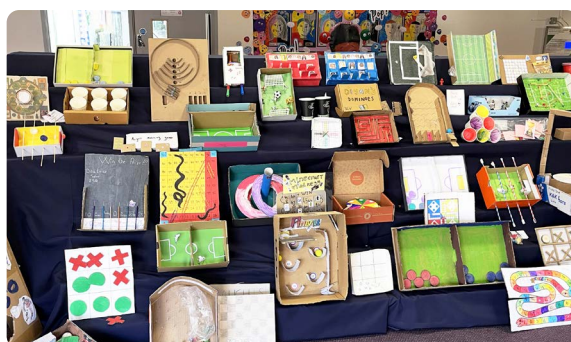
As we begin our journey to become a Rights Respecting School, Whitchurch welcomed five ambassadors from Newton Farm Primary School - a Gold Rights Respecting School - to meet with our School Council class representatives. They also gave an impressive presentation to Year 4 all about children's rights!

*Miss Liu*



## Year 2 Games Exhibition

Year 2 have put their creative skills to the test by designing and making a range of interactive games such as board games and ball games. These are currently on display in the 3D exhibition area!



# General Notices and Highlights



## Years 1 to 3 Sports Day - Tuesday 15th July

Sports Day for Years 1 to 3 will take place on **Tuesday** from **9.30am-11.30am**.

## Applying for Secondary School Places

The presentation for Year 5 families on applying for secondary school places can be found on the Year 5 page of our website.

View  
presentation  
here

View our  
parental  
survey  
findings on  
page 10

## Instrumental Lessons 2025-26

We have a number of spaces available for instrumental lessons from September, particularly in orchestral instruments - this is worth considering if you would like your child to be involved in one of our ensembles.

Lessons are 30 minutes long, taught weekly on rotation by our experienced Harrow Music Service visiting staff. Pupils can work towards graded exams and are encouraged to join ensembles and choirs where appropriate.

Spaces are available on the following instruments:

- **Strings (from Year 2):** cello
- **Piano (from Year 2)**
- **Woodwind (from Year 3):** saxophone, recorder
- **Percussion (from Year 3):** drum kit
- **Brass (from Year 4):** trumpet
- **Guitar, harmonium, tabla (from Year 3)**



If your child would like to begin lessons, please email Mrs Leutfeld, Director of Music at [eleutfeld@whitchurchps.co.uk](mailto:eleutfeld@whitchurchps.co.uk)

## Litter Pick and Riverfly Count

### Stanmore Marsh this Saturday, 10am-1pm

If you would like to take part in this event, please meet at the entrance to the North Marsh on Marsh Lane at 10am.

View our  
Summer term  
menu and  
allergens  
here



# Recommended Reading



## Whitchurch Recommended Reading List

At Whitchurch, we are committed to nurturing a love of reading. From September, each year group will have a Whitchurch Recommended Reading List which consists of a selection of high-quality books that children can enjoy in class, take home and celebrate reading through fun activities and certificates.

To help bring this to life, we have created Amazon Wish Lists for each year group (from Early Years through to Year 6). If you are able to support, we would be incredibly grateful for any book donations, either via the links below or by purchasing the same titles from elsewhere. Books purchased elsewhere can be dropped off at the school office or brought into school with your child.

**We are already so grateful for the generous donations we have received! Thank you to everyone who has contributed so far. Your support is helping us create fantastic reading spaces and inspire a lifelong love of reading across Whitchurch.**

Early  
Years

Year 1

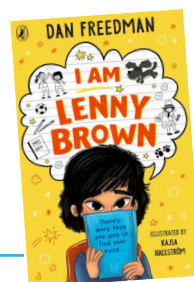
Year 2

Year 3

Year 4

Year 5

Year 6



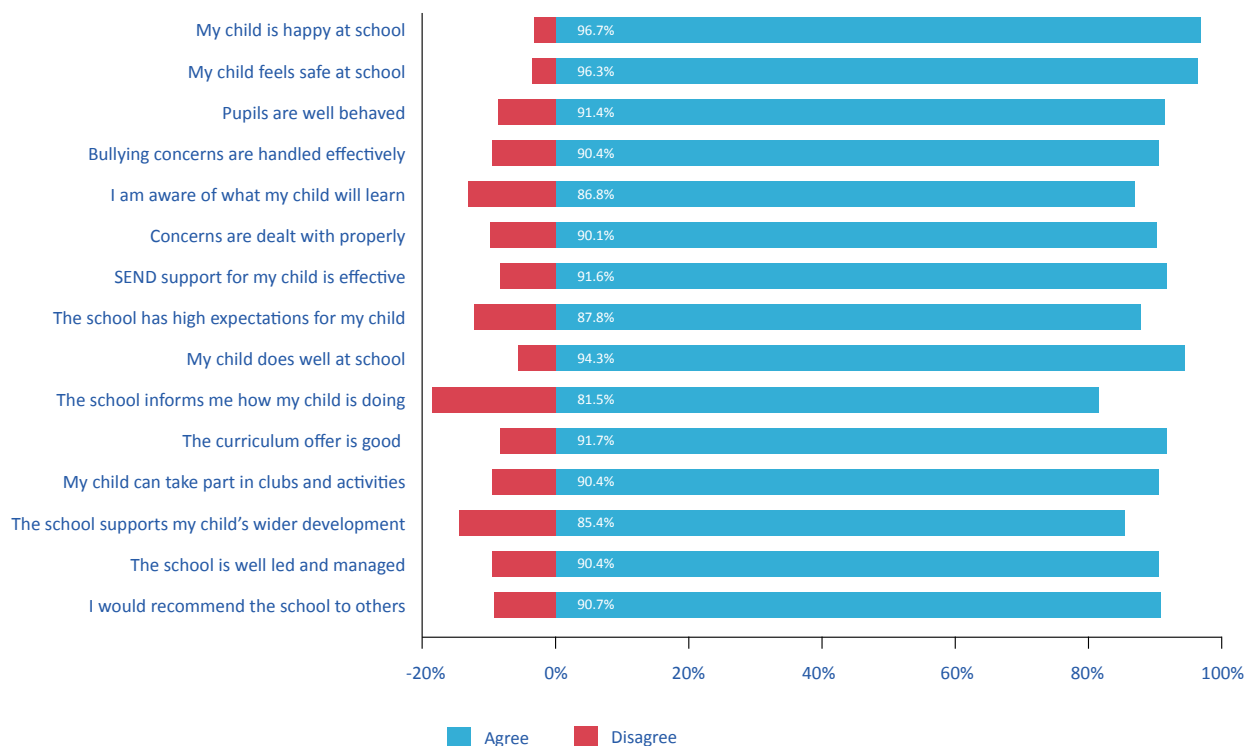
### Summer Reading - First News

Whitchurch children have free access to First News until 5th September. To take advantage of this offer, please register for a digital subscription via the link.

Subscribe  
here

# Parental Survey Results

Summary of findings  
(based on 302 responses)



## Feedback from parents and carers

There were many positive comments about the school...

- **Whitchurch is a good school with a welcoming community spirit**
- **children are happy and settled at school**
- **meet the teacher sessions are very useful**
- **there is a varied and interesting curriculum**
- **there are some exciting new initiatives**
- **senior leaders are calm, supportive and respectful**



The feedback also highlighted areas for review, such as...

- **the provision of after school clubs and activities**
- **meetings and feedback on children's progress**
- **more challenging homework**
- **timely communications**

We shall  
review these areas  
over the year ahead  
to help us grow  
as a school

# Dates for your Diary

Summer 2



Monday 14th July

Reception visit to Hertfordshire Zoo  
1RA and 1PD visit to London Aquarium (SeaLife)  
6HH and 6ET Production (5.30pm-7pm)

Tuesday 15th July

Year 4 day visit to Woodrow High House  
Year 1-3 Sports Day (9.30am-11.30am)  
6HA and 6CM Production (5.30pm-7pm)

Friday 18th July

1SM and 1IN visit to London  
Aquarium (SeaLife)

Monday 21st July

Class Parties (PM)  
Year 6 Leavers' Assembly (2pm-3pm)  
Year 6 Leavers' Party (6pm-8pm)

Last day  
of term  
Tues 22nd July  
(2pm finish)





# Spotlight on Design Technology

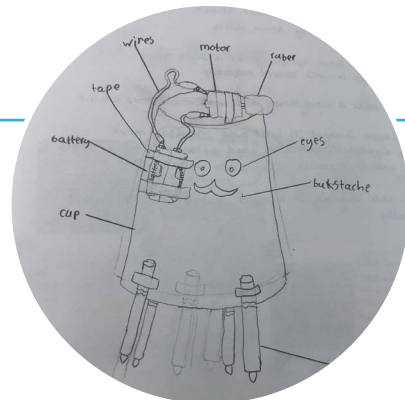
Year 5  
have been  
designing  
Doodle Bots!



## Doodle Bots

In Design Technology, Year 5 have designed and built doodle bots using motors, batteries and pens. We explored simple circuits and motion, then watched our creations produce unique patterns! This fun, hands-on project developed teamwork, problem-solving and creativity whilst deepening our understanding of electrical systems.

*Mrs Cumming*



## Year 5 views

“During the making of our Doodlers me and my group had lots of fun working together and decorating the Doodler. We were happy with the result.” Yusuf

“What went well is that the motor stayed on, however it was very loud and the batteries kept falling out!” Daria

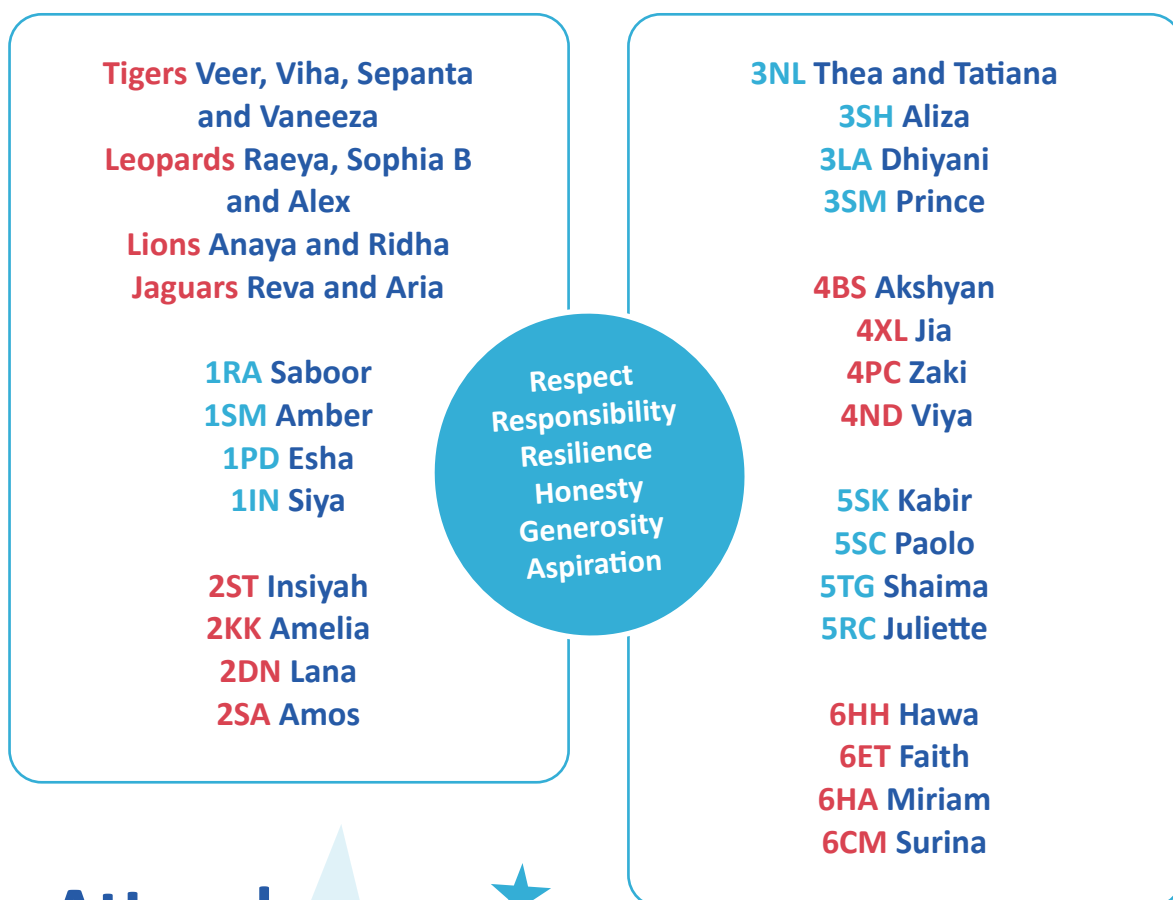
“It was tricky getting the pen at the best angle. To fix the problem we had to remove the tape on the pens and put them at the right angle.” Darius



# Whitchurch Star Pupils



Well done to our stars of the week, who have been selected for excellent work and demonstrating our school values



## Attendance Stars



This week's  
attendance  
stars are  
5SK (100%)

Whole  
School  
95%

### Did You Know?

Regular routines and increased social interaction promote positive mental health and wellbeing.

# Support for Families

Online  
Safety



## AI-enabled Scams

Artificial Intelligence (AI) isn't just transforming the way we learn and work, it's also reshaping the tactics scammers use online. From generating convincing phishing emails to fabricating influencer videos, criminals are using AI to make their scams more convincing than ever. These include romance scams, deepfake audio/video impersonations and fake job offers. Young people, who often embrace new tech quickly, can be especially vulnerable.

Please refer to the poster attached to this newsletter, which highlights AI-enabled dangers and how to spot and report them. It provides clear tips for verifying content, thinking critically and using trusted platforms to help young people stay one step ahead of the scammers.



## HAF in Harrow

Book  
activities  
here

Bookings for the **Holiday Activities & Food (HAF) scheme in Harrow** are now open. There are thousands of free places for school aged children at participating holiday clubs across the borough. To be eligible, families in receipt of income-related free school meals.

## Magna Summer Camps

Magna Camps are offering Summer Camps at Elmgrove Primary, Newton Farm School and Stag Lane Primary. They also have FREE HAF spaces to eligible children across Harrow via the booking link.

Visit  
Magna  
Camps  
website

Book  
Magna Camps  
10 day HAF  
places here



# Support for Families



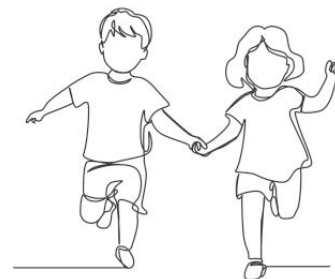
Schools  
Counselling  
Partnership



## Helping your children to get along with each other

Brothers and sisters spend so much time together at home that they may be prone to arguing and fighting from time to time. When your children are having a hard time with each other, it can be very difficult and tiring for you to try to help them get along and be nice to each other.

Try to create more positive experiences between your children, to help them develop more good feelings towards each other. They may need your help to notice and suggest activities to do together that they both enjoy. When you catch them playing well together, try not to interrupt them - perhaps lunch can wait a little longer? Laughing together can really help with bonding and connecting: can you put some music on and dance together at home, or can you all enjoy singing songs together? It is also good to encourage children to work together as a team: try to remove competitive games and if you do, encourage children to play together against the adult(s)! Or perhaps they could create a card or drawing for a relative together? If you would like to do something a little creative, you could start a Family Kindness journal or jar: write down any time you notice siblings being kind to each other, even if it is just exchanging a smile! Then read through them together at the end of every day or week.



### Reach Out - Schools Counselling Partnership

Sometimes we could all do with someone to talk to. If you would like to meet Tom for a confidential and non-judgemental chat about you, your child, or any other worries, he is available on **Wednesdays at 9-10am**.

You can call/text Tom on **07799 028 461** or email him at **tom@schoolsounsellingpartnership.co.uk**

# Staff Snapshot



**Name: Anita Nicholas**

**Role: Year 3 Class Teacher**

I am pleased to be working at Whitchurch, where everyone has been friendly and welcoming to me. Thank you to the staff, pupils and parents who have made my first weeks so comfortable!

## All about me

I have been teaching for eighteen years. Prior to teaching I worked as a Software Test Engineer in the city of London and prior to that I was a chef for three years in Tokyo, Japan. I come from a family of educators so I guess I was always meant to be a teacher. I have lived in Ruislip, Hillingdon, for nearly thirty years - it is not too far from Whitchurch. I have a daughter who has just started working in London.

## Hobbies and Interests

I spend my free time in the kitchen - I love food and I bake my own sourdough bread every other week! I attend weekly yoga classes, walk in my local woods most Saturdays and sing in a choir. I also like to travel and last summer I visited Granada in Spain, where I spent a day at the amazing Alhambra and learnt about the Moorish influences on Spanish food and culture. This summer I will spend a few weeks with my elderly mother in Accra, Ghana.



## Best part of my role

I enjoy teaching and the children at Whitchurch are a joy to teach! I have taught all years, from Nursery to Year 6, but my favourite years are Years 1 and 2 because it is satisfying to see how children develop their personalities and grow academically. It is profound to see children become independent readers as this makes the whole curriculum accessible for them to explore. It is rewarding to see children develop their curiosity, social skills and resilience each year. So the best thing about my role is seeing children learn to read, grow socially and explore the world through their learning.

# 2025-2026

## Class Allocations



Current Class	New Class	Class Teacher
N/A	Nursery	Ms P Szabo
	RLW Jaguars	Miss N Ward / Mrs P Leigh
	RTP Tigers	Mrs T Patel
	RJP Lions	Miss J Patel
	RDW Leopards	Mrs R Dodia / Mrs J Whittingham
RNW Leopards	1TG	Miss T Goldsmith
RLS Lions	1RA	Mrs R Ahmed
RBP Jaguars	1RS	Miss R Syed
RTP Tigers	1KB	Mrs K Bainbridge
1IN	2DN	Ms T Doshi / Ms M Nickson
1SM	2KK	Miss K Karia
1PD	2JJ	Mrs J Jain
1RA	2NT	Ms A Nicholas / Mrs S Tezel*
2DN	3MD	Miss M Daniel
2ST	3MS	Miss M Shameem
2KK	3SA	Mrs S Akhund
2SA	3NN	Miss N Nami
3LA	4HH	Miss H Hogberg
3SM	4XL	Miss X Liu
3NL	4AK	Miss L Aid / Ms S Khan
3SH	4RS	Miss R Samji
4BS	5NL	Miss N Lakhani
4XL	5PS	Mrs P Shah
4ND	5RP	Mrs R Price
4PC	5RC	Miss R Chauhan-D'Souza
5RC	6BS	Mrs B Solanki
5SK	6CM	Mrs C Marin
5TG	6ET	Miss E Thomas
5SC	6ND	Mrs N Darr

\* on maternity leave during Autumn term





# Penalty Notices for Unauthorised Absences

2024  
updates:  
what you  
need to  
know

With the introduction of the new National Framework for Penalty Notices, the following changes will come into force for unauthorised absences that occur after 19th August 2024.

## 5 consecutive days of Term Time Leave

Fines  
will be  
issued  
for:

Penalty Notice fines will be issued for term time leave of 5 or more consecutive days *(or for fewer days where this has happened before)*.

## 10 sessions of Unauthorised Absence in a 10 week period

Penalty Notice fines will be considered where there have been 10 sessions of absence in a 10 week period.

## Each parent/carer - for each child

Fines  
will be  
issued  
to:

Penalty Notice fines will be issued to each parent/carer, for each child who was absent.

*For example: 3 siblings absent for term time leave will result in each parent/carer receiving 3 separate fines.*



### First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or irregular attendance the amount will be:

**£160 per parent/carer,  
per child when paid  
within 28 days.**

*(reduced to £80 per  
parent/carer, per child  
if paid within 21 days)*

### Second Offence (within 3 years)

The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or irregular attendance the amount will be:

**£160 per parent/carer,  
per child when paid  
within 28 days.**

*(no option to pay  
at £80 level)*

### Third Offence (and any further offences within 3 years)

The third time an offence is committed for Term Time Leave or irregular attendance a Penalty Notice will not be issued. the case will proceed to the Magistrates' court.

**Magistrate's fines can  
be up to £2,500 per  
parent/carer, per child.**

Please refer to our Attendance and Punctuality Policy and speak with the school if you are thinking of taking your child out of school during term time. You will need to make a written request to take your child out of school and any leave of absence will need to be agreed by the Headteacher before it is given.

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](https://nationalcollege.com).

# What Parents & Educators Need to Know about AI-ENABLED SCAMS

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Artificial intelligence (AI) is quickly becoming a widely used tool, with lots of positive applications being discussed and developed. Sadly, however, as with most technology tools, there are those who will seek to use it for malicious and dishonest practices, with children and other vulnerable groups particularly at risk.

### PHISHING EMAILS: BETTER & QUICKER

Phishing scams – emails designed to trick people into handing over login details or money – are not new, and do not rely on AI; however, AI has made them far more dangerous. Criminals can now generate highly convincing emails at speed, mimicking an organisation's tone, branding and language with ease. This makes phishing attempts harder to spot, especially for young people who may not yet know what to look out for.

### ONLINE MARKETPLACE FRAUD

Online marketplaces are now a common way to buy and sell everything, from second-hand clothes to cars. Criminals are exploiting this by using AI to enhance or completely fake product photos and videos, and pressure buyers into paying deposits or full amounts upfront. These tactics are becoming more advanced, making it vital to pause, check, and verify the sale before parting with any money.

### VOICE IMPERSONATION

AI can now realistically impersonate a person's voice when given a small sample of someone's speech patterns. This is especially concerning where voice has been enabled as an alternative to password-based logins. One such example was the use of AI deepfake audio as part of a fake kidnapping scam: the criminals used an AI voice clone of a 15-year-old to convince her parents she had been kidnapped and elicit a ransom.

### EMPLOYMENT SCAMS

Using AI, criminals can create fake online profiles that seem completely real. These synthetic identities can chat with young people about fake job offers, asking for money to secure a visa or paperwork. In 2025, The Guardian reported a scam targeting young people with promises of quick cash, posing as TikTok staff.

### INFLUENCER & INVESTMENT SCAMS

AI tools now make it easy to manipulate video and audio, with technology available that can generate entirely fake content using the likeness of celebrities or influencers. Criminals are using this to create convincing videos of well-known figures promoting fake products or services, which young people can be particularly susceptible to. Cryptocurrency scams are a common tactic, luring people into investing in schemes that do not exist. Once payment is made, the criminal simply disappears with the money.

### ROMANCE SCAMS & SEXTORTION

AI chat bots can now mimic real conversations, often accompanied with realistic fake photos and videos, which makes it easier for criminals to build trust with young people – among other things, this can lead to fraud or sextortion. In 2024, the NCA's CEOP Safety Centre received 380 reports of sextortion. Alarmingly, in the first five months alone, police received an average of 117 monthly reports involving under-18s, showing how serious and targeted this threat has become.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### THINK CRITICALLY

The key to addressing the increasing growth of AI-enabled scams is to think critically and show caution. Inform children that if something is too good to be true, then it probably is. Encourage them to stop and carefully consider what they are seeing and reading before taking any action. For example, if a social media post expresses urgency, proceed with caution; if content seems unusual, even from a known person, it may be that their account has been hacked.

### USE TRUSTWORTHY SITES AND SERVICES

Online marketplaces are useful when buying and selling items; however, where possible, encourage children to use reputable companies and their online shopping sites. These companies are likely to have more sophisticated cyber-security safeguards in place, underpinned by consumer legislation, enabling them to control how products and services are displayed and traded on their sites.

### SEEK TO VERIFY

Criminals may breach an influencer's account or spread misinformation and fake content; however, their approach will generally be limited to a single account, site or service. Where possible, show children how to verify information to check its legitimacy before proceeding. Small actions, such as phoning the person who is the subject of a suspicious email, or checking content via an individual or company website or social media sites can make the difference. The greater the risk, the more effort we should expend to confirm whether the information presented is true or false.

### REPORT IT

As the sophistication of scams increases, the likelihood of being tricked by them also increases, especially when not paying attention or acting quickly. It is important that young people know how to report incidents as they happen. Show children how to report their concerns to the social media site, Action Fraud, banks, and other individuals or organisations linked or involved. If you are unsure of the most effective reporting channel, contact Action Fraud.

### Meet Our Expert

Gary Henderson is the Director of IT at Millfield, a large independent boarding school in Somerset, as well as a member of the Digital Futures Group, Vice Chair of the ISC Digital Advisory Group and an Association of Network Managers in Education (ANME) Ambassador.



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