PARENT BULLETIN

Thursday 12th November 2026

YOUR WEEKLY UPDATE TO OUR LATEST SCHOOL NEWS

Key Notices for the Week Ahead

We have lots of exciting updates for you. Please read below:

Music Trips

- Thursday 12th November - Brightsparks Royal Festival Hall concert - GCSE Music trip - Y9-11 selected students

Odd Socks Day – Monday 16 November!

Different socks. One community. United against bullying!

On Monday 16 November, we're kicking off Anti-Bullying Week with Odd Socks Day, organised by our School Council!

We're inviting all students to wear their most mismatched socks and bring in £1 to support anti-bullying work. Odd socks are a fun way to celebrate what makes each of us unique and remind everyone that our differences are something to be proud of.

This year's theme, 'Break the Silence', encourages us all to speak up against bullying, listen to one another and help make SPW a place where everyone feels safe and included.

Parents and carers: please remind your child to find two different socks and bring £1 to school on Monday!

Celebrating Diwali and Marking Remembrance at SPW

This week, our school community came together to recognise two important occasions.
To celebrate Diwali, the Festival of Lights, students enjoyed a special themed lunch. Celebrated by Hindus, Sikhs, Jains and some Buddhists, Diwali symbolises the triumph of light over darkness, good over evil and hope over despair. It was a lovely opportunity to celebrate the rich cultural diversity of our school community.

We also marked Remembrance Day with a two-minute silence and the playing of *The Last Post* during morning line-up. Observed each year on 11 November, the anniversary of the end of the First World War in 1918, Remembrance Day provides an opportunity to reflect on the millions of lives lost or affected by war and conflict, both past and present. This moment of collective reflection complemented assemblies delivered to students throughout the week, exploring the history and significance of Remembrance and why it remains important today.

Both occasions offered opportunities for our students to reflect on the importance of respect, compassion and community, values at the heart of life at St Paul's Way

AT SPW WE VALUE Aspiration Integrity Community

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Year 7 Enrichment Taster Fortnight – Give Something New a Go!

Our Year 7 Enrichment Taster Fortnight is now underway! Over these two weeks, students are encouraged to try out the clubs and activities they've expressed an interest in, whether that's sport, music, science, art or something completely new.

All Year 7 students should now have received a personalised letter, in some cases confirming their preferred activities, and tutors will be encouraging them to get involved. The fortnight is a chance to explore new interests, make friends, build confidence and discover talents they never knew they had!
Parents and carers – please encourage your child to give their chosen clubs a try! There's no obligation to continue if they decide an activity isn't for them, and most clubs are completely free, with no special equipment required.

Taking part in enrichment also supports students' progress through Aspire7, our Year 7 character development programme, which recognises and rewards students for embracing new challenges, demonstrating our school values and contributing to school life.

Find out more about enrichment and Aspire7, including how students can complete challenges and earn awards.

Love food? Come and work with us!

We're looking for a Food Technician to join our team at St Paul's Way School!

This could be a fantastic opportunity for someone in our local community who loves cooking, enjoys working with young people and would like to play a bigger part in school life.

You'll help prepare ingredients and equipment for Food Technology lessons, support students' practical learning and help keep our kitchen running smoothly.

The role is permanent, 35 hours per week, term-time only (41 weeks per year (term time +2weeks)).
Interested, or know someone who might be? We'd love to hear from you!

WEEKLY HOME LEARNING TIPS

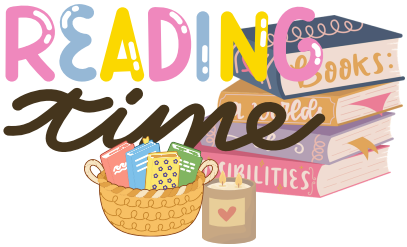


SUPPORTING WITH HOMEWORK

The Chunking Method - Help your child break larger projects or long-term homework into smaller, 20-minute tasks to prevent them from becoming overwhelmed.

READING TIP

Find out what reading your child is doing already, but be gentle! Their reading r***eally*** doesn't need to be something heavy - if it's celebrity gossip or news about their interests, that's great! Remember, all reading counts, so avoid seeing this as a 'way in' to something else and celebrate it for what it is. We're just interested in reading practice and supporting the 'habit' of reading. You don't need to monitor their reading at all, but just talking to them about it is likely to reveal all the hidden reading they do in a week without even realising.



AT SPW WE VALUE Aspiration Integrity Community

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

AGE RESTRICTION 13+ In the UK

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

WhatsApp is a free messaging app owned by Meta, that allows users to send messages, share multimedia, make calls, and participate in group chats. In September 2026, WhatsApp announced new optional parental controls for teenagers, including privacy settings, group notifications, and restrictions on AI content, which parents and educators should be aware of.

GROUP CHAT PRESSURES

Group chats help young people stay connected, but they can also leave them feeling excluded or overwhelmed. Negative comments can escalate quickly, and frequent notifications can create a sense of needing to be constantly available. WhatsApp's new parental controls notify parents when teenagers join or leave groups, or when a group grows significantly in size.

HARMFUL CONTENT ON CHANNELS

WhatsApp Channels allow users to receive updates from public figures, organisations, and content creators; however, some Channels may expose young people to misinformation, harmful ideologies, or age-inappropriate material. New optional parental controls allow adults to restrict which Channels teenagers access, including limiting them to approved Channels.

SCAMS TARGETING YOUNG USERS

Scammers may use WhatsApp to trick young people into sharing personal information, sending money, or sharing security codes. They may impersonate friends or family members, using convincing stories about emergencies or urgent requests for help. New parental controls can help manage who contacts teenagers; however, they cannot prevent all scams or fraudulent messages.

UNWANTED CONTACT AND LOCATION SHARING

WhatsApp allows users to share their live location, profile information, and Status updates. Without appropriate privacy settings, this information could expose young people to unwanted attention or reveal their whereabouts. New parental controls enable adults to manage certain privacy settings, including who can view account details and add teenagers to groups.

DISAPPEARING AND HIDDEN MESSAGES

WhatsApp features such as disappearing messages and Chat Lock can make conversations harder for adults to identify. Although these tools are designed to protect privacy, they may also make it harder for adults to recognise inappropriate exchanges or harmful behaviour. WhatsApp's new parental controls do not give adults access to teenagers' private messages or calls.

COMMERCIAL AND AI CONTENT

WhatsApp includes advertising in parts of its Updates section and offers Meta AI, an integrated AI assistant. Young people may encounter sponsored content, misleading AI responses, or information which is unsuitable for their age. New parental controls offer a stricter 'Limited Content' setting for Meta AI; however, this cannot guarantee that every response will be accurate or appropriate.

Advice for Parents & Educators

EXPLORE NEW PARENTAL CONTROLS

WhatsApp's new optional parental controls are being rolled out gradually, giving families more ways to manage teenagers' privacy and interactions. Teenagers will need parental approval using a parent-set PIN to relax any protected settings. Keep the conversation open and set up the controls together, remembering that parents can adjust or switch them off at any time.

MANAGE CHANNELS AND AI

Explore the new settings for Channels, Status updates, and Meta AI. Parents can restrict Channels to approved selections or prevent teenagers from viewing them. They can also choose Meta AI's stricter 'Limited Content' option, which restricts certain topics. Remind young people that AI can produce inaccurate information and encourage them to question responses rather than accepting them at face value.

MONITOR GROUP ACTIVITY SAFELY

New parental controls notify adults when teenagers join or leave groups, or when a group grows significantly in size. These alerts can help identify potentially concerning interactions without revealing private messages. Encourage young people to discuss unfamiliar groups, uncomfortable conversations, or pressure from other members and that they can leave, mute, or report if they feel uncomfortable or unsafe.

PRIORITISE TRUST AND COMMUNICATION

Parental controls should support conversations about online safety, not replace them. Explain that WhatsApp's new features do not give adults access to private messages or calls, helping teenagers understand that their privacy remains protected. Reassure young people that they can speak openly about upsetting content, unwanted contact, or pressure from other group members.

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.



See full reference list on our website

#WakeUpWednesday®

The National College®

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 11.11.2026

SPW6
ST PAUL'S WAY SIXTH FORM
PART OF UNIVERSITY SCHOOLS TRUST

SPW6 OPEN EVENING

BOOK TODAY

Thursday 3rd December at 3:50pm.



