



SHOBNALL PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



TELEPHONE: 01283 247410 TWITTER: @shobnallprimary E-MAIL: shb-office@shb.itmat.co.uk

24th January 2025

"You are your best thing."

Dear Parents/Carers,

It is difficult to believe that we are already nearly at the end of January and, as ever, school has been exceptionally busy with a range of different activities taking place over the course of the week.

Next week, **Year 6** are making their way to **Laches Wood** and will be staying from **Monday 27 January** until **Friday 31 January**. Please look out on X (Twitter) and Instagram to see how they are getting on! I know the children are really looking forward to their stay and it promises to be a fantastic week for them!



You will all have received an invite to attend a consultation with your child's class teacher at **Parents' Evening** on **Monday 10 February 2025** or **Wednesday 12 February 2025**. If you have not already booked your slot, please follow the instructions that were provided on the email you received earlier on in the week.



With **National Storytelling Week** starting on **1 February 2025** (more information below), this has been the perfect way to find out more about children's likes and dislikes when it comes to reading! We would like to thank you for your support with reading at home, as this really helps support the children with becoming confident readers and developing a passion and enjoyment for books! Please keep checking our weekly newsletter for recommended reads and further ideas of how you can support your child with reading at home!

We hope that whatever it is you are doing this weekend that you have a restful, relaxing and enjoyable one! As always, we look forward to seeing you again on Monday! Enjoy!

National Storytelling Week – 1 February to 9 February 2025

We celebrate stories in every form during National Storytelling Week, which takes place from 1 February to 9 February this year. This engaging event is celebrated in schools, clubs, museums, spoken word venues, and various other places. Like its name, National Storytelling Week encourages people of all ages, genders, and cultures to indulge in stories new and old and participate in this centuries-old form of entertainment.



The theme for National Storytelling Week 2025 is **'Reimagine your World'**. Whether it's something unexpected on your way to school, odd sounds you hear at night, or a path you've never followed, the world around us is full of secret lives, places and possibilities. The most extraordinary story can come from the most ordinary place: it just needs someone to find it.

Finding the time to read with children can often be difficult, especially with the increase in technology. However, story time is an important part of a child's life, therefore, as teachers and parents, setting up a regular storytelling time ensures children can let their imaginations go wild! As a school, we will be promoting the power of storytelling and if you have any exciting ideas to share of things you do at home, please let us know!



Parent Survey Feedback

As stated in last week's newsletter, we would like to say thank you once again to all parents who shared their views as part of our Kirkland Rowell Parent Survey, which was distributed last half-term. Your views are extremely valuable to us and, as promised, we will be sharing some feedback over the forthcoming weeks in response to the issues raised.

In this week's newsletter, we thought it pertinent to remind parents of our collection procedures for those who use Shobnall Stars. With regards to the collection procedures, it is important to note that the main gate is locked

by the school office at 3.40pm and in order to ensure for safe collection from the hall, parents must ring the external white bell located to the right of the main gate. This will notify staff in the hall that a parent is waiting to be admitted. Signage is being added so that parents know the correct bell to press.

As safeguarding is "everyone's responsibility", if parents have any further suggestions, please contact us via the regular communication channels and we will try our best to respond as soon as is possible. We know you all appreciate how busy schools are, so thank you for your patience with this.

PFA Valentine Disco – Friday 7 February 2025

Tickets for the forthcoming Valentine themed disco go on sale next week every morning and afternoon pick up by the entrance to the key stage 2 playground and will be priced at £4.00, which includes a drink and some sweets. The infant disco will be 3.45 – 5.00pm and the junior disco will be 5.15 – 6.30pm. The day itself will be a non-uniform day (the theme being party, or 'Dress up for Digits' as this is also NSPCC Number Day) free of charge, so no need for children attending the infant disco to bring a change of clothes. Shobnall Stars will remain open on that night but will be in the Year 2 classroom on that evening.



There will be a range of other goodies on sale at the discos so children will need to bring a little extra spending money on the night should they wish to purchase anything on offer. Prices for these optional extras are:

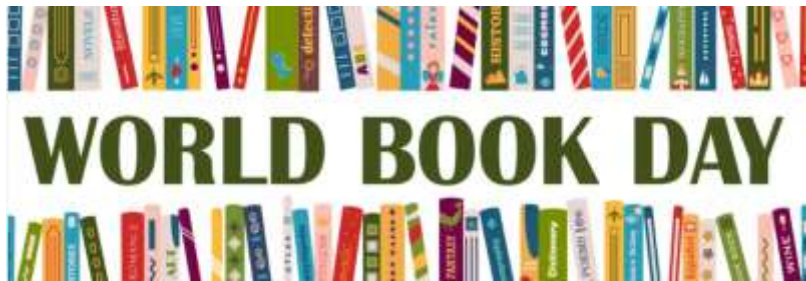
- Can of Pop – 90p
- Water – 50p
- Fruit Shoots – 60p

- Cartons of Pop – 40p
- Walkers Crisps – 60p
- Raiders Crisps – 40p
- Freddos – 25p
- Sweets – 30p / 50p

The PFA can take card payments for tickets, but due to the bank charges, there will be an additional 5p charge for every transaction. We do hope that you are able to support this event!

Welcome Back Mrs Sandhu!

This week, Mrs Sandhu, who has been on Maternity Leave, spent some time in school during one of her 'Keeping in Touch' days in preparation for her return after half-term. She is very much looking forward to coming back and can't wait to get stuck in! She will be working with Year 5 on a Friday whilst Miss Martin-Mills undertakes her work in other schools across the Trust, as well as delivering some boosters in Year 6 as they prepare for their SATs, and some reading and writing interventions in Year 1 as they prepare for the Phonics Screening Check.



World Book Day – Thursday 6 March 2025

World Book Day is fast approaching, and this year Miss Martin-Mills is asking the children (and staff) to come **dressed** in their **pyjamas** as our theme is centred around **bedtime stories**. The Reading Ambassadors and Miss Martin-Mills will be

planning lots of fun activities based around this theme when we return after half-term! More information will follow in due course!

Check out the World Book Day Family Hub for more things to do at home. We're very much looking forward to celebrating World Book Day, which could not happen without the support of parents and carers – thank you. Please remember to keep reading!

County Council Elections – 1 May 2025

The government has confirmed that local elections will go ahead on **Thursday 1 May 2025** across Staffordshire. As a polling station, we have to comply with the returning officer's request to use our school on this date.

It is important to note that the Returning Officer has **a right by law** to make use of **any** school premises for the purpose of an election/referendum. ***This statutory entitlement is equally applicable to Academies and other non-maintained schools.***

The Representation of the People Act, 1983 (Schedule 1, rule 22 (1)(b) applies.

Under that provision, in England and Wales a school maintained or assisted by a local authority or a school in respect of which grants are made out of moneys provided



by Parliament to the person or body of persons responsible for the management of the school may be used. **Consequently, Schools and Academies cannot refuse such a request.**

We have been given as much notice as possible by the Local Council Returning Officer of the intention to use our school. The practicalities and safeguarding involved in our school remaining open whilst being used as a Polling Station have been discussed with the Local Governing Body and they have agreed that for the safe operation of the Polling Station and the potential risks to pupils, school will be **closed on Thursday 1 May 2025.**

There are no planned elections for 2026.

Thank you for your understanding.

Gung Hay Fat Choy!

Lunar New Year, or Chinese New Year, begins next week and we would like to take this opportunity to wish all our families who celebrate, "Gung Hay Fat Choy!" We would like to share with you some facts about this tradition:

- ❖ In Chinese legend, the twelve animals of the Chinese zodiac were asked to meet the Jade Emperor and each had a year named after them. It was then decided that all those born in the animal's years would have their personalities as well.
- ❖ Red is a lucky colour because it represents fire and is thought to drive away bad luck. This is why people wear red clothes, hang red lanterns and give out red envelopes for Chinese New Year.
- ❖ The traditional Chinese New Year celebration lasts for 15 days. It is the longest and most important festival.
- ❖ People do their spring cleaning at Chinese New Year as it is believed bad luck is swept away with the dirt.
- ❖ It is a tradition to stay up until midnight to greet the new year. This practise is called *Shou Sui*. Doors and windows are open on the stroke of midnight to allow the old year to flow out.



This year is the **Year of the Snake**. People born in the Year of the Snake are said to be enigmatic, wise and sympathetic. The serpents personality on the surface is very calm and collected but internally they are very passionate. In front of strangers, they revert to a quiet self-protection mode but once familiar they will take care of one another. They are goal-oriented, have a plan, and get closer step by step to their goal.



Warm up this Winter!

At this time of year, the most important thing to do is keep warm.

Layer up

It goes without saying, but make sure you are wearing those layers, especially if you're heading outside.

Gym clothes are great to wear as your base layer, then add woolly jumpers and thick hoodies over the top before

adding your waterproofs. When it's extra chilly, keeping your head warm with a woolly hat, and wearing thick socks and gloves will make all the difference when you're out and about.

Keep moving

Heading outside to exercise may seem like the last thing you want to do when it's cold. But going out for a brisk walk is the perfect way to warm up and won't cost you a penny.

Comfort foods are made for winter

Cook up some winter warmers to keep your body warm from the inside out. Chillis, curries, spaghetti bolognese and a good old Sunday roast are some popular favourites which are also great for batch cooking and leftovers making your meals last longer and go further.

Try cooking in an air fryer or slow cooker too, to keep your energy costs down.

Hot water bottles

Bring out the hot water bottle instead of heating the whole house. Perfect when working from home or warming up your bed.

Online Safety Tips

A study entitled *The Digital Health Generation* has highlighted that more than 70% of young people in the UK, some aged just 8, are using apps and other digital online technologies to track and manage their health.

For those of us who might struggle with sticking to a routine or even knowing where to start, physical wellbeing and fitness apps promise to do the heavy lifting for you providing meal plans, exercise routines and more.

However, some of these apps aren't always as safe as they might first appear, and they tend to present a few risks to their users – especially for their underage demographic. That's why this free guide on safety concerns around physical wellbeing apps will provide you with expert advice on how to mitigate these risks for young people.



FREE Uniform!

We continue to accept donations of old uniform via the box situated outside the school office for any parents who wish to donate. Please could we ask that these are cleaned and in good condition before placing in the box outside the school office. If you need any uniform, you will need to pop down to the **Family Hub** on Waterloo Street, DE14 2NJ. The Family Hub do not have the capacity to reply to emails but do have uniform on site all year round and are open Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 4.00pm.

Reading Corner

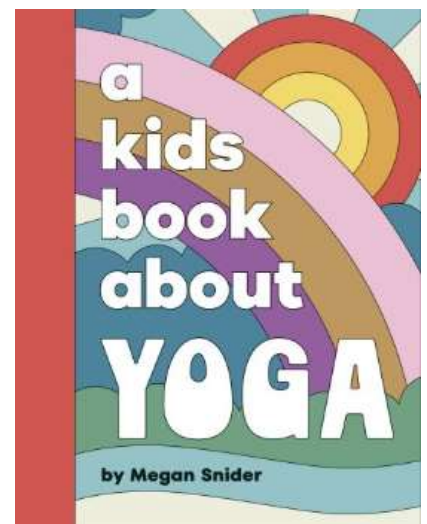
This week's recommended read is for children aged 9+...

A Kids Book About Yoga

Written by Megan Snider

Yoga is a way to discover more about ourselves and our connection with the surrounding world. This is a kids' book about yoga. The word "yoga" means to "join together." Yoga is how we connect things that were never meant to be apart. Yoga grows and changes with us.

This book was made to help kids aged up to 9 understand what yoga is - what it means and how to do it. Yoga reminds us how to be the best versions of ourselves. Ready to learn more? Close your eyes. Take a deep breath. Exhale slowly. And let's begin.





Attendance

Please read the [NHS 'Is my child too ill for school?' guidance](#) which has further information if you are unsure whether to send your child to school or not. We are always happy to advise in line with this guidance, so if you are still in doubt, please contact the school office if your child develops any symptoms and we can discuss this further with you.

Children can come to school with mild respiratory illnesses. This includes general cold symptoms: a minor cough, runny nose, or sore throat. However, children should not be sent to school if they have a temperature of 38°C or above.

Please note, we can only accept and administer **prescribed medicines** that are in-date, labelled, provided in the original container as dispensed by a pharmacist and include instructions for administration and dosage.

If your child arrives late, it is the responsibility of the adult to report to the school office and sign the "Late Book", giving a reason for lateness. This is important so that the school office knows your child is in school and can mark your child in in the class register. The class registers in the classrooms close at 8.55am when lessons start.

When reporting an absence, please could we ask that parents contact the school office before 9.30am and state clearly reasons for absence. Let's keep working together to ensure attendance is as good as it can be! Remember, every pupil, every day! Thank you for your support. This week's Attendance Champions are **Year 1! Here are the latest figures...**

Reception	95.0%	Target
Year 1	100%	97%
Year 2	98.6%	
Year 3	91.6%	Overall (to date)
Year 4	98.8%	
Year 5	98.7%	
Year 6	91.2%	96.3%
Overall	96.0%	

Head Teacher's Awards

Reception	Gianna R	Simeon B-C
Year 1	Harvey K	Elliott T
Year 2	EVERYONE!	
Year 3	Bradley F	Fynn M
Year 4	Ava B	Jackson B
Year 5	Elliot M	Rehaan K
Year 6	Tabitha B	Alfie P






Lunchtime Star Awards

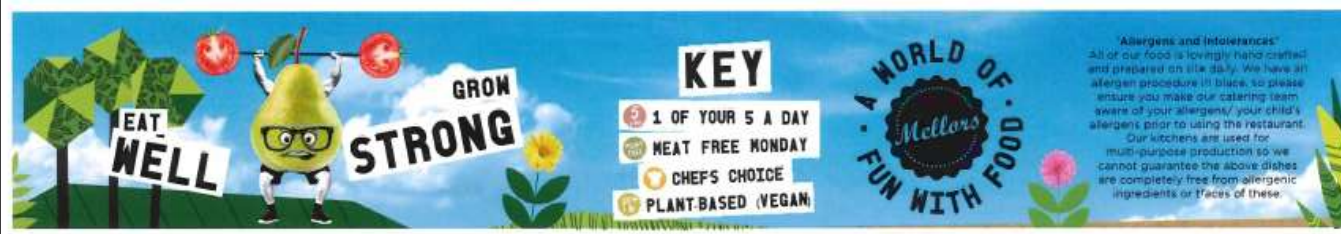
Reception	Dawoud A
Year 1	Cooper Z
Year 2	Mustafa A
Year 3	Aleem A
Year 4	Angus B
Year 5	Afra M
Year 6	Rhema B

Team Points

Team Points	Claymills	Rosliston	Sinai	Trent
Points (Week Ending 24.01.25)	44	39	89	69
Position	3 rd – 2 points	4 th – 1 point	1 st – 4 points	2 nd – 3 points
Running Total	6	7	8	11

Hot Lunch Options 27.01.25 – 31.01.25

WEEK 1	 MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Main dish	Margherita pizza with baked potato wedges	Pork sausage with creamy mash potato & gravy	Roast beef, with Yorkshire pudding, roast potatoes & gravy	Chicken burger with crispy diced potato	Crispy fish fingers with chunky chips
Vegetarian Main dish	Roasted vegetable pizza	 Vegan sausage & mash potato with gravy	 Quorn™ fillet with roast potatoes & gravy	Vegetarian burger with crispy diced potato	 Crispy vegetable fingers with chunky chips
Accompaniments	Peas & baked beans Salad bar	Peas & carrots Salad bar	Carrots & cauliflower Salad bar	Green beans & sweetcorn Salad bar	Peas & baked beans Salad bar
Desserts	Apple & cinnamon muffin	Shortbread	 Flapjack	Jam & coconut sponge	Ice cream
Fresh fruit or yoghurt	Fresh fruit or Yoghurt	Fresh fruit or Yoghurt	Fresh fruit or Yoghurt	Fresh fruit or Yoghurt	Fresh fruit or Yoghurt
Jacket potato and sandwich selection	Jacket potato and sandwich selection	Jacket potato and sandwich selection	Jacket potato and sandwich selection	Jacket potato and sandwich selection	Jacket potato and sandwich selection



SHOBNALL SHOWCASE!

Let's have a sneaky peek as to what has been going on in our classrooms this week...

Nursery

Our adventures in Nursery this week...

We had an exciting start to the week in Nursery as we have been completing lots of learning based on our class focus book, 'The Gingerbread Man.' It has been wonderful to watch the children working in groups, taking it in turns to retell the story. The children have loved reciting the repetitive vocabulary with some wonderful acting of the Gingerbread Man.

Science was lots of fun as the Nursery children had great fun placing a gingerbread man biscuit into water to see what would happen if he had swum across the river, instead of taking a ride from the sly fox! This generated lots of lovely vocabulary such as soggy, mushy and sloppy! This learning also led us on to thinking about objects that float and those that sink, and we began some simple experiments in Nursery to find out more.



Reception

Our adventures in Reception this week...

We have had a fabulous week exploring the deep, blue ocean as part of our theme, 'On the High Seas!'

We had lots of fun researching sea creatures and were eager to share our exciting facts...

"They squirt black ink to scare the predators from eating them." (Freddie)

"Stingrays live with the sharks." (Sim)

"Dolphins eat meat and have 2 bellies." (Ethan)

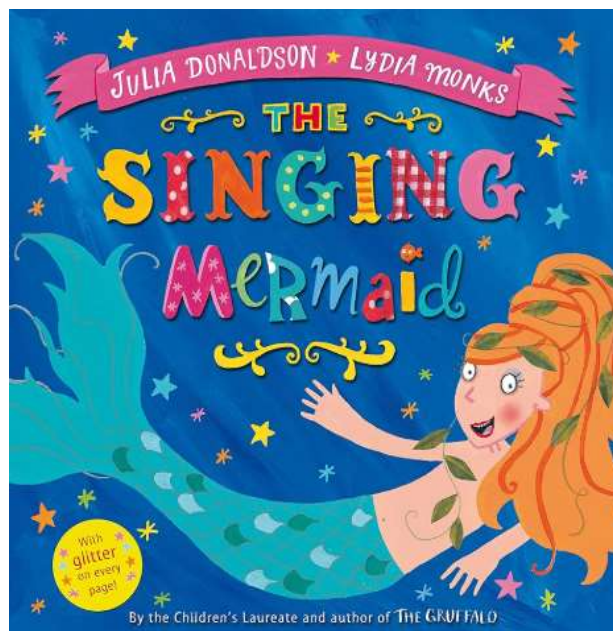
"All of the clownfish are males when they are born. That means they are all boys!" (Ava)

It was fun diving under the sea in the acting avenue and spotting lots of different creatures. We even made some coral in the sand it was very colourful.

One of our stories this week was, 'The Singing Mermaid!' by Julia Donaldson. We were mesmerised by the colourful images. We completed our own yoga poses linked to the story that made us feel relaxed and happy.

During Thursday afternoon Miss Alexander received an urgent email. When it was opened, we could not believe our eyes, there was a video of a REAL mermaid in our classroom! We then discovered a letter and found that the mermaid needed our help. Her scales had started to fall off because they were no longer waterproof, and she wanted our help to protect them.

This started our investigation into waterproof materials. We had an amazing adventure discovering lots about materials and testing them. Eventually, we were able to find the perfect material to protect Aria's scales.



Year 1

Another wonderful week in Year 1, with the children really persevering in Maths when it came to estimating numbers on a number line. The children used their known fact knowledge of where halfway was on the number line to be able to accurately find the correct location of each number. In English, the children have begun to write their instructions on how to make a musical instrument. The children have been able to choose whether to make a rainstick, a drum, maracas or a guitar and they are so proud of their creations. In Science, we have been learning all about sound and how it travels. We even got to use sign language in order to spell out our names. We also had our second session of Forest School, which was very cold and muddy. However, the children were so resilient and enjoyed using the mud kitchen, creating homes for the stick man and even creating their own interpretations of 'Stick Man'. Well done Year 1!

Year 2

This week in Year 2 has been fantastic! In Maths, we've been exploring money, and the children have been really engaged in learning how to use and count coins. In English, they've been enjoying planning and writing their own brochures about Burton on Trent, showing great creativity. In History, we've been learning about Rosa Parks, and the children have really absorbed the important lessons of her bravery and impact.

In Science, we've been looking at the human life cycle, and the children have loved discovering the different stages of life. To top off the week, we had our class assembly on The Great Fire of London. The children



worked incredibly hard, and I couldn't be prouder of how every single one of them participated. It was a fantastic assembly that showcased their knowledge and teamwork.

It's been a brilliant week overall—well done, Year 2!

Year 3

This week, our Year 3 children have been engaged in a range of exciting learning activities across the curriculum! In English, they have started a brand-new unit called *How Magnets Help Us*, where they have been exploring explanatory texts, learning new vocabulary, and understanding how magnets play a role in everyday life. In Maths, they have been working hard to solve word problems involving multiplication and division, using 2-digit by 1-digit calculations to develop their problem-solving skills. In RE, the children have been learning about Jesus' miracles through the Bible stories of *The Blind Man* and *The Paralysed Man*, discussing the significance of these miracles and what they teach us. Meanwhile, in PSHE, the focus has been on overcoming challenges. As part of this, the children worked collaboratively in teams to design a garden specifically for people who face physical challenges, considering ways to make outdoor spaces more accessible and inclusive. It has been wonderful to see their creativity and teamwork shine! Well done, Year 3!

Year 4

Year 4 have had another fantastic week! In maths, the children have completed their multiplication and division unit, and they have been working extremely hard again on their times tables! In English, the children have been drafting and editing an information text on how to keep our teeth clean and the importance of looking after our teeth. In PSHE, we have been identifying what our dreams and goals are and have been planning out how to achieve them! The children have also been continuing with their computing unit for this half term and have been applying different codes to generate different repetition in shapes. Another wonderful week year 4, well done!

Year 5

Year 5 have had a brilliant week of learning! In English, the children began drafting persuasive leaflets to encourage families to send their children to Whitemoor Lakes for a residential. They included emotive language and modal verbs to make their arguments more convincing. In Maths, the focus returned to fractions. Despite not revisiting this topic since before Christmas, the children impressed us with how much they had remembered and were able to apply their knowledge to new learning. In Science, Year 5 had great fun investigating how surface area affects air resistance. Working in groups, they designed parachutes for 'Pedro the Paratrooper' and timed how long each one took to land. Don't forget to check out the videos on Instagram and X! On Wednesday afternoon, the children enjoyed a relaxing session exploring space art in their sketchbooks. They experimented with space, line, colour, and texture as part of their new art unit. Well done, Year 5—what a fantastic week!

Year 6

In year 6 this week we have been continuing with our algebra learning in maths. In English we were given the opportunity to write up our published poems on a word document on the laptops,



where we got to add pictures, borders and change the font. We really enjoyed doing this. In science we looked at how plants are adapted to their environments and what is meant by an epiphyte. We have been doing lots of revision this week, where we have been looking at different test techniques to support with answering our questions. We completed a previous SATs reading paper on Tuesday to get an idea of how long the test will be in May. The children have worked really hard this week and the work they have produced, particularly their poems in English, is fantastic. I am very proud of them. Keep up the hard work Year 6. Well done.

Diary Dates 2024-2025

Event	Date/Time
Year 6 Laches Wood	Monday 27 th January to Friday 31 st January 2025
School Closes for Half-Term	Friday 14 th February 2025
INSET Day	Monday 24 th February 2025
School Reopens for Pupils	Tuesday 25 th February 2025
Young Voices 2025	Thursday 27 th February 2025
School Closes for Easter	Friday 11 th April 2025, 2.00pm
School Reopens for Pupils	Monday 28 th April 2025
County Council Elections – School Closed	Thursday 1 st May 2025
May Day Bank Holiday – School Closed	Monday 5 th May 2025
Key Stage 2 SATs Week	Monday 12 th May 2025 to Friday 16 th May 2025
School Closes for Half-Term	Friday 23 rd May 2025
School Reopens for Pupils	Monday 2 nd June 2025
Reception Class Assembly	Thursday 5 th June 2025, 9.00am
Year 1 Class Assembly	Thursday 19 th June 2025, 9.00am
Year 4 Class Assembly	Thursday 26 th June 2025, 9.00am
Year 5 Class Assembly	Thursday 3 rd July 2025, 9.00am
JTMAT INSET Day	Friday 4 th July 2025
School Closes for Summer	Friday 18 th July 2025, 2.00pm
INSET Day	Monday 21 st July 2025

Spring Term Diary Dates

Event	Date/Time
Year 6 Laches Wood	Monday 27 th January to Friday 31 st January 2025
Shobnall Stars – After School Club <u>ONLY</u> Closed for Staff Training	Monday 3 rd February 2025
Mental Health Support Team (MHST) Introduction to Worry Parent Workshop	Tuesday 4 th February 2025, 3.30pm
NSPCC Number Day	Friday 7 th February 2025
PFA Valentine Disco	Friday 7 th February 2025: - KS1, 3.45pm – 5.00pm - KS2, 5.15pm – 6.30pm
Parents' Evening	Monday 10 th February 2025, 4.00pm – 7.00pm
Safer Internet Day	Tuesday 11 th February 2025
Parents' Evening	Wednesday 12 th February 2025, 4.00pm – 7.00pm
School Closes for Half-Term	Friday 14 th February 2025
INSET Day	Monday 24 th February 2025
School Reopens for Pupils	Tuesday 25 th February 2025
Young Voices 2025	Thursday 27 th February 2025
World Book Day	Thursday 6 th March 2025
Comic Relief	Friday 21 st March 2025
Year 5 Hampton Court Palace	Thursday 27 th March 2025
Eid al-Fitr	Sunday 30 th March 2025/Monday 31 st March 2025
Mother's Day Lunches – Reception	Tuesday 1 st April 2025
Mother's Day Lunches – Year 1	Wednesday 2 nd April 2025
Key Stage 2 SATs Meeting for Parents	Wednesday 2 nd April 2025, 3.30pm,

	Year 6 Classroom
Mother's Day Lunches – Year 2	Thursday 3 rd April 2025
Mother's Day Lunches – Year 3	Friday 4 th April 2025
PFA Easter Bingo	Friday 4 th April 2025, 5.00pm
Mother's Day Lunches – Year 4	Monday 7 th April 2025
Mother's Day Lunches – Year 5	Tuesday 8 th April 2025
Mother's Day Lunches – Year 6	Wednesday 9 th April 2025
School Closes for Easter	Friday 11 th April 2025, 2.00pm

Train to Teach
in Local Schools

Primary (3-7) · Primary (5-11) · Secondary (11-16)

The John Taylor SCITT
jtscitt.co.uk

Funding for Selected Routes
Full or Part-Time Routes
Gain School Experience

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about HEALTH & FITNESS APPS

Physical wellbeing apps are useful tools for monitoring and improving our health. They allow us to balance nutrition, set goals, track our activities and sleep patterns, and motivate us to exercise. Nonetheless, there *have* been some reported drawbacks; this guide outlines some of these concerns and explains how to use fitness apps safely.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

LACK OF PERSONALISATION

Many apps take a one-size-fits-all approach, failing to account for the varying ages and abilities of children: a 16-year-old, for example, will have different physical needs to a child of 10. This can create unrealistic expectations and set exercises which may be too advanced for younger children or too simple for older ones.

NOT DEVELOPED BY EXPERTS

Some fitness and wellbeing apps are developed by experts in the field – but a concerning number of them *aren't*. As such, these platforms may contain inaccurate information. They may present safety concerns by giving incorrect advice regarding physical activities or might include age-inappropriate content which would clearly cause more harm than good.

REDUCED INTERACTION WITH OTHERS

Physical wellbeing apps can remove the social and interactive elements which physical exercise can offer – for instance, meeting people at fitness classes, at the gym or during any other such activities. Research has found that young people generally dislike this aspect of fitness apps, suggesting that they would rather exercise in the company of friends or other like-minded individuals.

DATA AND PRIVACY CONCERNS

Fitness and wellbeing apps tend to collect a lot of personal information from their users, including name, location, date of birth, details of their physical health and more. It's worth keeping in mind that some of these apps may sell this data to third parties. We'd advise that any apps young people download should have the correct legislation in place to protect their safety and privacy while using the service.

ADDITIONAL COSTS

While many fitness apps are free to download, the initial content is quite basic. Users will only receive more helpful content (such as new workouts, nutrition advice or a personalised plan) by signing up to a subscription or paying for extra features. This can incentivise users to spend money on the service – a cost which can quickly mount up.

DEPENDENCY ON THE APP

While physical wellbeing apps can help motivate young users to manage their fitness, there's a possibility that – without being sent frequent rewards and reminders – children could start to lose their natural drive to be active. Young people may also become obsessed with tracking their exercise, health and eating habits: this can have negative effects on their mental and emotional wellbeing.

Advice for Parents & Educators

EXERCISE AND SOCIALISE

Highlight the importance of children enjoying fitness activities with family and friends, rather than always exercising alone. Emphasise the fun they can have by interacting with others rather than solely relying on an app to maintain their regime. Remind them of the importance of staying active, as well as the benefits of doing so with company.

PROMOTE POSITIVE BODY IMAGE

While we want children to be active and healthy, we must also ensure they don't become fixated on how they look and begin take things too far. During childhood and adolescence, the body is still growing and changing. It's vitally important for young people's wellbeing that we promote a positive body image and a healthy relationship with food, empowering them to make informed decisions about their diet and lifestyle.

REVIEW THE APP FIRST

Before allowing someone under 18 to install a fitness and wellbeing app, check its age rating, read its reviews and scroll through its data policy, to ensure its suitability for younger users. You could also try it yourself, to see if it's appropriate for the child's particular needs and decide if you're comfortable with them using it. Ensure that any privacy-compromising features – such as location tracking – are disabled.

USE PARENTAL CONTROLS

As with all apps, it's important for parents to familiarise themselves with any controls on the app and to use these on a child's account. The specific settings vary between platforms but – most commonly – these will relate to screen-time limits, disabling or capping in-app purchases, and managing social aspects or features which aren't age appropriate. By utilising these controls, you can help to ensure a child is getting a safe experience.

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.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College