



# Newsletter

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**Spring Term 1**  
**Friday 14th February 2025**

Dear parents and carers,

This half term has flown by - it feels like we were celebrating the new year just moments ago. However, so much has happened in school in such a short time, and some of it is shared here.

## Maths Sparx Support

The completion rate for maths homework is higher now than it has ever been. This is largely due to the move to the SparxMaths online learning platform but it is also due to the great support that we get from parents and carers. I would like to take this opportunity to remind you that the Maths Faculty offer home learning support sessions after school in the Science Studio every Thursday evening. The sessions are free to attend and are staffed by maths specialists. Students from all year groups are welcome to attend. I am very grateful to the maths staff for running this initiative which is designed to help students with their homework, thus putting the emphasis on support rather than sanctions.

## Use of Toilets During Learning Time

We have had a recent spike in the number of students asking to use the toilets during lessons rather than waiting until lesson changeover, break or lunch times. Whilst I would never want to prevent a student from using the toilets, the increase in requests is resulting in significant disruptions to learning. Parents/carers will now be able to see through the behaviour tab on the edulink one app when your child has been to the toilet during lesson time. This will allow parents/carers to discuss reasons when students get home. The monitoring will also allow school staff to track trends so that we can identify students for whom this has become a habit and to see if there are underlying reasons. Please do not hesitate to contact the pastoral team if you require any further information about this matter.

## Advance Notice of Early Closure at Easter

School will close at the earlier time of 1pm on Friday 4th April. This is the final day of term before the Easter break. Although we do not traditionally close early at Easter, it is necessary because we are making a lot of changes to the layout of the school. The time will be used by staff to relocate several classrooms and offices. The rationale behind the room changes is to avoid corridor congestion, increase the space available for SEND and to create a Pastoral Hub on the ground floor. Please accept my apologies in advance for any inconvenience caused.

## Calendar

**February  
2025**

### 14th February

Lisbon Trip

### 14th February

School closes for half term break

### 24th February

School Re-opens

### 26th February

Y7 Parents' Evening  
4pm to 6pm

**March  
2025**

### 3rd March

Y11 2nd Mock  
Fortnight

### 10th March

National Careers Week

### 19th March

Y8 Options Information  
and Parents Evening  
4pm to 6pm

**April  
2025**

### 2nd April

Y11 Parents' Evening

### 4th April

Commendation  
Assemblies  
Classroom Moves  
End of Term (1pm  
finish for students)

### 22nd April

School Re-opens

## Year 11 2nd Mock Exams

Although many schools only complete one set of year 11 mock exams, we always do two rounds of mocks at WCHS. The second set allows students the opportunity to make continuous improvements during their final year so that they feel fully prepared for the final exams in May and June. I believe that this is one of the key reasons why WCHS students have done so well in external examinations in recent years. Year 11 parents have all been provided with an electronic and paper copy of the latest version of the Parent Guide to Revision.

If you have not received your copy, please contact Miss Rawstron in the main office. Please use the booklet and the online resources on our school web site to encourage your child to use their time wisely to prepare for their mock exams. The timetable is here for your information.

| w/c 3rd March | P1                           | P2 | P3              | P4                             | P5 |
|---------------|------------------------------|----|-----------------|--------------------------------|----|
| Mon           | English Language 1           |    |                 | RS                             |    |
| Tue           | Maths Non Calculator         |    |                 | Spanish Writing Computing      |    |
| Wed           | English Language 2           |    | Business        | Sociology                      |    |
| Thur          | Chemistry                    |    |                 | History Paper 2 EEE & Cold War |    |
| Fri           | Geography Paper 1&3 combined |    | Spanish Reading | PE Music                       |    |

| w/c 10th March | P1                 | P2 | P3                | P4                             | P5 |
|----------------|--------------------|----|-------------------|--------------------------------|----|
| Mon            | English Literature |    |                   | Drama Hospitality and Catering |    |
| Tue            | Physics            |    |                   | History Paper 3 Germany        |    |
| Wed            | Maths Calculator   |    | Business          | Biology                        |    |
| Thur           | Maths Calculator   |    | Art               | Art DT                         |    |
| Fri            | Geography Paper 2  |    | Spanish Listening | GCSE PE                        |    |

## Sport Update

Congratulations to our team of PAN Bowlers who came 3rd out of 11 schools in the county stage of the competition. They have now secured a place in the North West finals, which are due to take place in Bolton in March. A special mention must go to Dexter F for being the only member of the team to score a strike and for his general enthusiasm.

Congratulations also to Seb M in Year 9 who finished the Lancashire Cross Country event in the top 50. What a great achievement. I've been told it was a very muddy event, so I should probably also give a mention to Seb's parents for cleaning his kit afterwards.

Our Year 7 boy's football team played a tough match last week against Alder Grange. They lost by four goals but Mr Cawley has asked me to highlight the determination and resilience that our boys showed despite the defeat. In the same week, our year 8s recorded a 5-0 win in the league over TVLA. Our boys out-played their opposition and thoroughly deserved their victory. Well done to all involved and thanks to Mr Cawley for his time and dedication.



## Kinky Boots

On Wednesday 5th February, we took a group of students to see the incredible musical 'Kinky Boots' at the Palace Theatre in Manchester. We had a fabulous time at the show, which featured Johannes Radebe (best known as one of the professionals on Strictly Come Dancing), whose performance was described by one critic as being 'nothing short of breathtaking'. As always, our students represented the school brilliantly.



## Summer's Success

One of our aspiring young sports stars, Summer in year 10, has played for Haslingden Girls & Ladies Football club for a number of years now. Her team, U15 Cyclones, have made the Lancashire County Cup final for the 2nd time in 3 years. This level of success has only been matched in the past by academy teams, which highlights the high standards of Summer's team who were recently featured in the Rossendale Free Press. Congratulations to Summer and her team mates for reaching the final. It goes without saying that I wish them the best of luck in the final which is due to be played at The County Ground on 16th March.



Best wishes

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to be 'Mr A Oliver'.

Mr A Oliver  
Headteacher

# What Parents & Educators Need to Know about SCAMS AND FAKE NEWS

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

"Fake news" refers to falsified or misleading material presented as a legitimate account of events. It's often used by malicious actors online to push an agenda, or even by criminals as a way of making scams more persuasive. Scammers can trick us into handing over personal information, security details and even our hard-earned cash.

### "CLICKBAIT" PHISHING SCAMS

A message arrives saying "Have you seen this video of yourself?" or you might be sent an attention-grabbing headline about a celebrity that's been shared on social media. This kind of "bait" is produced by scammers to drive us to click on an unsafe link, where malware could be downloaded to our devices. These scams rely on our curiosity and our "need-to-know" instinct.

### SALES, DEALS & DISCOUNTS

Some scams appear as adverts, offering a chance to buy something – such as designer products, expensive gadgets or tickets to a popular show – at a reduced price. Such plays often include a time limit or countdown, urging us to hurry so we don't miss out on the deal. This pressure encourages us to input personal details or payment information before pausing to check if it's legitimate.

### YOU'RE A WINNER!

This kind of scam involves fake giveaways, opportunities or freebies. It could be a message saying we've won a prize draw or competition. Or it could be a gift, free trial, bonus credit, and suchlike. It might claim that a package or refund is waiting. All these techniques are used to prompt us to share our personal information, thinking that there's something to be gained by doing so.

### FALSE FRIENDSHIPS

Scammers often pretend to be someone they're not to gain their victims' trust. They might attempt to convince any children they connect with that they're a child of similar age with shared interests. Warning signs include a high volume of messages (often with an intense tone), secrecy, inappropriate levels of intimacy, guilt tripping, emotional manipulation, threats or blackmail.

### PANIC MODE

To trigger a sense of panic, scammers may claim that a child's account has been hacked, or a virus has been installed on their device, or any number of other scary scenarios. They may claim to be able to fix the problem or offer a solution – if the child hands over control of the device or sensitive information. Similar scams involve impersonating a friend or relative, claiming that they're in trouble and need help.

### FAKE CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENTS

Impersonating influential people online is a common tactic for scammers, who can use technology to create fake photos, audio and even videos that look authentic. These can be used to convince us, for example, to buy products, sign up for so-called "business opportunities" or invest in cryptocurrency schemes – all of which are fake or otherwise malicious. Many scams also involve the impersonation of popular companies' social media accounts, as well as those of individuals.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### STAY INFORMED

Stay up to date with the latest information and best practice on cyber-security. See what scam stories are reported in the news and make note of what tactics were used. Keep up with young people's digital lives: talk about what they're doing online and use properly endorsed resources to learn what risks certain sites and apps pose to their younger users.

### ENCOURAGE HEALTHY SCEPTICISM

Most scams rely on emotional or psychological manipulation, tapping into our human instincts – whether that's to keep ourselves safe, help others, find answers, make friends, avoid losing out or to secure something we really want. Encourage children to recognise that pressure to act and to always consult with an adult – especially if what's on offer sounds too good to be true.

### TALK TOGETHER

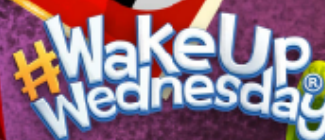
Chat often and openly with young people about fake news, online scams and how they both work. Encourage them to talk to you about anything they're unsure of or worried about online. If a child claims to have been scammed, don't pass judgement. Blaming the victim may deter young people from asking you for help. Remember: adults are scammed just as often, if not more.

### BE PROACTIVE

Children increasingly use digital devices for education, socialising, shopping and play. Don't wait for a problem to arise before you discuss the risk of scams, false information and fake news. Highlight what to look out for and clearly communicate under what circumstances the child ought to speak to an adult. Finally, ensure that they're aware of the support services that are available to them (such as Childline).

### Meet Our Expert

Dr Holly Powell-Jones is the founder of Online Media Law UK and a leading expert in digital safety, media law and young people. Her PhD investigates children's understandings of risk online. She works with schools, businesses, and universities to provide award-winning education on the criminal, legal and ethical considerations for the digital age. Visit [OnlineMediaLaw.co.uk](https://OnlineMediaLaw.co.uk) for more.



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