

12th January 2024



# NORTH STAR 240°

Dear North Star Families,

Welcome back to the start of a brand-new year at North Star 240! We hope that everyone had a wonderful and restful break, and we are excited to share some fantastic updates and important information with you in our first newsletter of 2024.

## In this issue:

- Head Teacher's message
- Attendance reminders
- First Aid Training
- Bristol Bears
- Online Safety

## Welcome to 2024!

As we embark on this new year, we want to extend a warm welcome to all our students, parents, and staff members. We are eager to continue our journey of learning and growth together and are confident that 2024 will be filled with exciting opportunities and achievements for our North Star community.

## Maintain Excellent Attendance: A Key to Success

One of the cornerstones of a successful academic year is consistent attendance. We encourage all students to make a commitment to good attendance in 2024. Regular attendance not only enhances academic performance but also fosters a positive and supportive learning environment. Let's work together to make this year the best it can be by being present and engaged in every learning opportunity.

## First Aid Training for All Students

In our commitment to ensuring the safety and well-being of our students, we are pleased to announce that first aid training will be provided to all students this year. This valuable skill will empower our students to respond confidently and effectively in emergency situations, promoting a safer school environment for everyone.



## Bristol Bears Rugby Team Takes Over PE Session

A thrilling highlight of the new year was the recent visit of the Bristol Bears Rugby Team to North Star! The team generously led an inspiring physical education session, sharing their expertise, enthusiasm, and love for the game with our students. The experience was not only educational but also a fantastic opportunity for our students to engage with professional athletes and learn valuable life skills through sportsmanship.



## E-Safety and Managing Screen Time

In an era dominated by technology, ensuring the safety of our students online is of utmost importance. This year, we will be placing strong emphasis on e-safety, including guidelines for managing screen time. We believe that educating our students on responsible and balanced technology use is crucial for their overall well-being and development.

## School term and holiday date reminders

### 2023 to 2024 term dates

**Term 1:** Friday 1 September 2023 to Friday 20 October 2023

**Term 2:** Monday 30 October 2023 to Friday 15 December 2023

**Term 3:** Tuesday 2 January 2024 to Friday 9 February 2024

**Term 4:** Monday 19 February 2024 to Thursday 28 March 2024

**Term 5:** Monday 15 April 2024 to Friday 24 May 2024

**Term 6:** Monday 3 June 2024 to Tuesday 23 July 2024

# Top Tips for... MANAGING SCREEN TIME

According to the latest stats, people aged between 8 and 17 spend four hours on digital devices during an average day. Obviously, a new year is ideal for fresh starts and renewed efforts – so lots of families are trying to cut down their combined screen time right now, creating more moments to connect with each other and relying less on gadgets to have fun. Our top tips on reducing screen time are for everyone, so you can get your whole family involved in turning over a new leaf this year!

Buy Milk

## GET OUT AND ABOUT

If the weather's decent, spend some time in the garden or go for a walk. Even a stroll to the local shop would do; the main thing is getting some fresh air and a break from your screen.

## TRY A TIMED TRIAL

When you're taking a screen break to do a different activity or a chore, turn it into a game by setting yourself a timer. Can you complete your task before the alarm goes off?

## GO DIGITAL DETOX

Challenge yourself and your family to take time off from screens, finding other things to do. You could start off with half a day, then build up to a full day or even an entire weekend.

## LEAD BY EXAMPLE

Let your family see you successfully managing your own screen time. You'll be showing them the way, and it might stop some of those grumbles when you do want to go online.

## AGREE TECH-FREE ZONES

Nominate some spots at home where devices aren't allowed. Anywhere your family gathers together, like at the table or in the living room, could become a 'no phone zone'.

## HOLD A SCREEN TIME AMNESTY

As a family, agree specific windows when it's OK to use devices. This should help everyone to balance time on phones or gaming with enjoying quality moments together.

## BE MINDFUL OF TIME

Stay aware of how long you've been on your device for. Controlling how much time you spend in potentially stressful areas of the internet – like social media platforms – can also boost your wellbeing.

## 'PARK' PHONES OVERNIGHT

Set up an overnight charging station for everyone's devices – preferably away from bedrooms. That means less temptation for late-night scrolling.

## SWITCH ON DND

Research shows that micro-distractions like message alerts and push notifications can chip away at our concentration levels. Put devices on 'do not disturb' until you're less busy.

## TAKE A FAMILY TECH BREAK

Set aside certain times when the whole family puts their gadgets away and enjoys an activity together: playing a board game, going for a walk or just having a chat.

## SOCIALISE WITHOUT SCREENS

When you're with friends, try not to automatically involve phones, TVs or other tech. Having company can be loads more fun if your attention isn't being split.

## WIND DOWN PROPERLY

Try staying off phones, consoles, tablets and so on just before you go to sleep. Reading or just getting comfy in bed for a while can give you a much more restful night.

## Meet Our Expert

Minds Ahead design and deliver the UK's only specialist postgraduate mental health qualifications. They also provide training and support to education organisations and local authorities – empowering school leaders and staff with the knowledge and tools to shape their settings into inclusive communities where the mental health of pupils and personnel is prioritised.



DEVICE BOX

The National College



National Online Safety  
#WakeUpWednesday

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