

8th February 2024



# NORTH STAR 240°

Dear North Star Families,

Welcome to our latest newsletter. We have had a busy term and the students have been working hard in all curricular areas. In this issue we have some news on lunches, a message from Miss Lloyd, our SENDCo about Annual Reviews, some helpful information about sleep habits and some information about free speech and hate speech.

## In this issue:

- Head Teacher's message
- Changes to Lunches
- Parent/Carer voice
- E-safety

## Some Changes to Lunches!

As you may be aware, we have been trialling some changes to lunch times and the students have been overwhelmingly positive about the change. KS4 now stop for lunch at 12.25pm, they have break until 12.45pm and then go to their reading session at 1.05pm. KS3 have their reading session at 12.25pm, they come down for lunch at 12.45pm and have a break until 1.25pm. This has meant that the lunch hall is much less busy and at breaks the students have options within their own Key Stage.

## Parental/Carer voice in Reviews — A Key to Success

Since joining North Star 240 in April last year, it has been a pleasure to meet you. Vicky English joined as SENDCo admin at the end of last year and manages the admin for annual reviews. The SEND code of practice guidance states 'EHC plans should be used to actively monitor children and young people's progress towards their outcomes and longer-term aspirations. They must be reviewed by the local authority as a minimum every 12 months. Reviews must focus on the child or young person's progress towards achieving the outcomes specified in the EHC plan. The review must also consider whether these outcomes and supporting targets remain appropriate'.

It is essential that we stick to annual review deadlines and it is important that parent/carers and students have the opportunity to discuss progress on EHCP outcomes.

### Timeline:

An invitation is sent to parent/carers and other professionals working with the student to annual reviews a few weeks before the annual review date. Please can you confirm attendance by text/ phone or email, if you are unable to attend, we will rearrange the date.

If professionals working with your child are unable to attend, they will submit a report. In addition, we will send a form to seek your views, if you have any queries or questions, it is useful if this can be sent back before the meeting so we can answer any question you have when we meet you.

The meeting can take place on site at North Star 240 or alternatively via the TEAMS app, again it is useful to know how you will be attend, so if you can let us know in advance, that would be great.

Should you have any queries regarding provision or any other query, I am very happy to hear from you at any time: [sylvie.lloyd@northstar-academy.co.uk](mailto:sylvie.lloyd@northstar-academy.co.uk)

## Healthy Sleep

Sleep is an area that many of our students struggle with. Routines around sleep can be really difficult. However, getting the basics right can really help. Here are some tips:



- Having a regular time to go to sleep and wake up.
- Having a predictable and consistent night-time routine.
- Making sure children and young people are in natural daylight for at least half an hour – particularly in the morning.
- Making sure children and young people get enough exercise during the day.
- Older children should avoid napping in the day.
- Avoiding caffeine, particularly in the afternoon.
- Turning off computer screens or other devices at least an hour before bedtime. Blue light from TVs, tablets and mobiles excite the brain and interfere with the sleep hormone levels, preventing the brain from feeling sleepy.
- Having low lighting and a quiet space in bedrooms.
- Avoiding checking devices, particularly in the middle of the night.
- Supporting children and young people to develop positive coping strategies for regulating their emotions and managing their stress levels.

## 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 Friday 19 July 2024 (Insets on 22nd and 23rd July)

There will be an Inset Day on the 19th February, so children will return to school on Tuesday 20th Feb.

# What Children & Young People Need to Know about **FREE VS HATE SPEECH**

Everyone in the UK has the right of "freedom of expression". That's the right to voice your opinions and share information and ideas with others. It's not the right to say whatever you want without regard for others' feelings and values. We all have a responsibility to use this right properly: being respectful and inclusive to those around us, rather than making offensive and threatening remarks. That's called 'hate speech' and knowing the difference is incredibly important.

Free speech is a person's legal right to share information, opinions and ideas without fear of retaliation, censorship or legal consequences. This freedom of expression is recognised in international human rights legislation, and here's what it does for us in our day-to-day lives ...

The Human Rights Act 1988 states that everyone has the right to express themselves freely – even if their views are unpopular and might offend others.

Freedom of expression encourages listening to others and allowing opposing views to be heard. It's important to respect someone's opinion, even if we disagree with it. Free speech lets us engage in meaningful discussions with people who feel differently.

Any concept could potentially offend someone. Galileo's theories were incredibly offensive to many at the time, while not everyone agrees with Darwin, even today. A frequent exchange of ideas is vitally important for a healthy society.

Free speech allows us to engage people we disagree with in a debate. The ability to challenge others' views is healthy – while having ours challenged helps us learn how to deal with criticism and think deeply about what we say and believe.

Freedom of expression includes the right not to do something, like not standing up for – or singing – the national anthem. Even though some people would find that offensive, it isn't illegal. By law, nobody can force you to say anything you don't want to.

Free speech is a powerful tool for change, justice and reform. Many modern UK rights – such as women being allowed to vote, decent working conditions or same-sex marriage – couldn't have been achieved without it.

Hate speech refers to any communication – like talking, texting or posting online – that negatively targets a group or an individual because they are perceived to be different in some way. Demonising and dehumanising statements, threats, identity-based insults, offensive name-calling and slurs would all count as hate speech. Here are some common forms it takes...

Targeting people or groups because of a protected characteristic – like race, gender identity, sexuality, nationality, religion or a disability – and verbally abusing them with slurs and name-calling. The Equality Act 2010 has more information on this.

Content that dehumanises people based on the same characteristics: referring to them as if they were animals, objects or other non-human entities, for example. Separating the target from other human beings is usually an attempt to justify the speaker's bigotry.

Calling for violence or hatred against certain people or groups and justifying and glorifying those actions. Suggesting that a certain group should be removed from society could be seen as a call to arms, for example – potentially putting people from that group in danger.

Claiming that specific types of people are physically, mentally or morally inferior (or even that they are criminals) to encourage others to view them in the same way. This kind of thinking is always incorrect – but can be incredibly harmful to the group in question.

Spreading damaging misinformation about a person or group that the speaker views as "different" – essentially, trying to turn others against them by lying. Someone might claim that a recent tragedy is the fault of this entire group, when this is simply not possible.

Promoting the segregation of certain groups, or discrimination against them, because of who they are. This has been illegal in the UK for a long time – but some people still try to promote the exclusion of others, which can cause a huge amount of distress.

## Meet Our Expert

The Global Equality Collective is an online community for homes, schools and businesses, a collection of hundreds of subject matter experts in diversity, equality and inclusion, and the organisation behind the DEC app, the world's first app for diversity, equality and inclusion.

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#WakeUpWednesday

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