



2024/25 Term 3 Newsletter

Secondary

1. Welcome from the Head
2. Safeguarding
3. What Secondary has been doing this term.

Our Mission

We **Navigate** **Success** **Together** with **Ambition** and **Relevance**



Dear Parents/Carers

What a short but busy term it has been! It was lovely to see the students return in January with a positive start, full of New Year's Resolutions and plans for a great year. Although it has been quite dark and gloomy outside, the atmosphere in school has been busy, productive, with lots of energy.

It has been very busy with trips and visits this term. It was great to see the KS4 Art Trips out and about building their portfolios with fantastic photos. Hedgehogs and Foxes had a day at Ikea implementing maths skills with handling money, social skills and trying new foods. Life Skills trips in Year 9 have continued to provide the students with opportunities to see their role in the real world and plan for their futures.

Y11 Art students had a very successful mock practical exam where some outstanding pieces of work were created. In Owls class, the Vikings came to town as they produced brooches, Viking helmets and even learnt to write in Viking Runes. We look forward to showing these off in future showcase events.

The school council have again been very active this term, supporting their classes in purchasing items for classrooms with money raised from the Christmas Fayre. We now have many plants of all shapes and sizes in and around us as well as soothing lights, sensory resources and academic games across the school making it a calm, soothing, fun place to be.

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We are proud of our school football team who have played two matches this term. Each game, the students are improving their skills, working together and supporting one another as they come together as a team. The new football kit looks brilliant and the children are proud to wear it, representing their school.

A huge thank you to Mr Moore who has organised for several companies to come and talk to the students this term. We have had assemblies and workshops on apprenticeships, the Ministry of Defence, Bath City College and even Thatchers come to work with us. Talking to the students, you can see what an impression these opportunities are having, as the students are discussing and planning exciting futures, job opportunities and looking at what they can do to make their goals realities.

It was amazing to see the whole school engaging in Chinese Lunar New Year! We had a completely different menu for the day which went down well across the school. In Primary, we had a carousel of activities including Chinese writing and even dragon making. It was wonderful to see the students throw themselves into the day!

Thank you to all the parents/carers who attended the Tea and Talk session on 14th February. We look forward to welcoming you all again for the next date later in the year.

We hope you all have a relaxing, restorative half term break and look forward to seeing everyone back at school on Monday 24th February.

Zoe Napier and Helen McDicken

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E-Safety

Wake up Wednesday—our IT leads have carefully selected our most appropriate wake up Wednesday poster and included it in this newsletter, if however you would like information or advice on any other E-safety topics please ask.

Feedback

North Star Academy Trust is committed to listening to you and working with you to resolve any concerns or queries you may have. Please contact the main office or your child's tutor to get in touch. northstar180@northstar-academy.co.uk.

Community offer

Please remind yourselves of the great sporting events taking place this term at Bath Rugby, activities are free and information can be found here bathrugby.com

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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.

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.

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.

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 for more.



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Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/fake-news-and-scams>

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What Parents & Educators Need to Know about ONLINE RELATIONSHIPS & DATING APPS

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Dating apps are used to help people find new relationships – whether casual or more long term – matching users based on age, interests, gender and more. Some may consider dating apps harmless to under-18s because they aren't able to use them, but effective age verification measures are quite scarce, and it's been known for young people to end up on apps of this type.

EASE OF ACCESS

The relatively lax age verification process of many dating apps makes them incredibly accessible to children who really shouldn't be using them. This carries the obvious risk of exposing under-18s to a dating scene populated by adults – who may not even be aware of the young person's true age. This is concerning when we consider the 'hook-up culture' common on these apps – with many people using them to arrange casual sexual encounters.

CONTACT AND CONDUCT RISKS

Once someone is active on a dating app, their social media profiles can be linked to the app and might be accessed by others. This can lead to random users 'sliding into their DM's' (sending a direct message) without consent. Complete strangers could start bombarding a young person's inbox with pictures, messages and sexual comments.

SCAMS AND SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Some young people may feel they've formed a real bond with someone through online dating, but there's always a risk that it's not genuine. Scammers on these apps often build romantic connections with their victims – then once they feel they have their victim's trust, they begin asking for money under false pretences (such as suggesting they meet in person and requesting a 'loan' to cover a train ticket).

UNVERIFIED ACCOUNTS

As with all online interactions, you may not be talking to whom you think you are. Without paying a subscription, users of dating apps can often only view a certain number of profiles at a time. A TikTok trend has advised young people to set their age limit to 80 years and over – putting them in a sparse and more 'exclusive' category to bypass the usual restrictions. Unfortunately, this can lead to matches with someone much older.

PEER PRESSURE

The pressure to be in a relationship can be huge, and many young people use online dating apps as a cost-effective way to meet others. Some users find it difficult to meet people organically due to their lifestyle, and may not have the time or money to go out and socialise. It's also common for young people to set up accounts for their single friends in the hope of finding a match for someone they know.

SKEWED PERSPECTIVES

Dating apps can promote an unrealistic view of what makes someone attractive. With such vast options, some users can become both picky and extremely harsh about others' appearance. Ultimately, all you see on these apps are pictures (with no insight into someone's personality), and some young people struggle with the fear of being judged. Even when someone does start dating, there's a persistent paranoia that their partner is only one swipe away from a potentially better match.

Advice for Parents & Educators

TALK ABOUT DATING APPS

Let young people know that they can talk to you about anything, even something as private as their dating life. At school, the relationships, sex and health curriculum can assist with conversations around healthy relationships, consent and online safety. Emphasise the message that you want to help them make healthy, safe and informed choices. If they feel embarrassed talking to you, make sure they have a trusted adult who can help them.

VERIFICATION STAMPS

Explain that someone using a dating app should only communicate with those who have gone through a verification process. Online dating apps use a variety of methods to ascertain a user's identity, including scanning valid documents (such as a driver's licence or passport). Verification can also involve users taking a selfie to ensure that the photos on their profile match it.

ENCOURAGE DATA PROTECTION

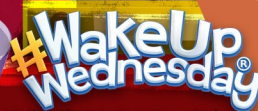
Empower young people to protect their data and personal information. Explain why including things like their school, age and surname in their profile could potentially be dangerous. Make sure they know never to give out personal details and that there's no reason for other users to ask for them. If they feel uneasy about a situation online, they need to speak to someone that they can trust.

REPORT AND BLOCK

Remind young people that they can always report or block (or both) anyone who makes them feel uncomfortable on any platform. Ask if they know how to do this and offer to help them figure it out if they're unsure. Every app should have advice on how to report or block another user, so be sure young people are familiar with the settings.

Meet Our Expert

Rebecca Jennings works at RAISE (www.raiseducation.org.uk) in the field of relationships, sex and health education, providing educational, age-appropriate workshops for pupils around the more sensitive areas of the curriculum – including online safety and healthy relationships.



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Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/online-relationships-dating-apps>

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[Live Well B&NES](#) is the home to Bath and North East Somerset's [SEND Local Offer](#), providing information, signposting and support to young people with SEND and their families.

We also offer lots of information for families and young people including registered childcare providers, parenting support, benefit advice, food support, managing money, mental and emotional health, social activities and cost of living information.

livewell.bathnes.gov.uk

www.facebook.com/livewellbathnes



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Helpful Numbers and websites



Below are some contacts of services if you need support over the break.

- NHS non-emergency line 111
- Police non-emergency line 101
- Social Care BANES 01225 396111 or out of hours 01454 615165
- Social Care Wiltshire 0300 4560108 or out of hours 0300 456 0100
- Social Care South Glos 01454 866000 or out of hours 01454 615165
- Social Care Bristol 0117 9036444 or out of house 01454 615165
- ChildLine 0800 1111
- Samaritans 116 123

For more information about services in your area look for the Local Offer:

- **BANES** <https://livewell.bathnes.gov.uk/children-and-families>
- **Wiltshire** SEND Support for 0 to 25 - Local Offer South Glos SEND <https://localoffer@wiltshire.gov.uk>
- **South Gloucestershire** southglos.gov.uk
- **Bristol** <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/bristol-local-offer>



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Financial Support

Winter has been a hard time for many of us. Heating costs combined with the cost-of-living crisis and Christmas have left many of us short of money.

If you find yourself in a difficult financial position please don't worry – there are organisations that can help. Please see below for a short list by local authority area.

We at Northstar 180 are always happy to chat and discuss options. The school is also able to issue foodbank vouchers for the BANES area.

BANES

Welfare Support

Call 01225 477277 or email welfare_support@bathnes.gov.uk

Can help with money for essentials, household bills and white goods.

Wiltshire

Household Support Fund 2025

Foodbank vouchers, cost of living assistance

Call 0300 003 4576 or email wellbeinghub@wiltshire.gov.uk

South Gloucestershire

Emergency assistance and referrals to help with living costs

Call 01454 868899

Bristol

Local crisis prevention fund

Call 0117 922 4500 or email lcpf@bristol.gov.uk

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Secondary



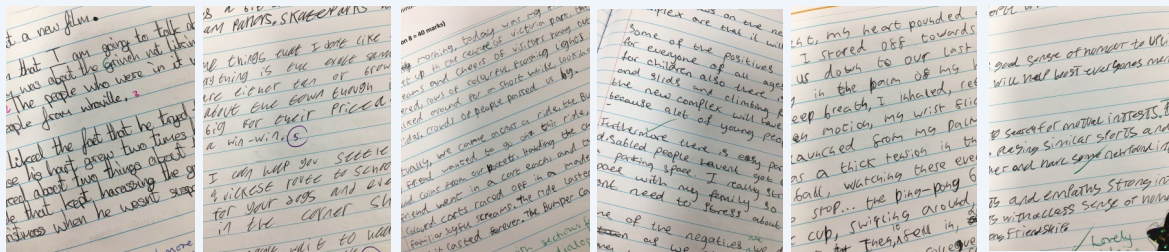
English

As a whole school, from Primary through to Secondary, we have introduced daily handwriting practice. This initiative helps students enhance their fine motor skills and develop a fluid, clear, and legible handwriting style while practicing spellings.

In Year 9, students have taken formal examinations this term, and we will have the results after half term. Entry Level Skills are the precursor to Foundation Levels and GCSEs. They focus on transactional writing, such as letters, emails, articles, and leaflets. The better we get at these forms of writing, the easier the Year 11 GCSE exams will be! A special well done to Year 9 students who have worked so hard this term.

Year 10 students have been working towards Functional Skills examinations, writing letters, reviews, speeches, and web forum entries. We have been brushing up on grammar skills and increasing the quantity and precision of our writing over the term.

Imaginative writing has been the focus of Year 11 English lessons. Students have been working hard on including more description, different points of view, and story structure. They have been testing themselves to plan stories in a short amount of time, helping them get used to exam pressure.



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Secondary



Maths

Year 9 worked really hard to get their heads around nets, plans and elevations in our Three-Dimensional Shapes topic.

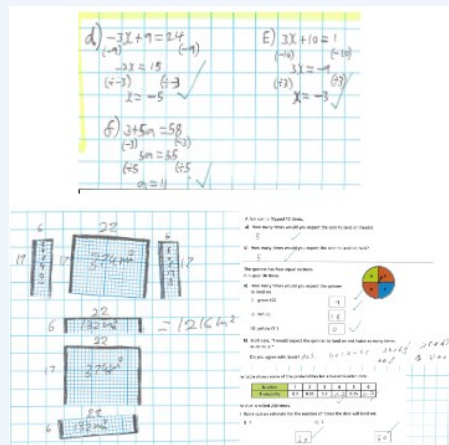
Year 10 developed their understanding of Probability and began to show an interest in preparing for their GCSEs next year.

Year 11 successfully ended their Trigonometry topic and moved on to Equations and Inequalities, we continue to work weekly on GCSE exam preparation.

In term 4, Year 11 will undertake GCSE mocks, which will provide us with areas to focus on and predicted grades.

The official dates for Maths GCSE are:

- **May 15th AM**
- **June 4th AM**
- **June 11th AM.**



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Sports report:



Bristol City vs London City Lionesses:

By Lily S

On Sunday the 19th of January, girls from NS180 went to watch a football match at Ashton Gate. It was Bristol City Ladies vs London City Lionesses. It was the first time all the girls went to watch a football game and they were all very excited!

We were sat in the middle of the stands which meant we all had a very good view of the pitch. To begin with, City were quite slow but then they warmed up and it got really exciting. The players kept edging closer and closer to the net, almost scoring so many times but not getting it in the back of the net.

At half time, there was loud music and the players went to have a rest while the grass was watered. We had a good chat and predicted who was going to win the game.

In the second half, Lloyd-Smith had a brilliant shot but it was unfortunately saved by the keeper. This was followed by Simpson with a header but it hit the post. The Lionesses eventually scored a goal which was unfortunate for Bristol as we just couldn't get an equaliser.

It was a bit upsetting that Bristol City lost but we had a fantastic day and really enjoyed it. Thanks to Mrs McDicken and Miss Butter for taking us on this wonderful experience.



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Secondary assemblies: Term 3

This term we have had some fantastic assemblies in Secondary!

Thatcher's cider and the Submarine Agency Corp (MOD) delivered presentations to the students explaining everything about what they do, and the different roles within their organisations. The students asked questions and interacted with the guest speakers, learning that there are lots of opportunities and pathways that lead into employment in these very different employment sectors.

The students were a credit to themselves and the whole school.



Project 28

Project 28 delivered an assembly raising awareness of the dangers of drugs, what support networks are available and how to reach those support networks.

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Bath college parent and year 11 coffee morning



This term the year 11's and their parents/carers had the opportunity to attend a coffee morning at North Star 180.



This provided a perfect environment for parents and students to gain information and guidance about Bath college and their next steps.

Some students have some anxiety about college life, pathways, qualifications and transport but after meeting with the college coordinators and liaison team, it has allowed students and parents/carers to gain some much-needed confidence before their transition to Bath college.



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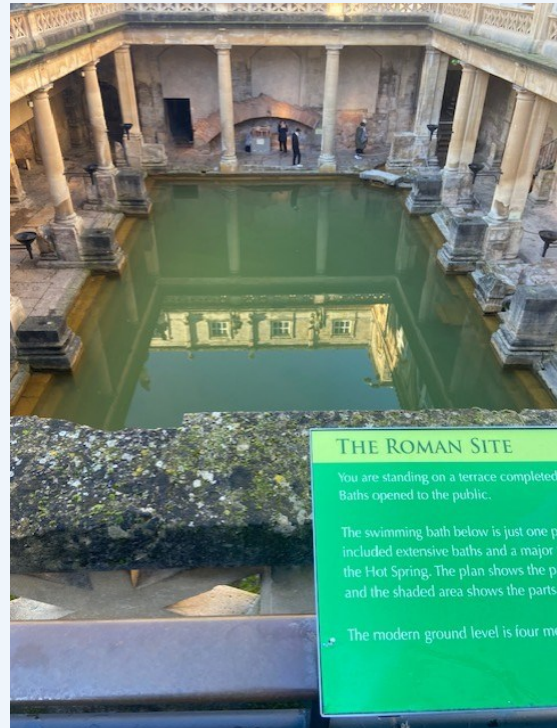
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9X Roman Baths Trip



This term 9X visited The Roman Baths as part of their work on the Romans. They enjoyed walking around looking at exhibits and listening to the accompanying audio commentary.

They had a chance to ask questions to the staff of The Roman Baths and were polite, sensible and a credit to the school.



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Year 11 Art and Photography trip

Dear Parents and Carers,



We are pleased to share that the Year 11 Art and Photography trip to Bath City Centre was a great success!

The students had a fantastic time exploring the city's stunning architecture, using their creativity to capture unique perspectives through their lenses.



They experimented with different artistic techniques, inspired by Bath's beautiful surroundings. The trip provided valuable material for their GCSE exam, helping to develop their portfolios with real-world observations.

We were incredibly impressed with their enthusiasm, creativity and respectful engagement throughout the day.



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Football Report:

New Horizons KS4 v Northstar 180 KS4



In a game which had the long awaited debut of the new Northstar 180 kit, we made a strong early start racing into a 2 goal lead with Deadeye Dylan H doing his usual trick of putting the ball in the net.

A fantastic game followed with the lead changing throughout the hour long game. Goals from Jack C and Romario B helped keep our boys in it, but all players featured in the picture played superbly and ran their hearts out. In a game which could have gone either way, we were unlucky to end up on the losing side but a rematch is sure to be set up in the near future. Well done to all involved and with performance like this wins are just around the corner.

Final Score: New Horizons **7- 5** NS180



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Tea and Talk Times!



This term we held another Tea and Talk Time for parents. Every term, parents and carers are invited to come in for a chat over a cuppa in friendly, like-minded company.

We have a growing group and it's always fun. There's always quick 10-minute talk on a theme and this term we looked at @transitions and Routines in School Holidays (by popular request!). We talked about keeping simple routines going in school holidays and looked at tips to stop your children from deep-diving into their devices.

Next term we are holding another Tea and Talk Time on Friday 28th March - if you have any requests for themes then please let us know.

Simple Steps for a Calm Holiday

- ✓ Keep a predictable but flexible routine
- ✓ Give warnings and use visual schedules
- ✓ Include no-cost, screen-free activities
- ✓ Set clear screen-time limits with alternatives
- ✓ Involve children in planning

Holidays don't have to be stressful—small changes can make a big difference!



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Important School Year Dates



2024-2025																											
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