



## **Weekly Parent/Carer Communication 13.03.2026**

### **1. Key Information**

**Monday 16th March:** An after school bake sale is being organised to mark the one-year anniversary of our much-loved and dedicated teacher Mrs Nikki Jones. Mrs Jones meant a great deal to our school community and we wanted to honour her memory in a positive way that brings people together and by sharing one of her favourite things....cake!

All money raised from the bake sale will be donated to Macmillan Cancer Support and Velindre. Thank you in advance for your support.

### **2. Key Dates For Next Week:**

**Monday 16th March: PTA Easter colouring & bonnet competition entries.** Please take entries to the classrooms on Monday morning and they will be collected from there- please ensure everything is clearly labelled. We are looking forward to seeing the entries!

#### **Friday 20th March Reading Cafe**

All parents/carers are welcome to attend and join the reading cafe at 2:45pm. Please go to your youngest child's classroom (at the usually pick up door) and we can also bring any older siblings to the classes. Staff will be sharing tips and advice on how to enjoy reading together at home and there will be an opportunity to read to your child/children.

#### **Big Walk and Wheel Fortnight 2026 from Monday 16th March.**

Big Walk and Wheel is the UK's largest walking, wheeling, scooting and cycling challenge. It inspires pupils to make active journeys to school, improve air quality in their neighbourhood and discover how these changes benefit their world.

On each day of the challenge schools compete to see who can record the greatest number of pupils walking, using a wheelchair, scooting or cycling to school. Our school's best five days will determine our final position and schools at the top of the leader boards will receive an exclusive Big Walk and Wheel certificate. So please pop the dates on your calendar and travel to school in an active way for two weeks in March!

#### **Monday 16th March:**

**5SJ Cycling Proficiency Training-** Your child will need to bring his or her bike to school (these can be left outside the classroom) together with a cycling helmet and suitable clothing for the weather. If your child does not have a bike and / or helmet, please contact your child's class teacher and we will make suitable arrangements to ensure everyone gets the chance to complete the training.

#### **Whatsapp advice and guidance**

Please see the below poster for advice for parents. Unfortunately, we are having an increase in pupils in older classes accessing the platform outside of school. Please note that the age restriction for Whatsapp is **age 13+** and, as such, primary aged pupils should not be using the app.

# What Parents & Educators Need to Know about WHATSAPP

AGE RESTRICTION  
**13+**

WhatsApp is a free messaging app owned by Meta, allowing users to send text and voice messages, share multimedia, make video calls, and chat in groups. With end-to-end encryption, only the sender and receiver can view messages. This may offer privacy, but it also comes with risks that parents and educators need to be aware of.

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### GROUP CHAT PRESSURES

Group chats enable multiple users to message in the same space, but this can also make it easier for young people to feel excluded or overwhelmed. Negative comments can escalate quickly, and young people may feel pressure to respond or stay engaged even when the conversation is uncomfortable or upsetting.

### SCAMS TARGETING YOUNG USERS

Scammers are increasingly using WhatsApp to trick users into sharing personal information. Common scams include fraudsters posing as family members in an emergency or tricking users into revealing security codes. These can lead to identity theft or access to private conversations.

### DISAPPEARING AND HIDDEN MESSAGES

WhatsApp offers features like disappearing messages and 'Chat Lock', which can give users a false sense of security. While intended to protect privacy, they can be used by young users to hide inappropriate conversations or content, making it harder for adults to spot potential issues.

### EXPOSURE THROUGH CHANNELS

'Channels' are an optional feature that allows users to follow updates from public figures or organisations; however, there is no way to block this feature or filter its content by age. Young users may encounter adult or distressing content, including misinformation and harmful ideologies.

### UNWANTED CONTACT AND LOCATION SHARING

WhatsApp users can share their live location, and if not managed carefully, this can allow others – even those in mutual groups – to track someone's whereabouts. Also, without the right privacy settings, young users may be contacted by strangers.

### COMMERCIAL AND AI CONTENT

WhatsApp now includes ads in the 'Updates' feed and has introduced an AI assistant – Meta AI – across the app, which cannot be removed. These additions raise concerns about targeting, privacy, AI use, and the type of content children and young people might interact with.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### REVIEW PRIVACY SETTINGS TOGETHER

Help young users check who can see their profile photo, status, and location. Activate the 'Silence Unknown Callers' setting and set group chat invitations to 'My Contacts' or 'My Contacts Except...' for added safety.

### TEACH HOW TO SPOT SCAMS

Encourage caution around unusual and unexpected messages, especially if they involve money or codes. Help young users understand the signs of scams and what to do if they receive a suspicious message. Enable two-step verification to add an extra layer of protection.

### BE OPEN ABOUT HIDDEN CHATS

Discuss why children and young people might use features like disappearing messages or 'Chat Lock'. Encourage them to share if something made them uncomfortable, even if the messages are gone. Let them know that privacy should not mean secrecy.

### TALK ABOUT ADVERTISING AND AI

Explain that WhatsApp now includes ads and AI tools. Discuss the difference between genuine and sponsored content, and the potential for AI to share inaccurate or age-inappropriate responses. Encourage young users to think critically before trusting or interacting with these features.

### 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

See full reference list on our website

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### 3. Important Future Dates 2026:

W/C 23rd March	Yr5 Cycling Proficiency Training: W/C 23rd March 5EL
Thursday 26th March	Year 3 Oscar Ceremony
Friday 27th March	Last day of term
W/C 30th March	Easter Holidays
Wednesday 22nd April	Whitchurch High School meet with Year 6 Parents 3:45pm
W/C 11th May	Call of the Wild Residential Week
Wednesday 20th May	SPORTS DAY - Nursery (Morning) & Reception am SPORTS DAY - Nursery (Afternoon) & Year 1 and Year 2 pm
Thursday 21st May	SPORTS DAY - Year 3 and Year 4 am SPORTS DAY - Year 5 and Year 6 pm
Friday 22nd May	INSET Day (School closed to pupils)
W/C 25th May	May Half-Term
W/C 1st June	STEM WEEK
W/C 8th June	Llangrannog Residential Week
Tuesday 9th June	Year 5 Rugby Festival
Thursday 9th July	Year 6 Transition Day to Whitchurch High
Monday 20th July	INSET Day (School closed to pupils)

Inset days for the rest of this academic year:

Friday 22nd May 2026

Monday 20th July 2026

We hope you have a lovely weekend,

The Whitchurch Team