



Ready - Respectful - Responsible

Parent Briefing 10.11.23

Dear Parent/Carer,

Just prior to half-term I had the privilege of being invited to judge our **House Talent competition**. Over 20 acts spent the final afternoon regaling a packed lecture theatre with their talents; and what a varied programme it was! **Guitarists, drummers, vocalists and keyboard players were joined by comedy acts, dancers, magicians and an unusual recital of the magical number Pi**. The students were showcasing their talents with the aim of earning points for their house. **Tensions were high but the talent was ready** and it made for a very entertaining afternoon and a delightful end to my first half-term as Head at John Colet School.

It also made me reflect on how important **opportunity is for young people**. Many of the acts were well polished, others were young people trying things out in public for the first time. I was struck by several moments when students paused, checked their tuning or equipment, and only performed when they were certain that all was well. **It is brave enough to perform in front of your peers but to take control of the stage in such a manner was very impressive**. The skill level of the acts was also very high which lent the occasion an exceptional level of entertainment value.

From students empowered on stage to students empowered to lead: I also had the privilege this week of being interviewed by the sixth form public relations representative for the sixth form newsletter. I was asked some very perceptive and incisive questions (some of which were quite challenging!). Again it was warming to note that in front of me was a student empowered to take on an opportunity; an opportunity that could lead to all sorts of future pathways or enhance the student's portfolio **when applying for university or future jobs**.

School is about offering **opportunities beyond the core curriculum** in order to enhance the skills, character and experiences of our young people. Sport, Music, Drama and other extracurricular opportunities (for instance our 'Dungeons & Dragons' club.) **all allow students to try out new things, socialise and build their confidence and social interaction skills**. I am proud to say that after only eight weeks I have seen a rich culture of opportunity that we hope to grow even further over the coming years. It should of course be noted that all of these opportunities would not be possible without such a **dedicated and passionate staff**.

And finally, what seems to be a regular traffic update, please ensure that you **don't park your car on double yellow lines** when waiting for or coming to collect your child. Many thanks.

Take care.

Ian Brierly

REMINDERS & NOTICES

IMPORTANT MESSAGE REGARDING ADHD MEDICATION

Dear Parents and Carers

We have been notified by the Local Authority SEN team of a potential shortage of certain ADHD medications. We realise this must be a worrying time for you and we would like to assure you that, as a school, we will be supporting your families where we can.

The current guidelines from County state:

There has been a national clinical alert issued by the Department of Health and Social Care (NHS England) to highlight the current shortages in Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) medications across the UK. The shortages are the result of increased demand and manufacturing issues. As a result, the supply of ADHD medication is intermittent. This is likely to remain the case for the remainder of 2023. Several ADHD medications have been affected: Equasym XL, Xaggitin XL, Concerta XL, Xenidate XL, Elvanse, Elvanse Adult, Guanfacine and Atomoxetine.

The advice to parents and carers is:

- To continue their child on the current medication.
- To continue ordering repeat ADHD medication as usual, but to re-order when there are between 7-14 days of medication left to allow time to source the medication.
- To try to contact other pharmacies in their local area to check they have supplies.
- To contact the GP/specialist service if they have tried but are unable to find the ADHD medication for their child.
- Due to the medication shortages there may be unavoidable gaps in the child's treatment.

Further information can be found here:

- Community paediatrics - Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust - CYP Website (buckshealthcare.nhs.uk)

If any of the medications listed above are prescribed to your child then please check with your GP or pharmacy about the status of the supply. If your child has a current diagnosis of ADHD can you please ensure that we are aware of this, if you have not already informed us, and email lbendel@johncolet.co.uk. Can you please include the following information:

NAME, DATE OF BIRTH, YEAR GROUP AND FORM, DIAGNOSIS, MEDICATION (If relevant).

If you are already aware that there is a shortage for your child, can you also please let us know.

The SEN department will endeavour to create a plan to help support you and your child if affected, and ensure we offer support for every child to remain at school if they are attending without having their ADHD medication.

Kind regards - Miss Bendel - SENCo

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- **Year 12 consultation evening** - 16.11.23
- **Year 11 Mocks** - 30.11.23 → 14.12.23

OPPORTUNITIES

COVER SUPERVISOR REQUIRED : An excellent opportunity for any person who has just finished education or any who may be considering a future career in education, or for anyone who would like a role which can fit around their family life. If interested please contact Mrs Perry: cperry@johncolet.co.uk

CASUAL INVIGILATORS: We are always looking for people to join our **team of casual invigilators** If you are interested or would like to inquire as to opportunities then the advert and application form for invigilators can be found [here](#).

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES VOLUNTEERS: If you speak French or Spanish and would like to support our MFL department please contact Mrs Simpson, our Head of MFL, directly: isimpson@johncolet.co.uk.

SAFEGUARDING LEADS & INFORMATION



Mr Crawford
Deputy Headteacher
DSL



**Be Safe,
Be Kind**



Mrs Rowland
*Operational Safeguarding Lead
DDSL

If parents have any concerns about this practice or, believe that any young person at John Colet School might be at risk, then please do contact one of the members of our Safeguarding Team via safeguarding@johncolet.co.uk

WENDOVER PROPOSED SKATEPARK

Share your thoughts about this exciting project on the planning application page:

<https://publicaccess.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=SILRA0CLI0U00>

Or visit the crowdfunding page to help out:

<https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/wendover-skatepark>



VISIT OUR CROWDFUNDER PAGE FOR MORE DETAILS OR TO SUPPORT US!

SCAN ME WITH YOUR SMARTPHONE CAMERA



THERE IS A SEVERE LACK OF FACILITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN WENDOVER AND WE ARE KEEN TO PROVIDE A SKATEPARK AS A FOCAL POINT

RECEIVE REWARDS IN RETURN FOR YOUR DONATIONS!

Visit the Crowdfunder web page:
www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/wendover-skatepark



MENTAL HEALTH & PARENT SUPPORT



If you're worried about your child's health, and especially their mental health, it isn't always easy to get access to an expert who can inform, advise or reassure you. At Tooled Up we have several opportunities in November for parents who'd like to hear from professionals. Questions can be asked anonymously at these sessions, or sent in advance to kathy@tooledupeducation.com to be asked, also anonymously, on your behalf.

[Live Q&A with a Consultant Psychiatrist: Thursday 2nd November, 20:15 GMT](#)

Do you have a question about the mind of your child that you wish you could ask an expert? We're thrilled to be hosting a live Q&A with Dr Anna Conway Morris, a consultant psychiatrist who specialises in adolescent mental health. Register [here](#).

[Understanding Girls with Dr Tara Porter: November 21, 19:30 GMT](#)

Dr Tara Porter is a Clinical Psychologist and Writer. She worked in the NHS for over 25 years in child and adolescent mental health and has her own successful private practice. In this webinar, clinician and author, Dr Porter will be exploring why some girls are struggling so much at present, and will provide parents with ideas for bolstering their relationship with their daughters whilst supporting their mental health. Register [here](#).

[Webinar on Self-Harm with Dr Dennis Ougrin: November 29th, 17:30 GMT](#)

Following his successful and fascinating [webinar](#) on discussing real-world trauma with children, psychiatrist Dr Dennis Ougrin returns to help parents and educators with an equally sensitive topic: self-harm. Please note this is a live Q&A rather than a 'talk'. Register [here](#).

Or tune in to hear what Professor Tamsin Ford, Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Cambridge has to say on a whole range of interesting topics! Listen back to a fascinating [Q&A](#) with her here.

UNIFORM

- **Shoes** - Please check that they will conform - there are diagrams on the website to help.
- **Piercings** - the rule is for a small, single, plain stud in the earlobe of each ear. Getting additional piercings that are not healed in time for the start of term means spending time in isolation until the item can be removed.
- Optional plain black v-neck jumper (worn with, not instead of the blazer). **A number of black sweatshirts have crept in. These are not acceptable.**
- **Plain outdoor coat**, no large logos. So no hoodies, zipped or otherwise.
- **No visible body art**, please ensure holiday tattoos are removed.
- Clear nail varnish may be worn but **fingernails must be short and nail extensions of any kind are not permitted.**
- **False eyelashes are not permitted.**
- **Jewellery** (except a watch and earrings as stated above) is not permitted. In the case of jewellery and other accessories, the student will be asked to remove the item, which will be confiscated. A parent/carer will then need to come into school to collect the item in line with school policy.

The full uniform policy can be viewed in the policies section of the school website.

SAFEGUARDING ADVICE FOR PARENTS

At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one of many issues which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit nationalonline.com for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about MICROTRANSACTIONS

Microtransactions (often abbreviated as "MTX") are digital purchases made within an app or game to unlock extra features or additional content such as new levels. A popular sub-set of these are loot boxes, which contain a selection (usually random) of virtual items: from character skins to game-changing equipment like better weapons. Microtransactions (and loot boxes in particular) are now widespread in apps and games, but concerns persist that they normalise gambling and can foster addictive behaviours – especially among younger players.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

GATEWAY TO GAMBLING?

Microtransactions have been criticised for promoting gambling-adjacent behaviour in children. Research has also suggested that exposure to the loot box system could affect the likelihood of a young person suffering gambling harms later in life: children who purchased or used loot boxes in the last 12 months were found to be more likely to have gambled during the same period, as well.

ADDICTIVE NATURE

Microtransactions (and loot boxes especially) could lead to young people displaying compulsive behaviours. Loot boxes are designed to be addictive, and the sought-after prizes they contain are dispensed at random. This means that young gamers might not get what they want straight away, causing them to spend more money as well as additional time gaming.

PAYING TO WIN

In many popular games (the FIFA series being a notable example) microtransactions make it far easier to succeed – which is a concern because children can often find it difficult to keep track of their spending. Once a child starts making in-game purchases, they may continue buying to keep up with their friends and other players sometimes without recognising the mounting real-world cost.

EXCLUSIVE CONTENT

DATA COLLECTION

To allow a young person to complete microtransactions, many app and game developers collect personal data such as their name, address, email, geolocation information, photos, payment details and so on. Even if this data remains secure (which is by no means guaranteed), there's always the chance that it will be used – and possibly sold on to third parties – for marketing purposes.

AFFECTING DAILY ROUTINE

Online games tend to revolve around repeated loops of activity that can affect purchasing decisions and potentially influence children's spending patterns. This could lead to your child not only handing over more money but also adjusting their daily routine to match the game's schedule – potentially impacting more important elements of their day, such as homework and family time.

SATELLITE SPENDING

If you've linked a payment method like a debit card or a PayPal account to your child's game or app, it's wise to keep a close eye on their microtransactions to ensure they aren't racking up a large bill. Letting a child have access to your card (if they're still too young to have their own) or other means of payment could also lead to them spending beyond the apps and games they normally use.

Advice for Parents & Carers

DO YOUR RESEARCH

It's important to have a serviceable idea of whether the games your child plays use the loot box system (even if it goes by a different name) or include the option of buying items, equipment and so forth. If so, it's crucial to help your child understand that this costs actual money, and that they shouldn't feel pressured into making any purchases.

CHAT ABOUT 'CHANCE'

It may help to explain to your child that many microtransactions involve an element of chance: they could pay money and still not get what they want in return. Emphasise that – while not usually costing much individually – these in-app and in-game purchases can soon add up. Talk to your child about how spending their money in a game or app means they have less to use in the real world.

(GIFT CARDS ON THE TABLE

Investing in an in-game currency gift card can be a useful way of helping your child get to grips with budgeting. If you buy, say, a £10 V-bucks Fortnite gift card, monitor how long it takes them to spend it. When they come to you asking for more, you could make it the starting point for a conversation about how quickly that money went and how they could earn their next gift card.

STOP SPENDING AT SOURCE

You might decide that the wisest strategy is to remove the potential for spending money on microtransactions. If so, most games, apps and devices have options in their settings to help you manage what your child can spend – or to disable that function altogether, preventing them from buying additional items for their games or boosted functionality for certain apps.

WATCH FOR THE SIGNS

If you're worried that your child's passion for a particular game or app may tempt them into habitual spending on microtransactions, it's important to remember the indicators of addictive behaviour. Irritability, a lack of concentration and prioritising recreational screen time ahead of homework or mealtimes could all be signs that you need to have a conversation about a more balanced routine.

Meet Our Expert

Carly Page is an experienced technology journalist with a track record of more than 10 years in the industry. Previously the editor of tech tabloid *The Inquirer*, Carly is now a freelance technology journalist, editor and consultant.



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National
Online
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#WakeUpWednesday

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Committed To Excellence

AYLESBURY RUGBY WOMEN

ANY LEVEL OF EXPERIENCE
AMAZING FACILITIES INCLUDING
GYM AND PHYSIO
NC3 MIDLANDS (SOUTH) LEAGUE
WOMENSRUGBY@AYLESBURYRFC.CO.UK

TRAINING TIMES:
WEDNESDAY 19:30-21:00
SUNDAY 12:30-14:00



ARFC HP22 5RN

PRODUCTIONS
YOUTH THEATRE GROUP
01767 681 049

OPEN AUDITIONS

BUGSY MALONE

MONDAY 13TH NOVEMBER
WATERSIDE THEATRE
Exchange St. Aylesbury HP20 1UG
(5.00-6.00pm 8-12 yrs old)
(6.00-7.00pm 12-18yrs old)

SATURDAY 16TH NOVEMBER
KINGSBROOK SCHOOL
Armstrongs Fields, HP22 7BR
(2.00-3.30pm 8-12 yrs old)
(3.30pm-5.00pm 12-18yrs old)

All auditionees must be 8 years old by the time of the show
TO BE PERFORMED AT THE AYLESBURY WATERSIDE. 14TH - 16TH MARCH 2024
NOTHING TO PREPARE
JUST ARRIVE, BOOK IN AND AUDITION
You only need attend one audition / A show fee is payable by all successful applicants



JOIN US FOR OUR
Christmas
CELEBRATION

Xmas
Tree Light
Switch On
at 5.30pm

Saturday 2nd December
4pm - 7pm on Manor Waste

There will be lots to enjoy on the night including:

- Santa's Grotto
- Christmas Gift Stalls, Food & Drink
- Late night shopping on the High Street
- Wendover Singers Adult and Children's Choir, plus more local groups entertaining!
- Bucks Radio will be hosting the event with a special guest, the Bucks Bear.

Bring along £2 and get a present from me!

J Brown Funeral Services
Independent Family Funeral Director
Wendover Amersham

Henry Fish's
Christmas Trees

Ivan R. Cammack
Optometrist
— Bringing quality to Eyecare —

Wendover Youth Centre are the beneficiary of this year's event, with thanks to The Salt Kitchen, Coffee Stop, Cheesy Grahams, and Daddy Donuts for their donations.

COUNCILLOR SURGERIES

3rd Thursday of each month!

Collecting positive ideas for the future of Wendover!



- ★ 16th November
- 🕒 10am - 12pm
- 📍 Wendover Library



Bring your thoughts, ideas, or concerns and chat with the Parish Councillors.

Join Wendover's

Remembrance Parade and Ceremony

on Manor Waste and the High Street

Sunday 12th November
at 2.30pm



In association with:

THE ROYAL BRITISH
LEGION



Committed To Excellence



HS2 IN WENDOVER

Socialise & Strategise



7pm Friday 24th November
Wendover Memorial Hall



Join us for a glass of wine and discuss plans for HS2 in Wendover

Committed To Excellence