



Ready - Respectful - Responsible

Parent Briefing 24.11.23

Dear Parent/Carer,

One of the attractions of John Colet for me (apart from the wonderful positive learning culture!) was the quality of the governance of the school. I attended my **first major finance trustees** meeting this week to hear the assessment of our **independent auditors** on our school finances. Several things were very apparent. Firstly the school is on an **excellent financial footing** and in extremely good health in this respect. This is due to some shrewd, financial acumen and excellent management. Secondly, was the quality of the governance with the **trustees challenging and questioning in a forensic and pertinent manner**. It further highlighted how well the school is being governed by trustees on behalf of the local community.

We are now **gearing up for the mock exams and I can see Year 11 and year 13 students beginning to prepare accordingly** for this valuable examination experience. However, I came across one young person this week who was only **'concerned about getting a 4 in English and Maths'** and was not planning to focus on 'other subjects'. **We had a chat about this odd approach** and although I didn't quite admonish him I had strong words about what I would describe as 'investing in your future'.

The core skills of English and Maths are clearly vital for future prospects **but success in EVERY subject is equally as important**. The skill set associated with success in any GCSE subject is like an investment in your future. **Employers are looking for diverse skill sets** which they can adapt and mould themselves within their companies, and a diverse and **wide ranging exam portfolio demonstrates adaptability and increases access to opportunities**. Expanding this portfolio with enrichment activities in and out of school begins to give employers and further education institutions a much more accurate picture of an **individual's capabilities, skill set and character**. **Reducing your portfolio simply reduces your chances and places you at a competitive disadvantage**; to use a crass analogy narrowing your portfolio would be like a football striker proclaiming that 'I don't do defence!' - this would not be a player you would want to take on board.

EVERY subject and EVERY grade counts.

This week's safeguarding top tips is focussed on **Black Friday and the pitfalls of cyber crime whilst shopping online**. It is worth reading not just to inform your children but also for your own knowledge. Our 'Tooled Up' section also focuses on **technology in family life**.

Finally, please take the time to read the winners of our **'Two sentence scary story'** competition included directly after my sign off.

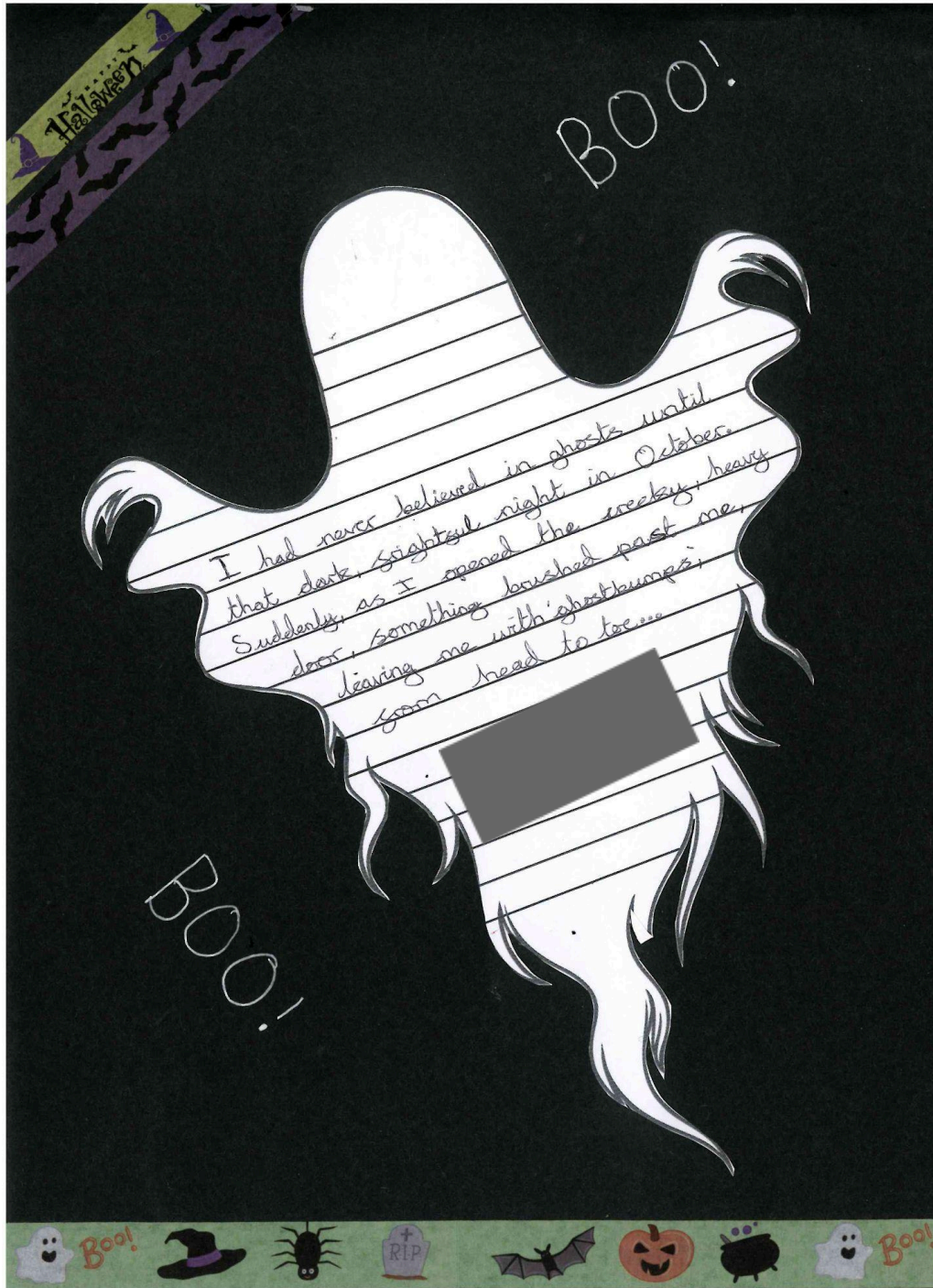
Take care.

Ian Brierly

REMINDERS & NOTICES

TWO LINE HORROR STORY WINNERS

The Winner...



2nd Place:

"The shadow! The lights flickered, it stood still."

Joint 3rd Place:

"I've learnt to realise the shadow people on my wall are not real. Though I don't know why they have glowing eyes."

"I was about to get the exclusive e-ticket. Then the wi-fi dropped out..."

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- **Year 11 Mocks** - 30.11.23 → 14.12.23
- **Christmas Concert** - 14.12.23
- **1st Day of Spring term** - 04.01.24
- **Year 13 Mocks begin** - 04.01.24

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.

WENDOVER YOUTH CENTRE LEAD YOUTH WORKER/CENTRE MANAGER JOB VACANCY - for further enquiries to admin@wendoveryouth.co.uk please.

SAFEGUARDING LEADS & INFORMATION



Mr Crawford
Deputy Headteacher
DSL



**Be Safe,
Be Kind**

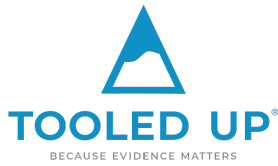


Mrs Rowland
*Operational Safeguarding Lead
DDSL

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

Committed To Excellence

MENTAL HEALTH & PARENT SUPPORT



It's official: Tooled Up Education are innovators! We're thrilled to be finalists in the BETT Awards for Innovation. These Awards recognise creativity and impact in the use of technology in education. **This week we're thinking about the role that technology plays in family life**, and how we can support our children in forming good habits around technology and the internet.

With the holidays around the corner, many parents will be having that conversation about buying a child their first smartphone. Here at Tooled Up we get a lot of questions about "first phones." Watch Dr Weston's [webinar](#) on what to consider before buying your child a phone. Our [webinar](#) on raising a child in the digital world can answer some of your queries and make a good starting point for healthy conversations with children.

If you follow any of the latest trends in technology, you've probably heard of the metaverse by now, but you might not be quite so sure what it is or what it does. Our helpful [explainer for parents](#) from Dr Lisa Sugiura is a great starting point.

Gaming is a key leisure activity for many young people, a social experience, a multi-billion dollar industry and a point of contention in many households. These [top tips](#) from expert Andy Robertson will help you set healthy boundaries and keep gaming enjoyable and safe. As always, don't miss out on attending any online event. Coming soon:

[November 29, 2023 – 12:30 GMT: Help! I Feel Like A Failure As A Parent!](#)

Psychiatrist Dr Gauri Seth will address the thorny topic of parental guilt and how to manage it.

[December 6, 2023 – 19:00 GMT: Raising A Resilient Teen Boy](#)

In this online talk, Dr Kathy Weston will take parents on a journey through the evidence relating to boys' resilience and mental health.

Other Links:



Relationships, Kindness and Success



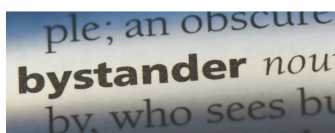
Family Values



Treating Others Kindly (younger children)



Treating Others Kindly (teenagers)



Raising an "Upstander"



Kindness Passport

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.

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=S1LRA0CLI0U00>

Or visit the crowdfunding page to help out:

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



The poster features a green silhouette of a skateboarder on the left. In the top center, there is a small inset image of a skatepark. To the right of the inset is a QR code with the text 'SCAN ME WITH YOUR SMARTPHONE CAMERA'. Above the QR code, it says 'VISIT OUR CROWDFUNDER PAGE FOR MORE DETAILS OR TO SUPPORT US!'. Below the QR code, it says 'RECEIVE REWARDS IN RETURN FOR YOUR DONATIONS!'. In the center, there is a text box that reads: 'THERE IS A SEVERE LACK OF FACILITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN WENDOVER AND WE ARE KEEN TO PROVIDE A SKATEPARK AS A FOCAL POINT'. At the bottom, it says 'Visit the Crowdfunder web page: www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/wendover-skatepark'. In the bottom right corner, there is a circular logo for 'WENDOVER WASH COUNCIL'.

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 nationalonlinecollege.com for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

Top Tips for Safer Online Shopping on

BLACK FRIDAY AND CYBER MONDAY

Black Friday and Cyber Monday have become established as two of the year's biggest shopping events, giving consumers the opportunity to snap up a stash of stunning bargains. While this is generally good news, of course, the resultant retail frenzy can lead to people dropping their guard – especially online. In previous years, a seasonal surge in cyber-crime has seen schemes such as phishing emails and credit card scams being unleashed on unwary buyers. Our guide has some essential pointers on keeping your details – and your money – safe while you shop.

ENSURE A SITE'S SECURE

Before inputting sensitive information (like your card details) into a website, check that the site's secure. The key thing is to look for a padlock symbol in the address bar and check that the URL begins with "https://" – the "s" indicates that the web address has been encrypted with an SSL certificate. Without that, any data entered on the site could be intercepted by criminal third parties.

TRUST YOUR INSTINCTS

If a deal seems too good to be true, then it probably is. Be especially wary if a site offering unbelievable discounts doesn't look professional (for example, if it's covered with pop-up adverts or it looks particularly outdated) – this often serves as a red flag that the seller might not be entirely trustworthy. Minimise risk by sticking with well-known, reputable retailers instead.

REVIEW BANK STATEMENTS

Even if you've followed all our tips, it's probably worth checking your next bank statement for any unusual transactions. Criminals know that on Black Friday and Cyber Monday, lots of people make numerous purchases online; they're hoping that any stolen money will get lost in the crowd of other transactions. If you see a payment or payee you can't identify, raise it with your bank straight away.

BEWARE OF SUSPICIOUS EMAILS

Black Friday and Cyber Monday often bring a significant spike in phishing emails, as criminals use the events' sense of urgency as cover for stealing personal information. Even if they look legitimate, be wary of emails requiring you to do something unusual or suspicious: providing your personal details in exchange for access to last-minute deals, for example, or clicking on a link to an unfamiliar site.

CHECK IT'S THE REAL DEAL

It's not just cybercriminals you need to be wary of. Research has shown that some online retailers increase the price of certain items in the weeks before Black Friday and Cyber Monday – enabling them to then advertise "discounts" (which, in reality, have simply restored the cost to normal levels). Use an online price comparison tool to verify whether these "reductions" truly equate to a saving.

MINIMISE MICROTRANSACTIONS

Black Friday and Cyber Monday promotions extend to digital items as well as physical ones. Some gaming companies will offer discounts on in-app and in-game microtransactions such as loot boxes. If you're concerned about how much your child might spend on these upgrades, you can restrict their ability to make purchases (via their device's settings) or remove any linked payment methods.

SET STURDY PASSWORDS

A strong, unique password is one of the most straightforward ways to protect yourself from cyber-crime. As most of us have multiple online shopping accounts, it can be tempting to use the same password for them all – but this puts your personal data at greater risk. You could try using a password manager to create a different, robust password for each online retailer that you visit.

DITCH THE DEBIT CARD

Where possible, it's safest to shop online with a credit card (as opposed to a debit card) because it offers additional protection. If a purchase is made fraudulently on your credit card, there's a fair chance of your bank reimbursing you. Should criminals obtain your debit card details, however, they could empty your account in moments – and it can be difficult to recover your money.

RESIST THE INFLUENCE

Recommendations from social media influencers are another thing to remain vigilant for on Black Friday and Cyber Monday. While many of these will be legitimate, remember that influencers are often paid to promote products – and to publicise deals that aren't quite as amazing as they might seem. Don't feel pressured into buying purely on their advice; look at everything with a critical eye.

TAKE CARE ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media scammers are more active on Black Friday and Cyber Monday, as they know people are hunting for deals online. These scammers tend to concentrate on platforms such as Facebook and Instagram, posting malicious links that can compromise shoppers' personal details. Other scammers, meanwhile, falsely advertise products in an attempt to trick users out of their hard-earned cash.

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.



NOS National Online Safety®
#WakeUpWednesday

@natonlinesafety

/NationalOnlineSafety

@nationalonlinesafety

@national_online_safety

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 22.11.2023

LOCAL UPDATES / EVENTS

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



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 Shale's
Wendover

Texan 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.