

Working together to be the best we can possibly be.

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. Philippians 4.13

25th April 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back to school and the start of the Summer Term.

Safeguarding:

At The National College, our **WakeUpWednesday** guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit [thenationalcollege.com](https://thenationalcollege.com/guides/wake-up-wednesday).

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about TIKTOK

13+ (Certain features are restricted to over 18s only)

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Adults tend to associate online videos with YouTube – but among teens, TikTok is king. The app provides a stream of short clips tailored to users' interests, based on what they've already watched. Around half of British children use TikTok, and while much of the content is benign, Ofcom considers it the app where youngsters "were most likely to encounter a potential harm".

AGE-INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

While TikTok's following feed only displays videos from familiar creators, for you is a collection based on a user's previously watched clips. Most of these videos will probably be inoffensive, but the app could potentially show concerning unsuitable. If children then engage with this content, more likely it will follow. TikTok's guidelines prohibit the sharing of illegal or inappropriate content, but the huge number of uploads means that a small amount inevitably slips through.

BODY IMAGE AND DANGEROUS CHALLENGES

According to Ofcom, most online harms for teens are body image related for girls (promoting unhealthy eating, body shaming and so on) and dangerous stunts for boys. Both are present on TikTok. One extreme example of the latter was the 'blackout' trend, which encouraged users to hold their breath until they passed out from a lack of oxygen. This led to two families filing lawsuits against TikTok over the tragic deaths of their children.

IN-APP SPENDING

TikTok is free, but users have the option to buy TikTok coins, which can be used to purchase gifts for content creators. Coin bundles range from £3.99 to an eye-watering £99, while that may not sound appealing, the app still generated £2.9 billion in user spending in 2023. TikTok's policy is that under-18s can't make in-app purchases, but it's possible to bypass this with a fake birth date.

CONTACT WITH STRANGERS

With more than 1.8 billion users globally, the potential for contact from strangers on TikTok is high – especially as accounts created by one-18s (or young people using a fake date of birth) are set to public by default. This means that not only is someone's profile visible to everyone else on the app, it also suggests their videos to others and enables anyone to download or comment on them.

MISINFORMATION AND RADICALISATION

Although the short videos on TikTok tend to be more frivolous than the longer ones on YouTube, clips can still influence impressionable minds in a negative way. Not only is there plenty of dangerous misinformation on TikTok, but Ofcom reports that nearly a third of 12 to 16-year-olds use TikTok as a news source – so you should be wary of misquoting, racist or conspiracy-themed material shaping how they see the world.

ADDICTIVE DESIGN

With its constant stream of eye-catching videos, TikTok can be addictive to young brains. In 2024, UK children spent an average of 127 minutes per day on the app, that's twice as much as in 2020. Excessive use can interfere with young people's sleep patterns – often leading to irritability – and distract them from other healthier activities. The instantly skippable nature of bite-size videos may also impact children's ability to maintain focus.

Advice for Parents & Educators

ENABLE FAMILY PAIRING

Family Pairing allows parents to link their TikTok account to their child's, and control settings remotely. Parents can then turn on Restricted Mode (reducing the chances of a child seeing inappropriate content), set screen-time limits, make accounts private and manage whether their child can send messages – and if they can, to whom. Children can't alter these settings without parental approval.

DISCUSS THE DANGERS

If a child wants to use TikTok and you're happy for them to do so, it's good practice to discuss the potential risks. Ensure that they don't share any identifying personal information, and that they know to talk to a trusted adult if they're worried by interactions on the app. With more teens using TikTok for news, it's also worth talking about misinformation and propaganda, and how to identify it.

BLOCK IN-APP SPENDING

If a child is using an iPhone or Android device to access TikTok, you can offer their settings to prevent them from making in-app purchases. We'd recommend enabling this feature, as it can be quite easy for a young person to spend a significant amount of real money buying TikTok coins to unlock more features of the app – sometimes without even realising.

READ THE SIGNS

If you're concerned that a child is spending too much time on TikTok, or that they've been emotionally affected by something they've seen, it's important to know how to spot the signs. Increased irritability and a lack of concentration are potential red flags, as is failing to complete homework or skipping meals. Remember the parental controls are there for a reason, and it's never too late to introduce limits.

Meet Our Expert

Alan Martin is an experienced technology journalist who has written for the likes of Wired, TechRadar, Tom's Guide, The Evening Standard and The New Statesman.

#WakeUpWednesday The National College

Source: <https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-67444444>

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Wellbeing and mental health:



School Dinner

Year 1 Parent meal: We would like to invite Year 1 parents and carers to join us for school dinner on Thursday 1st May. The meal will be our extremely popular (and very delicious)

roast dinner.

Parents and carers are asked to purchase their school dinner through MCAS under the Products and Trips tab. The meal will cost £3.60. **Meal choice and payment must be made by today, Friday 25th April please.**

Please complete this form to book your meal once payment has been made on MCAS:

<https://forms.office.com/e/Y7mk1jicki>

Unfortunately, we can only offer for one parent or carer to attend. This will be an annual event moving forwards so will be repeated next academic year.

Children in Year 1 who prefer to have a home packed lunch will still have opportunity for their parent Carer to join them. Adults can still order a school dinner or bring a packed lunch from home to sit to eat with their child.

Please would parents and carers of Year 1 children arrive for school dinner at 11.50am.

Swimming lessons:



We are very much looking forward to our swimming lessons which will begin next week, WC 28th April.

What to wear for swimming: For these sessions, the children will need to wear a one-piece swimming costume or fitted swimming trunks. UV swimming t-shirts are allowed.

Please do not send your child with a bikini or long (knee-length) baggy swimming shorts as these are not appropriate or practical for learning how to swim and your child will be unable to enter the pool.

In line with the Cambridgeshire swimming policy, the children will not wear goggles for their sessions as our focus is on developing water confidence and safety. Earrings **must** be removed for swimming. Please remember to also send your child with a named towel. All other swimming aids will be provided by school.

Any child with hair that is longer than chin length or a fringe that impedes their vision when wet will be expected to wear their own swimming hat. If you do not have your own swimming hat, these are available to purchase via MCAS for £1.50 and can be collected from the school office.

Swimming timetable from 28th April 2025:

Monday	Larch class	Willow – girls only	Oak – girls only
Tuesday	Chestnut	Silver Birch	Year 5/6 - all boys
Wednesday	Cedar – girls only		
Thursday	Beech	Rowan *	Ash *
Friday	Sycamore	Elm	Hazel
* NB Reception PE day will change to Wednesday.			

Year 4 Parent Information Evening – 30th April at 6pm



Please complete this form to register for the Year 4 Multiplication Table Check (MTC) Parent Information Evening. The event will place virtually and will begin at 6pm. The children in Year 4 will complete this statutory check later in the summer term. Book here: <https://forms.office.com/e/DGkZ8pDbM6>



Dates for your diary:

- Sunday 18th May: Yard Sale
- Sunday 29th June: Funday Sunday

FWR Pre-Loved Uniform Sales Summer Term:

Sales before and after school, on the following dates:

- Friday 16th May
- Thursday 26th June

FWR Yard Sale - Sunday 18th May:



FWR Smartie Fundraiser for Early Years: Please return tubes of coins collected over the Easter holiday to the school office, class teacher or pre-school. Thank you.



The Rackham Pre-School: The Pre-School has spaces available from September 2025. We can accept children from the age of 2 years 6 months. Please contact the school office for more information via office@rackham.cambs.sch.uk

Phonics:

Our pre-school children do not need to learn phonics, this will happen as soon as they start in Reception. If parents and carers have any questions about this, please contact the office in the first instance: office@rackham.cambs.sch.uk Thank you.



Suncream: The UV rays are becoming greater in intensity and have been recorded at 4 this week. The recommendation for applying suncream from the Government and Cancer Research UK is when the UV levels are 3+.

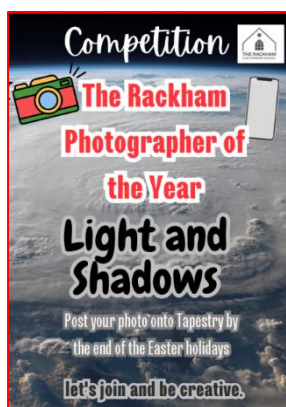
New nutrition guidance for EYFS:

The Department for Education is committed to ensuring that all children in early years settings have the best possible start in life and have released new nutrition guidance in the EYFS statutory framework, which will replace the 'Examples menus for early years settings in England' guidance from September 2025.

This new document is on our website for parents and carers as there are some interesting pieces of information they may also like to read.

Please see also the link here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-nutrition>

The Rackham Photographer of the Year competition: Winners will be announced next week!



Girlguiding in Witchford:

Did you know Girlguiding is active in your community? 1st Witchford Rainbows, 1st Witchford Brownies and 1st Witchford Guides provide a range of extracurricular activities for girls aged 4-7, 7-10 and 10-14. We work through a variety of Girlguiding themes, go on adventures, play games, do crafts, bake, take part in community events, undertake challenges, learn new skills and most importantly, have FUN! Would your daughter like to join us? We meet in Witchford on Tuesdays in term time, 4:30-5:30 for Rainbows, 6:00-7:30 for Brownies, and Guides meet 6:30-8:00. Rainbows is currently at capacity and running a waiting list, but there are spaces available at Brownies and Guides. Please see www.girlguiding.org.uk for more information, or contact us directly using witchfordrainbows@gmail.com / witchfordbrownies@gmail.com / witchford.guides@gmail.com.

Would you like to volunteer with Girlguiding? We help all girls to know they can do anything! Are you curious, adaptable, thoughtful, ambitious? Could your skills compliment Girlguiding in Witchford? Please see www.girlguiding.org.uk/interested for more information.

Your local Girlguiding leaders, Ellen, Robyn, Brown Owl, Arctic Owl, Butterfly and Squirrel.

Term dates for 2025 – 2026:

Term dates for next academic year are now available on the website and can be found [here](#).

Uniform orders:

Uniform items for school and pre-school pupils (**including jumpers and cardigans**) are now available from Sigma.

Pre-School: [Clubs & Groups - Sigma Embroidery & Printing](#)

Primary School: [Clubs & Groups - Sigma Embroidery & Printing](#)

Orders must be placed by parents and carers and can be collected from Sigma Embroidery on Sedgeway Business Park, Witchford.

Workshops:

Healing Through Story

Using Myths & Movies to Support Children's Mental Health

A new and exciting online creative workshop - open to all!

Unlock the power of story to support children's mental health! Join our hands-on creative workshop and discover how archetypes from films and fairytales can help children navigate emotions, build resilience, and express themselves. Perfect for parents, teachers, and anyone passionate about children's well-being, this session blends psychology and storytelling in an engaging, practical way. No prior experience needed—just a love for stories and a desire to make a difference! We will explore the characters of Elsa, Superman, the Hulk and Cinderella!

TWO OPPORTUNITIES TO SIGN UP!

SATURDAY MAY 10TH 10.00-3.00 AND REPEATED ON FRIDAY 13TH JUNE

To reserve your place please email: cambridgecreativecounselling@gmail.com
This workshop will take place via Zoom, and you will only require a few basic creative materials.

£50 - payable a week before the course (instalments available on request)

Emma Moat is an experienced play therapist, counsellor, and trainer with 20 years of expertise across the UK and Europe. She has led highly successful workshops, earning excellent feedback for her engaging and transformative approach to supporting children's well-being through creativity and storytelling.



Attendance:

The Rackham has an updated policy on Attendance. Please follow this [link](#) to read the policy on the school website.

Thank you to all our parents and carers for supporting our drive for improved attendance. The Government has identified a child's attendance of 96% and above is the key figure to give best chance of academic progress. Please can we remind you that absence must be reported to the office by 9am on each day of absence.

This week's attendance: 93.7%

ATTEND TODAY ACHIEVE TOMORROW

EDUCATION IS IMPORTANT - DON'T MISS OUT



Looking forward to seeing everyone on Monday.

Best wishes,

Miss Turner

Dates for your diary:

30 th April	Bikeability for Year 4
30 th April	Y4 Parent's Information Evening MTC 6pm (booking required)
1 st May	Y1 Parent Meal (booking required)
1 st May	Reception and Year 6 Height and Weight measurements
5 th May	May Day Bank Holiday Monday
12 th May	Y6 SATs week
22 nd May	Last day of term for pupils
23 rd May	Professional Development Day for teachers
26 th May	HALF TERM
2 nd June	Year 6 Bikeability this week
5 th June	Reception Classes Parent meal (booking required nearer the time)
12 th June	Class photos (Pre-School to Year 6)
WC 16 th June	
29 th June	Funday Sunday
30 th June	
7 th July	Move up day (More details to follow for Pre-School and Reception 2025 intake)
10 th July	Pre-School, EYFS and KS1 Sports Day (booking required nearer the time)
11 th July	KS2 Sports Day (booking required nearer the time)
16 th July	Parent's Evening (booking required nearer the time)
17 th July	Parent's Evening (booking required nearer the time)
17 th July	Reserve Sports Day for Pre-School, EYFS and KS1
18 th July	Reserve Sports Day for KS2
21 st July	Year 6 Leaver's BBQ (booking required nearer the time)
22 nd July	Year 6 Leaver's Assembly to parents and carers (booking required nearer the time)
22 nd July	Year 6 Parent or carer school buffet invitation (booking required nearer the time)
22 nd July	Last day for children
23 rd July	Professional Development Day for teachers
	SUMMER HOLIDAY