

# The Richard Crosse C of E (A) Primary School

## Newsletter February 2026



**Our Motto:** Believe and Achieve

**Our Values:** Love - Respect - Friendship

**Our Christian Vision:** Philippians 4:13: 'I can do everything through Him who gives me strength'

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Dear Parents and Carers,

As we reach the end of a truly action-packed short half term, marked memorably by our first Snow Day for many years, I am delighted to reflect on the incredible energy and enthusiasm radiating throughout the school. I am continually proud of how well our children are doing, whether inside the classroom or out in the community, they are consistently demonstrating our school rules and values with pride.

This half term has been defined by a strong sense of care and responsibility. We have focused on personal wellbeing through Mental Health Day 2026 and digital responsibility on Safer Internet Day. Perhaps most inspiring has been the introduction of our new, pupil-led School Inclusion Code. Seeing the children take ownership of this, ensuring everyone has someone to play with and checking in on one another, has been a heartwarming highlight for all.

As always, our curriculum has extended far beyond the school gates. Class 4 immersed themselves in history during their Viking residential in York, while KS2 raised the roof at the Young Voices concert at Birmingham Arena. In school, we welcomed Severn Trent Water for an insightful assembly on water conservation and Class 3 has been working hard with Music Share in preparation for their concert at Lichfield Cathedral next half term.

It has also been a term of great physical achievement. From MAT netball competitions and football tournaments to Bikeability and the start of Year 4 swimming, our children have embraced every sporting opportunity offered, with many more to come in the, hopefully, drier months ahead!

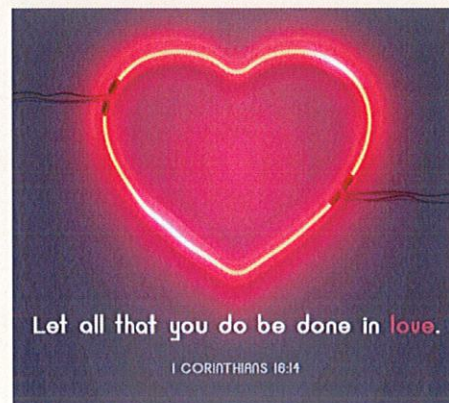
Finally, I would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who attended the PTA Pizza Making Night last night. It was a delicious way to end the half term and a creative new way to raise funds. This support mirrors the dedication we saw at our recent parents' evening, where the exceptionally high turnout was a wonderful testament to your partnership in your children's education.

I must also pay tribute to our incredible staff team. Working in a small school entails wearing many hats, and their teamwork and willingness to go above and beyond for every child never ceases to amaze me. Thank you also to the children for their hard work and smiles this half term. We look forward to welcoming everyone back on Monday, 23rd February.

I wish you all a restful and happy half term.

Kind regards,

**Ms Bowring (Headteacher)**





# Children's Mental Health Week

This week, our school community joined the nationwide celebration of **Children's Mental Health Week 2026**, led by the charity Place2Be. This year's theme was **"This is My Place"**, focusing on the vital importance of belonging.

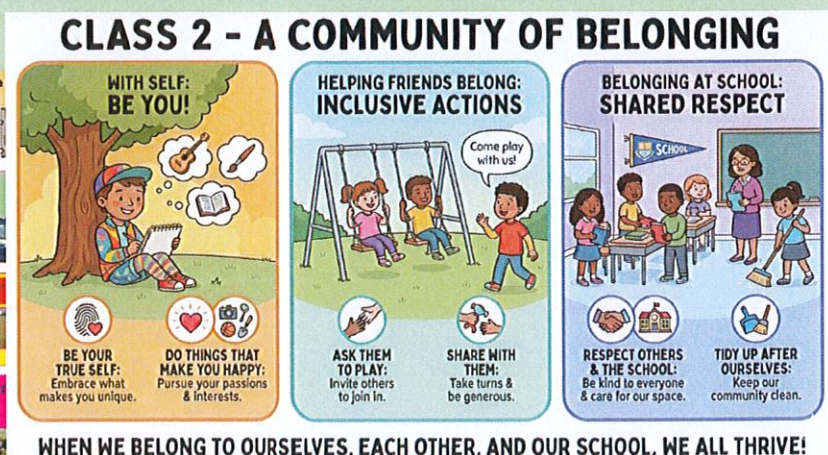
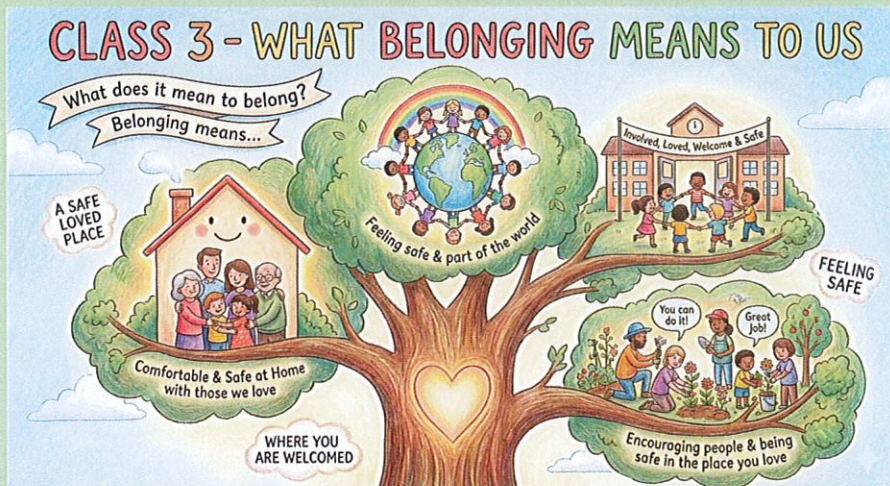
We used resources to explore how feeling safe, valued and included is the foundation for resilience and confidence. This theme resonated deeply with our new, pupil-led School Inclusion Code, reinforcing our commitment to ensuring every child knows they have a place here.

We explored this theme through both physical and creative challenges including:

- **The Cube:** A huge thank you to the PTA for funding a whole day of enrichment challenges in 'The Cube'. The children had a great time navigating the tasks, which required communication and trust, perfectly highlighting how working together strengthens us.
- **Poetry with Daniel Thompson:** Our **Key Stage 2** children participated in a special online event with poet Daniel Thompson. Designed to spark a love of poetry and encourage emotional expression, Daniel shared his inspiration and read from his collections. He then led the children in creating their own poems, helping them find their voice and articulate their feelings.

<https://richardcrosse.staffs.sch.uk/photo-galleries/children-s-mental-health-week-2026>

Take a look at some of our whole class creations:





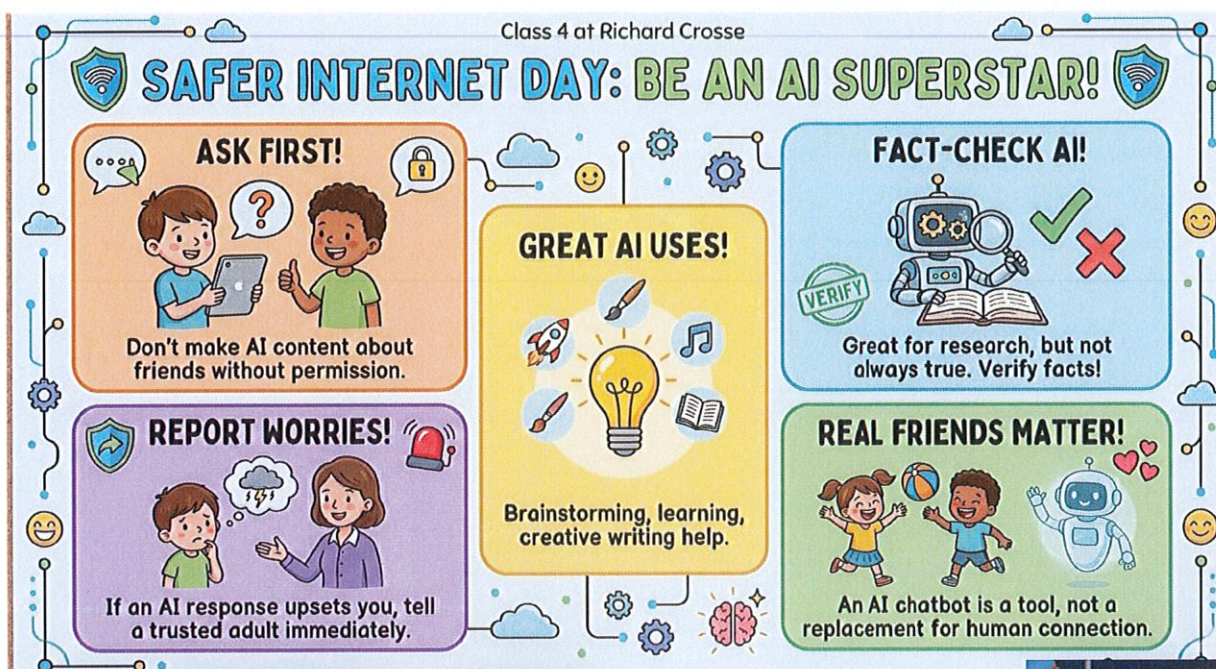
# Safer Internet Day 2026

## Tuesday 10 February

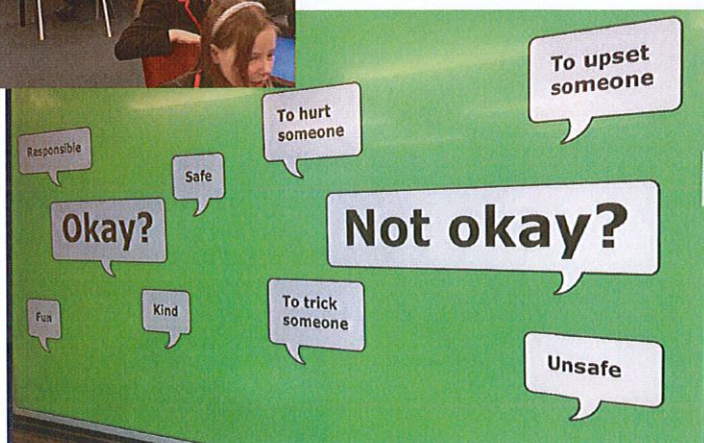
Coordinated by the UK Safer Internet Centre

[saferinternetday.org.uk](https://saferinternetday.org.uk)

On Tuesday, 10th February, the whole school joined the global celebration of **Safer Internet Day 2026**. Exploring this year's theme, 'Smart tech, safe choices', children across all year groups investigated the rapidly evolving world of **Artificial Intelligence (AI)** and "smart" technology. From debating the benefits and risks of voice assistants to challenging their critical thinking with interactive quizzes, the day was designed to empower our students to be "AI Aware." The goal was not to discourage new technology, but to equip our children with the confidence to question what they see online and navigate the digital world safely.



Take a look at some of the things we got up to!!





## Richard Crosse Inclusion Code

Class 4 worked together with Ms Bowring over a number of sessions to create an Inclusion Code for the whole school. This was delivered in worship and is now up in every class and around the school. Thanks Class 4, you did a great job for the whole school!

### The School Inclusion Code

Making our school a happy place for everyone



- **1. We Are One Big Family**

We treat everyone in our school like they belong on our team. We are friendly, loving, and kind to everyone, not just our best friends.
- **2. Every Seat is an Open Seat**

We never "save spots" to keep people away. If someone asks to sit next to us or join our table, the answer is always a smile and a "Yes!"
- **3. The More, The Merrier**

Our games and conversations are never closed. We know that adding more people to the fun makes the playtime better, not worse.
- **4. We Invite Everyone In**

We notice if someone is standing alone or feeling left out. We act fast to say, "You can play with us" or "Come and sit with us."
- **5. Kind Actions Match Kind Words**

We make people feel welcome with what we say *and* what we do. We use open body language and make room in the circle so nobody feels weird about joining in.

## What have we been up to? Take a look!!

School website Gallery - <https://richardcrosse.staffs.sch.uk/photo-gallery-category/school-gallery>

School Facebook Page - <https://www.facebook.com/share/17c9arjK52/?mibextid=wwXlfr>

School Instagram Page - [https://www.instagram.com/richardcrosseprimary?igsh=MW82a3g1Mmd0anc1dw%3D%3D&utm\\_source=qr](https://www.instagram.com/richardcrosseprimary?igsh=MW82a3g1Mmd0anc1dw%3D%3D&utm_source=qr)

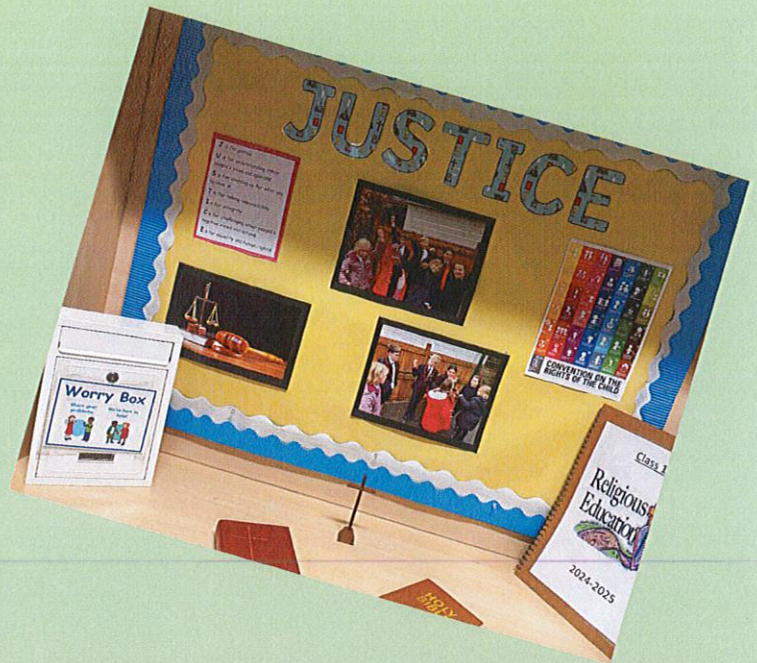
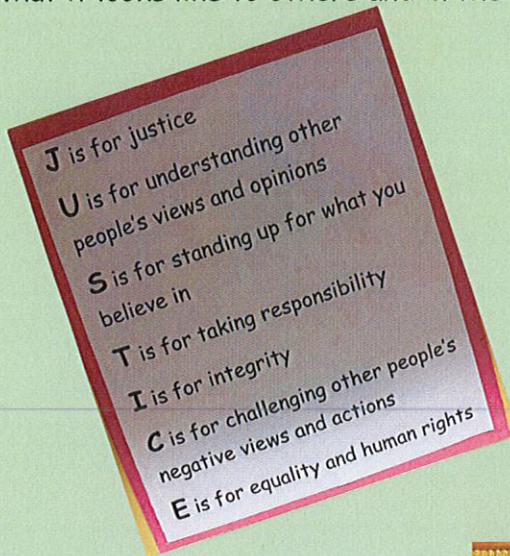
## Upcoming Events and Key Dates

Please remember to keep an eye on the school calendar on our website and check the weekly round up for the latest information!



## Values and 'The Big Question'

This half term's value has been 'Justice', the children have looked at how we can show this and what it looks like to others and in the bible.

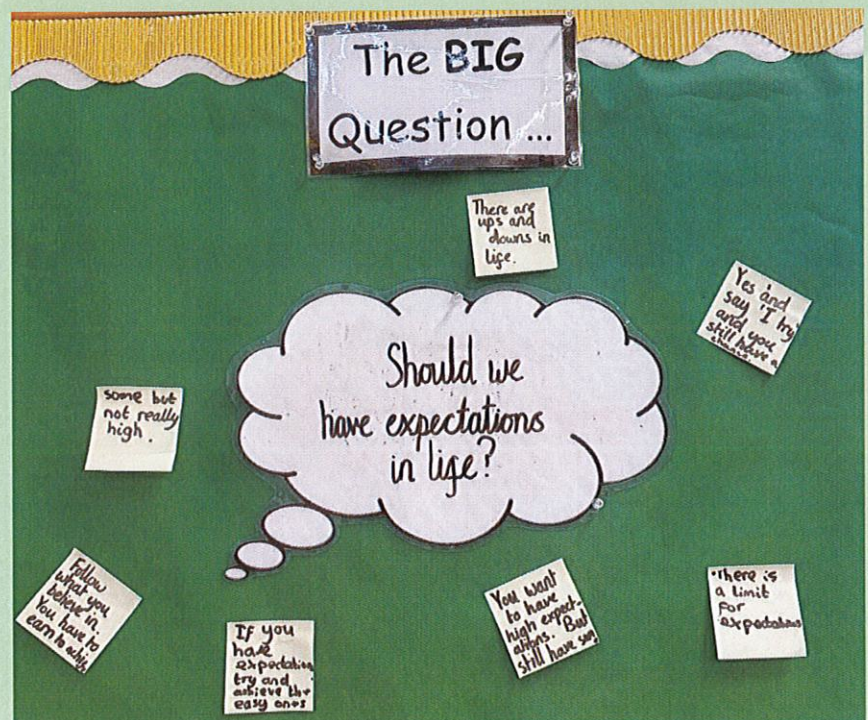


'The Big Question' supports our children to become deeper thinkers by posing and discussing questions that have no right or wrong answer. This half terms question was

***Should we have expectations in life?***

As you can see the children came up with some amazing ideas and had some beautiful, respectful discussions along the way!

Next half term.....



Our BIG question is:

Why do we need to make sacrifices?

Our focus value is: **Courage**

What do they mean to you and your family? It would be lovely for the children to come to school with some ideas that you have discussed together over the holidays!

**A massive well done to our kitchen team on their Food Standard Agency inspection this week! 5/5**





## Great British Athlete Visit next half term!!

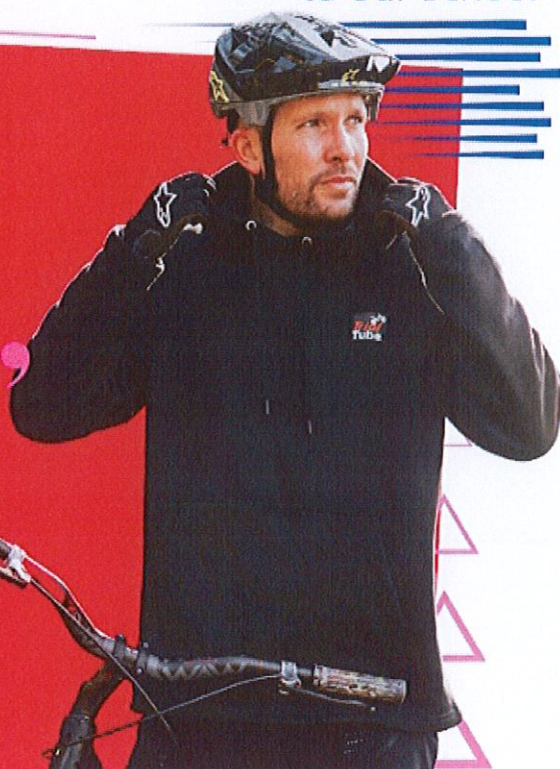
We are thrilled to be able to share some more information about our upcoming Great Athletes event. We are excited to announce that the athlete who will be visiting us will be Team GB Mountain Biker Danny Butler!

Scan to sponsor  
Search our school



## Welcome Team GB Mountain Biker **DANNY BUTLER** to our school

“Make as  
much effort  
as you can  
every day.  
Even if it's  
just a little”



On the event day, all pupils will take part in a sponsored fitness circuit run by their athlete, a terrific way to get all children excited about sport and realise that getting moving is really fun! Their athlete will then share their incredible sporting journey, a story of resilience and determination in a fun and interactive assembly. There will also be an opportunity to ask any burning questions.

Fundraising for the event will begin after half term when the children will be bringing home a sponsorship form.

The money raised for the event will help us to purchase new sports equipment and improve levels of physical activity in our school!

If you wanted to get a head start with fundraising we have attached the QR code! Thank you in advance for your support!

### Safeguarding - Contact and support information for over the holidays

**Staffordshire Families Integrated Front Door (SFIFD)** if you have concerns or are worried for a child and wish to make a referral: **0300 111 8007**

**NSPCC Helpline** Call **0808 800 5000** or email [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk) if you're worried about a child.  
[NSPCC Christmas Support \[nspcc.org.uk\]](https://www.nspcc.org.uk)

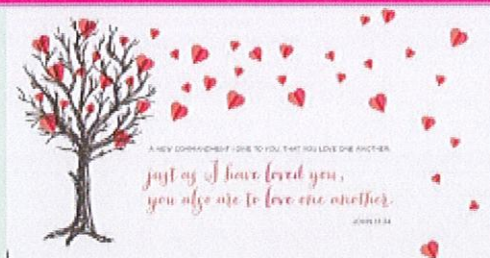
**Childline** Free, confidential support for children and young people: **0800 1111** or [childline.org.uk](https://www.childline.org.uk)

**Samaritans**  
**116 123** [samaritans.org](https://www.samaritans.org)

**Citizens Advice Staffordshire** – Debt, benefits, budgeting  
**0808 278 7874**

**StepChange Debt Charity** – Free debt advice  
**0800 138 1111**





## CEO LETTER Spring 1 2026

All staff have returned this January raring to go and leaders have admirably managed the inclement weather conditions—balancing the decision of opening for an education and enabling parents to go to work and closing due to safety - all balancing risk in their community. So many positive things have taken place from enrichment including children across 7 schools

singing at the NEC, to successful Teams around the School - Curriculum and Business meetings which now have their groove, Directors' and Headteachers' strategic away days and Governors' meetings have all been held, what a vibrant term. Thank you to all the staff, children and families for making it safe and full of learning!

### Meeting with Tim Coulson

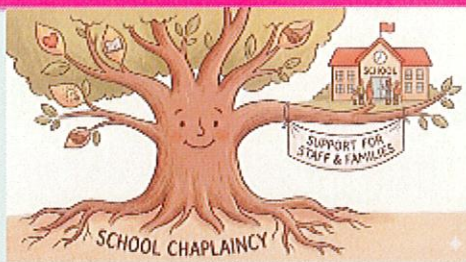


On Friday 23rd January we were pleased to welcome Dr. Tim Coulson (Director General and former Chief Executive of Unity Schools Partnership, a large multi-academyTrust, 40 schools) to Anson. The visit provided a critical opportunity to showcase our operational model and high standards directly to a figure with significant influence within the Department for Education. Accompanied by Nicky Jarrett and Joe Davis, Dr. Coulson spent time in classrooms and held a strategic roundtable covering:

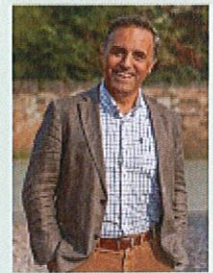
- \* Trust-Wide School Improvement: We detailed our "Champions" movement and the successful transition of staff across the Trust to ensure pedagogical consistency.
- \* Curriculum & Standards: Demonstrating that our academic outcomes remain robust despite the complexities of the current educational landscape.
- \* Operational Viability: A core focus was proving the sustainability of small schools.

All Staff and children were fantastic and Nicky and Joe spoke brilliantly showcasing their school and cross Trust working. Dr. Coulson explicitly noted that our settings serve as a "proof of concept" for the Department for Education—showing that small schools are viable and high-performing when under connected, strategic leadership. A portion of the visit was dedicated to the "sharp end" of school leadership. We were candid regarding 'The SEND & Funding Gap'. Dr. Coulson confirmed he will be feeding back his observations to the Secretary of State, Bridget Phillipson. We hope this visit successfully placed Anson and our Trust "in the lens" of the DfE. By demonstrating our success in community and family working alongside high academic standards, we have reinforced our reputation as a Trust that delivers excellence in challenging contexts. We will continue to use these high-level engagements to advocate for fairer funding while maintaining our current trajectory of improvement.





We are thrilled to announce that Mr Kev. Borg, our previous Co-Chair of the Board of Directors has offered a 10 week chaplaincy service for our Trust schools. Each school will have sent out the timetable and opportunity to book slots for staff, families and our year 6 children.



What a wonderful opportunity for our whole Trust, all seven schools attended the young voices event, the BP pulse arena tonight, it was exceptional, and we are really proud of everyone and grateful to our staff for such a wonderful evening. Thank you for a super time for our children.



Trust worship was held at The Howard this half term and we look forward to Anson's after half term. The Howard led worship in the value of justice, it was excellently planned and delivered, so clear and well organised, thank you to Mr Wynn for leading and the children for a great worship.



It was exciting to be at The Howard at the same time as Steel from Gladiators and we launched our TSSMAT Travelling tales project at The Howard Class 1 which was delivered onto Mary Howard by class 1 and year 6 children and will travel around all 7 EYFS classes between now and July. 'The Traveling Tales is an exciting collaborative literacy project uniting all seven of our Trust's early-years classes. It centers around a single storybook and accompanying activity kit that will journey from school to school. Each class will read the book,



complete the shared activities, and document their work *within* the book, building a shared record of learning. The project culminates in a special handover every few weeks, where Ralph and I transport a group of children from the current school to the next to personally share their contributions, creating a powerful sense of community and shared literary experience across our Trust. This project aims to foster a shared reading culture, enhance collaboration, and create a strong sense of community across all seven schools in the Trust'.







### **Announcement: We've developed our socials!**

We are thrilled to announce the launch of our brand-new Facebook page: **The Staffordshire Schools Multi Academy Trust (TSSMAT)**.

While our individual schools do incredible things on Instagram (and some on Facebook), this new page is where we bring our whole community together. It's a space to celebrate and to showcase the collective success of our seven wonderful schools.

Why your follow matters:

- **Visibility:** A strong following helps us reach new families looking for the right school and talented professionals looking for their next career move.
- **Community:** It's the best way to stay updated on Trust-wide events, news, and the "big picture" of how we are enabling our children to flourish.
- **Support:** Every like, comment, and share boosts our reach, ensuring the "Staffordshire Schools" name is synonymous with excellence across the county.

*Please give us a 'Like' and share our first post to help us grow our digital community from day one! And if you can do this on Instagram too for all our schools, that would be fantastic! Thank you.*



<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/blog/the-importance-of-continuous-provision-in-the-early-years>



### **Showcasing fabulous work**

We are thrilled to see examples of Mrs Anna Coleman Harris' provision, our EYFS leader from St Mary's Primary, in print!



### **A new outfit - bespoke to each school**

Ralph says: "I am such a lucky boy! A lovely family at St Marys gifted me the most wonderful harness set to show I am a very important school dog. I've got a little Velcro tags for each school I visit! It's so comfortable and I love it! Thank you. <https://www.wuffable.com/>" Yes, my mum has declared it as a gift, and a wonderful gift which all the schools, and Ralph, can enjoy.



We wish you a safe and happy February half term, that you manage to have family time juggling working across this period and we hope staff are able to have a rest and look forward to their preparation for a wonderful Spring 2 term to come

Regards, Charlene Gethin, our Central Team. Shanie Cole - Finance Manager  
Jacqui Bowman - Business Operations Manager  
Nic Saint - Project Manager and Clerk to Governors  
and *Ralph*





# 10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

## SUPPORTING SAFE USE OF AI

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is increasingly woven into young people's digital lives. It can offer some educational benefits and day-to-day assistance; however, it also raises concerns about misinformation, privacy, fairness, and safety. This guide provides parents and educators with practical strategies to support young people to navigate AI tools responsibly, and to use them safely and with discernment.

### 1 DEMYSTIFY WHAT AI REALLY IS

Children encounter AI in most online places, including games, streaming platforms, and school tools. Explain that AI uses patterns from past data to make decisions, but it doesn't think or feel like humans. Use age-appropriate examples, like how recommendations on YouTube or Netflix work, to build understanding and prevent false beliefs about AI being all-knowing or alive.

### 2 TALK ABOUT RISKS OF MISINFORMATION

AI can create convincing false information, including deepfake videos, photos, and fake facts. Encourage children to think critically about what they see and read. Teach them to double-check information using reliable sources, to look at images and videos carefully, and to ask an adult if something doesn't seem right.

### 3 DISCUSS DATA AND PRIVACY

Explain that AI systems learn by analysing lots of data, sometimes including personal information. Help young people to be mindful of what they share online and why protecting personal data matters. Model good habits like reading app permissions together or reviewing what's collected by voice assistants like Alexa or Siri.

### 4 ENCOURAGE CREATIVE USE OF AI

Support children, when using AI tools, to explore ideas, make art, or build projects. This fosters confidence, imagination, and independent thinking. When children use AI creatively, rather than just passively consuming it, they are more likely to stay engaged and make thoughtful choices.

### 5 USE AGE-APPROPRIATE AI TOOLS

Not all AI platforms are suitable for children. Choose tools designed for education or creativity, with clear safety policies. Review terms of use and privacy settings, and help children use them in age-appropriate ways. For example, some chatbot tools mimic conversation but should only be used with guidance and boundaries in place.

### 6 USE AI TOGETHER

Exploring AI tools together can help adults understand how they work and spot potential issues. Try co-writing a story with an AI writing assistant or experimenting with an AI art tool. This encourages curiosity, helps you stay informed about the latest AI tools, and allows you to reinforce safe and respectful use while modelling critical thinking.

### 7 SET BOUNDARIES FOR AI USE

Establish when, where, and how AI tools can be used, just as you would with any digital technology. For example, you might agree not to use AI tools to complete school assignments without permission, or to avoid unsupervised use of voice assistants. Consistent boundaries help manage overuse and misuse.

### 8 WATCH FOR OVERRELIANCE

Some AI tools, like homework help apps, may be tempting shortcuts. Encourage children to use AI to support their thinking, not replace it. Celebrate effort and process over perfect answers. Reinforce that mistakes are part of learning and that relying too heavily on AI can limit real understanding.

### 9 TEACH DIGITAL ETHICS AND LITERACY

Help children explore how AI works, where it might be biased, and why ethical thinking matters. Building digital literacy alongside ethical awareness ensures children engage with AI critically, not just conveniently. Help young people to understand that not all people use AI for legitimate purposes; some use it for malicious reasons. Encourage questions about fairness, representation, and who benefits from certain tools; talk about algorithms, echo chambers, and the impact of automation on daily life.

### 10 STAY CURIOUS AND INVOLVED

AI is developing rapidly, and staying informed helps you support the young people in your care. Follow trusted sources for updates and keep the conversation going. If a child brings up a new AI trend or tool, take the opportunity to learn about it together. Showing interest builds trust and strengthens digital resilience.

### Meet Our Expert

Home to the world's largest CPD library for educators, The National College has transformed the way education establishments go about developing their workforces and managing compliance. Our three memberships help all phases and types of setting raise standards, save time, reduce risk, and build a culture of improvement.

#WakeUpWednesday

The National College