

# SELWOOD ACADEMY NEWSLETTER

22nd May 2026 - Issue 14

## DIARY DATES

- 22<sup>nd</sup> May - Last Day of Term
- 25<sup>th</sup> May - Bank Holiday - School Closed
- 26<sup>th</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup> May - Half Term
- 1<sup>st</sup> June - Return to School (Week A)
- 5<sup>th</sup> June - SEND Coffee Morning 11:15am
- 9<sup>th</sup> June - 12<sup>th</sup> June - Battlefields Trip



## Contacting the School

For urgent or time-sensitive matters, email may not always be the quickest way to reach us, as it can take up to 72 hours for messages to be directed to the right department. If you need immediate assistance, please feel free to give the school a call, we're always happy to help!

## Friendly Reminder to Parents and Carers



We would like to gently remind families about our school's first aid procedures. Our trained first aid personnel are only able to treat injuries and accidents that occur during the school day while pupils are in our care. This is because we can only provide very basic treatment, such as applying ice to reduce swelling, which would not be appropriate or effective for older injuries.

For minor injuries that happen at school, we can provide this basic care. If a pupil requires any further medical attention beyond this, we will always contact home to inform you and discuss the next steps.

Thank you for your understanding and support in helping us keep all pupils safe and well.

## IN THIS EDITION

- Reminders
- Diary Dates
- Payment Deadlines
- Update from Head of School
- Careers Spotlight
- School News
- Local Events

## PAYMENT DEADLINES

*Please see ParentPay for amounts due.*

- 22<sup>nd</sup> May - Year 8 Prom
- 29<sup>th</sup> May - Year 8 Thorpe Park Trip (Final Balance)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> June - Year 5 SCARF Life Education Workshops
- 29<sup>th</sup> June - Ski Trip 2027 Instalment 2
- 29<sup>th</sup> June - KS3 Geography Trip to Sicily (Final Balance)
- 17<sup>th</sup> July - Year 5 Swimming Contribution

## Mobile Phone Reminder



Please remind your child that mobile phones should not be taken out or used until they have left the school site at the end of the day.

If a pupil is seen using their phone on the school site, their name will be taken and the phone will be confiscated the following day. Thank you for your support with this matter.

Wishing all our families a lovely half term break!

We look forward to welcoming everyone back on Monday 1st June, Week A.



SELWOOD ACADEMY, BERKLEY ROAD, FROME, BA11 2EF 01373 462798

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# UPDATE FROM HEAD OF SCHOOL

As we wrap up an action-packed Term 5, it's wonderful to reflect on the incredible experiences and achievements of our pupils. From the bright lights of the theatre to the grit and determination shown in the classroom, this term has truly showcased the best of our school community.



## Term 5 Highlights

- **Year 8's Day at the Opera:** We kicked off the term with a spectacular visit to see The Phantom of the Opera. Our Year 8s represented the school brilliantly, soaking up the culture and drama of the West End, whilst also getting to speak to the cast.
- **A Step Back in Time:** Year 7 enjoyed an immersive trip to the Black Country Living Museum, where they explored industrial history and got a real taste of life in the past.
- **Year 6:** Our SATs Superstars: A massive "Well Done" to our Year 6 pupils. They have shown incredible determination and resilience while preparing for their SATs. We are so proud of how they handled the week with such a positive attitude. Congratulations on finishing!
- **Portsmouth Adventures:** To celebrate their hard work, year 6 also headed to Portsmouth for a trip. From maritime history to plenty of laughs with friends, it was a fantastic way to bond and have some well-deserved fun.



## Parent Survey Updates

Thank you to everyone who took the time to complete our recent Parent Survey. Your feedback is vital in helping us shape the future of our school. Based on your input, we are already moving forward with two key areas:

### 1. New Mobile Phone Policy (Coming September)

We are introducing a significant change to our mobile phone policy to continue to ensure a focused, distraction-free learning environment.

- **The Change:** Starting in September, any pupil who chooses to bring a phone to school will be required to use a secure pouch to store it during the school day.
- **Next Steps:** We will provide a detailed policy document and more information on how this will work during term 6.

### 2. Homework Policy Review

We are currently reviewing our approach to homework. Following a very successful trial and positive feedback from parents and pupils, we are changing platforms for English to better support pupil progress. While we believe homework is vitally important, we are carefully considering all survey feedback to ensure it remains meaningful and manageable.



## Term 6

If you thought term 5 was busy, get ready! Term 6 is shaping up to be our biggest yet. Please keep an eye on the calendar for key events:

- **Careers Day:** Inspiring our pupils for the future.
- **Sports Day:** A day of competition, teamwork, and school spirit.
- **More Trips & Celebrations:** We have several more outings and end-of-year events planned to finish the year on a high.

### Transition events



We wish all our families a restful and relaxing half-term break. Thank you for your continued support, and we look forward to seeing everyone back and "ready to go" for the final stretch in term 6!

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# SCHOOL NEWS

## Classroom to Concorde



Our pupils were proud to attend the launch of the 'Classroom to Concorde' initiative at Aerospace Bristol. This industry-backed programme aims to tackle the UK's engineering and design skills gap by strengthening links between schools and leading businesses, while celebrating the region's rich heritage of innovation.

Supported by organisations such as the James Dyson Foundation and Samsung, it offers schools access to high-quality resources, teacher training, and meaningful industry engagement. The event gave our pupils valuable insight into how their learning connects to real-world careers in engineering, design, and manufacturing.

## Gardening Club

Our pupils have been taking part in Gardening Club and are making a real difference to the school grounds. Through their hard work and enthusiasm, they have been planting flowers, tidying outdoor spaces, and helping to create a more welcoming environment for everyone to enjoy.

It has been wonderful to see their teamwork, responsibility, and pride in improving the school environment. Well done to all involved for their fantastic efforts!



# SCHOOL NEWS

## News from the Stage



Congratulations to Jessica and Poppy on their recent performance in ***The Wizard of Oz*** at the Memorial Theatre. What a fabulous show! You both should be incredibly proud of your performances. Well done to everyone involved in bringing such a wonderful production to the stage.

Jessica has been incredibly busy, going on to deliver a stunning performance in ***The Biggest Night of the Musicals*** at the Warminster Athenaeum. Well done Jessica!

## SATs Success

A huge well done to all of Year 6 for their commitment, resilience and hard work during their recent SATs assessments. The children approached each test with a positive attitude and gave their very best effort throughout the four days. They should be incredibly proud of themselves.

To celebrate their dedication and to recognise the effort they put in, Year 6 were treated to a well-deserved ice cream on the Friday after the SATs tests. It was a lovely way to mark the end of a challenging week and enjoy some time together as a year group.

Well done, Year 6! Keep up the fantastic effort!



# SCHOOL NEWS

## Portsmouth Dockyard Trip

After completing their SATs exams, Year 6 had an exciting trip to Portsmouth Historic Dockyard to look forward to. The visit provided a fantastic opportunity for the children to learn outside the classroom and enjoy a well earned experience together.

Over the two days, the pupils represented the school brilliantly and behaved exceptionally well throughout. They showed great enthusiasm, curiosity, and respect while exploring the historic site and taking part in the activities.

It was a thoroughly enjoyable trip and a wonderful way to celebrate their hard work during SATs. Well done, Year 6! A great experience all round!



## Wacky Tie Day

Wacky Tie Day brought a wonderful splash of colour and creativity to the school, with a whole host of bright patterns, bold designs, and imaginative ties on display throughout the day. The event was a great success and raised a fantastic amount for Dorothy House in memory of Andrew March. It was a special way for the school community to come together in support of such an important cause.

Thank you to everyone who took part and contributed so generously.



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# CAREERS SPOTLIGHT



## Cybersecurity Specialist



### *What do they do?*

A cybersecurity specialist protects computer systems, networks and data from cyber threats such as hacking, phishing, malware, and data breaches. They work to prevent attacks, detect vulnerabilities, and respond to incidents to minimise damage and recover systems quickly.

### *Key skills needed:*

They need strong technical knowledge of networks, operating systems (like Windows and Linux), and cybersecurity tools such as firewalls, intrusion detection systems, and encryption software. Programming skills are useful for automating tasks and analysing security data. Key soft skills include problem-solving, attention to detail, and communication skills to explain risks and solutions clearly to non-technical colleagues.

### *What do they do day to day?*

Their daily work often involves monitoring security systems and logs to detect suspicious activity, such as unusual logins or data transfers. They investigate alerts, respond to cyber incidents and help contain or remove threats if a breach occurs. They also run vulnerability scans, apply security patches and updates and test system defences through simulated attacks. In addition, they may write security reports, update policies, and train staff on topics like phishing awareness and password safety. Keeping up with the latest cyber threats and security trends is a constant part of the role.



### *How do you become one?*

Many cybersecurity specialists start with a degree in cybersecurity, computer science, or information technology, although it is possible to enter through alternative routes. A common pathway is beginning in entry-level IT roles such as support technician or network administrator and gaining experience over time. Industry certifications like CompTIA Security+, Certified Ethical Hacker (CEH), and CISSP are widely recognised and can significantly improve job prospects. Practical experience through labs, internships, or cybersecurity challenges is also highly valued.



### *Why is this job important?*

Cybersecurity specialists are vital because nearly every organisation relies on digital systems that store sensitive data, from personal information to financial records and national infrastructure. Cyberattacks can cause serious harm, including financial loss, identity theft, and disruption to essential services. As attacks become more frequent and sophisticated, cybersecurity professionals help protect systems, maintain trust in digital services, and ensure businesses and public services can operate safely.

# What Parents & Educators Need to Know about MINECRAFT

As the best-selling game in history, Minecraft has made a name for itself by empowering audiences of all ages to harness their creativity. Originally an indie hit, it's become a cultural phenomenon with merchandise, spin-off titles, and wider media adaptations. Even if you don't know your Creepers from your Endermen, this guide will explore the risks of Minecraft in 2026 and explain how to support a safe gaming experience for the children in your care.

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### PUBLIC SERVER COMMUNICATION

Many players enjoy Minecraft with others, including friends and unknown players online. In-game text chat is commonly used to coordinate building projects and gameplay, and this can extend to adding friends to voice chat. While often harmless, this creates risks around contact with strangers, and in some cases server hosts may expose IP addresses (if hosting independently), which raises privacy and security concerns.

### GRIEFING BEHAVIOUR

Some players deliberately damage or destroy other players' creations. This behaviour, known as 'griefing', is a form of bullying that can undo hours of effort and cause frustration or distress to affected players. Although many servers treat griefing as a serious offence, enforcement varies. Children who prefer to build independently may feel safer working on private worlds or controlled servers.

### ADDICTIVE GAMEPLAY LOOPS

Minecraft's creative focus can make it easy for players to lose track of time. The cycle of gathering resources and building projects can be highly engaging, which may challenge agreed screen-time limits. If not managed effectively, this can impact children's sleep, schoolwork, and real-world social interaction.

### SCARY GAME ELEMENTS

Although often compared to digital construction toys, some gameplay modes include hostile creatures with unsettling sounds and sudden encounters. While there is no graphic violence, younger players may still find zombies, spiders, or dark environments frightening. These experiences can lead to anxiety or reluctance to play, depending on the child's age and sensitivity.

### IN-GAME SPENDING

Minecraft requires a one-off purchase after a free trial, usually around £15, but additional spending is possible. Players can buy cosmetic content or subscribe to Minecraft 'Realms' for private servers. Without supervision, children may make unintended purchases. Subscription services and add-ons can also increase overall costs over time if not monitored.

### ONLINE INTERACTIONS

Playing with others can introduce broader online safety concerns, including exposure to inappropriate language or behaviour. Some players may attempt to move conversations beyond the game, which can increase risks to children's safety and welfare. Children may not always recognise these situations, meaning guidance and ongoing conversations about safe interactions are essential.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### CHOOSE SUITABLE GAME MODES

Creative or Peaceful modes remove hostile creatures and reduce the pressure during gameplay. These options allow children to focus on building and exploration without fear of attack. They are also ideal for shared play between adults and children, creating a calmer environment to learn the game and enjoy collaborative projects.

### USE PRIVATE SERVERS

Setting up a private server helps control who can join a child's game. Access can be limited to trusted friends through passwords or invitations. This reduces the likelihood of unwanted interactions and gives adults greater oversight. While some options involve a subscription fee, they offer a safer and more controlled multiplayer experience.

### DISCUSS ONLINE STRANGERS

Children should understand that not everyone they meet online is who they claim to be. Clear guidance about not sharing personal information is essential. Encourage children to report any worrying or uncomfortable interactions and reassure them that they can seek help without fear of punishment. Open, ongoing conversations help build their confidence and awareness of these issues.

### SET SPENDING BOUNDARIES

Agree on clear rules around purchases before letting children play, and use device settings or platform controls to restrict spending within agreed limits. Explaining that in-game currency uses real-world money can help children make informed decisions. Regularly reviewing purchases together can also prevent unexpected costs and encourage responsible behaviour.

### Meet Our Expert

Lloyd Coombes spent 7 years in games media, before moving into the games industry via PR and marketing. A parent himself to a Minecraft-loving son, he understands why it's so important to stay safe online.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

# 10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

## HELPING NEURODIVERGENT CHILDREN NAVIGATE THE ONLINE WORLD

Neurodivergent people tend to be early adopters of technology, and many influential innovators in this space are neurodivergent themselves. It's therefore likely that a neurodivergent child or young person may be drawn to the online world from an early age. This isn't a concern in itself, but understanding both the benefits and potential risks is essential. Here are ten key considerations to support safe and positive online experiences for neurodivergent children.

### 1 TREAT ONLINE LIKE THE REAL WORLD

You wouldn't allow a child to cross a road without guidance – you'd hold their hand, use a pedestrian crossing, and model safe behaviour. In the same way, a neurodivergent child's first experiences online should be supported by an adult who can guide and explain safe and responsible digital behaviour to them from the outset.

### 2 MODEL RESPONSIBLE USE

Children learn from what they see. Show all children, regardless of neurotype, what responsible internet use looks like. Reflect on your own use of social media and AI. Consider how often you use them and your own understanding of these platforms. Talk openly about when and why you use these tools, helping all children develop a balanced and informed approach.

### 3 KNOW YOUR LIMITS

Current government guidance suggests no solo screen use below the age of two, with a maximum of one hour per day for two- to five-year-olds. Screen time can support communication and connection when shared with an adult. However, passive watching can affect neurodivergent children's attention and language skills. Focus on the type of content they watch, encouraging slower-paced and meaningful material rather than fast-paced, overstimulating content.

### 4 CONSIDER AGES AND STAGES

For older children and teenagers, agreed limits are important. Screen time can be beneficial, but it should form part of a balanced lifestyle. Neurodivergent children may find online communication easier than real-world conversation, supporting their social interaction. However, it shouldn't be their only option. Encourage a range of activities, including creative play, physical exercise, and opportunities for real-world connections.

### 5 KEEP CONVERSATIONS OPEN

Discussions about online safety should begin early and continue as children grow. However, neurodivergent children may worry about getting things wrong or being misunderstood, meaning these kinds of conversations should feel open and fair, rather than like a lecture. If a child encounters a problem – such as a scam or inappropriate content – they need to feel able to speak to a trusted adult without fear of judgement or embarrassment.

### 6 BUILD YOUR KNOWLEDGE

You aren't expected to be an expert, but it's important to stay informed about the platforms, games, or apps neurodivergent children use in order to provide practical support. Social media platforms have age limits, and many apps and games offer parental settings that can control access. Schools and families should work together to understand these tools, helping neurodivergent children use them safely while keeping up to date with new features and changes.

### 7 SET CLEAR BOUNDARIES

Children and young people often know more about current technology than adults, meaning it's important to recognise that controls may be bypassed. Clear, predictable boundaries should be used, based on trust and consistency. Involving children in discussions that affect them helps them feel heard. This is particularly important for neurodivergent children, who may respond strongly to perceived unfairness.

### 8 UNDERSTAND AI CONTENT

The internet now includes large amounts of AI-generated content, including images, videos, and stories. These can be difficult to identify. Children should be encouraged to question what they see and check the information using trusted sources. Neurodivergent children may interpret content literally, meaning adult guidance is important in helping them recognise what's real and reliable – and what isn't.

### 9 EXPLAIN AI LIMITATIONS

AI isn't the same as a search engine. It generates responses based on prompts and patterns, and its accuracy depends on how it's used. Sometimes, it produces incorrect or unrealistic information, known as 'hallucinations'. Both adults and children need to understand this and learn how to check information carefully using reliable and trusted sources.

### 10 CLARIFY AI RELATIONSHIPS

AI can feel conversational and personal, but it's not capable of real relationships. It learns from patterns in user input rather than human understanding. Some neurodivergent children may experience a sense of connection with AI chatbots, particularly if they find social situations challenging. It's therefore important to explain that these are simulated conversations and aren't a substitute for real, human relationships.

## Meet Our Expert

Catrina Lowri is a neurodivergent former SENCO and Advisory Teacher who works with nurseries, schools, colleges, and businesses to improve inclusion for neurodivergent people. She is the Founder and Director of Neuroteachers and the author of "The Other 29 – How Supporting Your Neurodivergent Learner Can Improve Teaching and Learning for the Whole Class".



See full reference list on our website

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# What Parents & Educators Need to Know about ONLINE GROOMING

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Online grooming is when someone builds a relationship with a child or young person online to gain their trust for the purpose of sexual abuse, exploitation, radicalisation, or criminal activity – such as county lines or financial scams. According to the NSPCC, police in the UK recorded over 7,000 offences involving sexual communication with a child in a single year – an increase of 89% since 2017/18.

## STRANGERS USING FAKE IDENTITIES

Groomers often pose as children or teenagers online to build trust. They may create convincing fake profiles, share photos stolen from real people, or mimic the interests of the child. By pretending to be someone their age, they make conversations feel safe and relatable. Over time, they may ask for personal details, photos, or suggest meeting in person, exposing children to significant emotional and physical harm.

## EXPLOITATION THROUGH GIFTS AND FLATTERY

To gain trust quickly, groomers often send gifts, gaming credits, or money. Alongside material offerings, they use excessive compliments, affection, and attention to create emotional dependency. These tactics make children feel valued and special, lowering their defences. Once trust is secured, groomers may escalate their requests, often asking for photos or private conversations, making the child feel pressured or indebted to continue.

## GROUP CHATS AS HIDDEN PATHWAYS

Unmonitored group chats on platforms like WhatsApp or Discord provide a cover for groomers. They can watch how children interact, identify those who seem vulnerable, and then move conversations into private messaging. This transition makes detection difficult for trusted adults. The seemingly harmless group setting often masks the presence of predators, giving children a false sense of security.

## THE RISE OF SEXTORTION

Sextortion involves pressuring children into sharing explicit content, then blackmailing them for more. Offenders may claim to have hacked a child's device, threaten to share images with friends or family, or demand money. Many victims remain silent out of fear and shame. This growing crime is particularly dangerous because children often feel trapped, believing there's no safe way to escape the situation.

## GAMING PLATFORMS AS GROOMING GATEWAYS

Games like Roblox, Fortnite, or Call of Duty, which include live chat features, are frequent targets for groomers. Conversations often begin casually during gameplay and can become manipulative over time. Groomers may offer in-game gifts, credits, or exclusive add-ons to build rapport. Children using headsets or private chat features are especially at risk, as conversations are harder for adults to monitor.

## CRIMINAL & RADICALISATION RISKS

Grooming is not always sexual. Some offenders manipulate children into criminal activities such as drug running or online fraud. Others attempt to radicalise young people with extreme ideologies. Groomers often use fear, money, shame, or promises of belonging to control their victims. These forms of exploitation can be just as harmful as sexual grooming, and often leave lasting psychological and social consequences.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### KEEP CONVERSATIONS REGULAR

Rather than having one "big talk" about online safety, weave conversations into everyday life. Ask questions about children's online friendships and interests. Share real-life examples to make discussions relatable and encourage honesty instead of secrecy. When children feel comfortable discussing their digital lives, they are far more likely to share concerns or admit when something feels wrong, reducing the chance of risky interactions going unnoticed.

### UNDERSTAND THE PLATFORMS CHILDREN USE

Take time to learn about the apps, games, and social platforms children are on. Familiarise yourself with privacy settings, parental controls, and group chat features. Use resources like The National College guides or conduct quick searches to stay updated. By understanding how these platforms operate, you'll be better equipped to set boundaries, guide safe use, and notice any unusual or concerning online behaviour early.

### CREATE A "TELL ME" CULTURE

Children often keep silent because they fear being punished or losing access to their devices. Reassure them that coming forward with concerns won't get them into trouble. Emphasise that you are there to help, not judge. Creating a safe, open environment encourages children to speak up if something feels wrong, and helps to ensure they don't suffer in silence when facing potential grooming risks.

### STAY ALERT TO WARNING SIGNS

Be attentive to both behavioural and digital red flags. Sudden secrecy, mood swings, or new online contacts may signal a problem. Watch for unexplained gifts, new social media profiles, or changes in sleep patterns. Increased anxiety or reluctance to attend school can also be indicators. Regularly checking in and showing interest in those whom they communicate with online help prevent small issues from escalating into serious risks.

### Meet Our Expert

Staffordshire Police is dedicated to keeping people safe and tackling crime across both the physical and digital world. The force continues to strengthen its digital investigation and safeguarding capabilities to protect children and vulnerable people online, working in partnership with local, regional and national organisations, schools, and the wider community.



# TEA & TOASTIES



**FREE AFTER-SCHOOL DRINKS & SNACKS. JUST DROP IN.**

Ages 12-16



**Tea and toast.  
Friendly faces. No pressure.**

Relax with free drinks, toast and snacks in an easy-going, space with supportive youth workers. Spend time with friends or just take a breather — there's no pressure to talk or join in.

**FREE**

## **TUESDAYS**

**Good Heart Cafe**  
7 Palmer Street, Frome  
**3:30-5:30pm**  
(term time only)

## **WEDNESDAYS**

**Key Centre**  
Feltham Lane, Frome  
**3:30-5:30pm**  
(term time only)

Staff and volunteers onsite to listen and to share information about local youth support options.



[purpleelephant.org.uk](http://purpleelephant.org.uk)

**FROME RFC**

# U12s BOYS

(CURRENT YEAR 7)



# TOUCH RUGBY



**A FUN, FAST AND SOCIAL NON-CONTACT VERSION OF THE GAME.**



**NO TACKLING NO SCRUMS EVERYONE PLAYS**



**DEVELOP SKILLS MAKE FRIENDS HAVE FUN**

**STARTING THURSDAY 14TH MAY 6PM - 7PM FOR BOYS ONLY CURRENT YEAR 7 (U12s)**



**EVERY THURSDAY\* 6PM - 7PM AT FROME RFC**