## SELWOOD ACADEMY NEWSLETTER

16th November 2025 - Issue 6

### DIARY DATES

- 18th Dec- Christmas
   Lunch and Jumper Day
- 17th Dec Carol Service
   -7pm St Johns Church
- 9th January Y5 Coffee afternoon 2.15
- 12th-14th Jan- Harry Potter Trip
- 15<sup>th</sup> Jan-Year 8 HPV vaccines

### **PAYMENT DEADLINES**

• 16th Jan - Battlefields Trip Instalment 3

# CHRISTMAS

We hope that all pupils, parents, carers and staff have a wonderful Christmas break!

### IN THIS EDITION

- Reminders
- Recent Events
- School News
- Useful info
- Head of school Update

### **REMINDERS**

#### **LOST PROPERTY**

We will be emptying our lost property at the end of term and we have lots of unnamed items. Please ask your child to check if they have lost something. Parents and carers are also welcome to come into school to look, please report to reception upon arrival.

### **END OF TERM REMINDER**

The last day of term is **Friday 19th December 2025**. Pupils will finish early **at 12.05pm.** The first day back will be

on Monday **5**<sup>th</sup> **January 2026.** We will

return on **Week 2** 

#### **WRAP AROUND CARE**

Premier Education will still be running their wrap around sessions this week, except for Friday evening due to the early finish.

# UPDATE FROM HEAD OF SCHOOL

Dear Parents and Guardians,

What a wonderfully busy and successful term we have shared! Our pupils have shown incredible dedication across all areas.

This term was filled with achievements, starting with a successful Interform Competition and excellent performances at multiple sports fixtures, including outstanding efforts in the Cross Country Trials. Year 8 enjoyed an inspiring trip to the University of Bath, looking ahead to their future studies.

In the community, we celebrated the festive season with a spectacular Lantern Parade showcasing the amazing creations by our pupils. Every pupil enjoyed the Pantomime, and Year 5 put on a charming Nativity performance. Our dedicated School Choir spread cheer by singing carols at the hospital and for local charities/care homes and will tomorrow be singing at the school Carol Service at the church. Our Christmas Fair was a huge success, thanks to generous donations from our 'Break a Rule Day', and we finish this term with a very packed hall for the Christmas Dinners on Thursday.

We wish our entire school community a Happy, Healthy, and Peaceful Christmas holiday!

We start the new term with great excitement: In Week 2, Year 5 will be off to Harry Potter World! The highly anticipated School Ski Trip takes place at the end of the term, and we will soon begin our Subject Parent Meetings.

We look forward to welcoming everyone back in the New Year for an exciting Term 3!

With best wishes, Mr Finlay

## REMINDERS



Our Christmas Lunch this year will be held on **Thursday 18th December**, and we're inviting everyone to bring the festive cheer by wearing their most joyful, colourful, or wonderfully ridiculous Christmas jumpers. If you haven't booked a Christmas Lunch for your child, please remember to send them in with a packed lunch, as no other meal options will be available on the day. Let's turn the hall into a sea of twinkling tinselled knitwear!

## Spring Term Clybs

Please see the new club list that has been sent by email. A copy will also be available on our website If you wish to sign up your child to any of the clubs you will need to do so via the Arbor Parent App or Portal in the Activities section. Access to this section will be opened up on the morning of **Monday 05 January 2026**. All clubs that are open for sign up and your child is eligible for will be listed.

As spaces can be limited please only sign your child up for a club that they are interested in and can commit to attending each session and does not clash with any other activity/club that they are taking part in.

The majority of Spring Term clubs start in the week commencing **Monday 12**January 2026 and finish in the week ending Friday 27 March 2026 but please do check the dates for yourself so you are aware of any variances. Information about what dates each individual club will be running will be available on Arbor Parent App. Most clubs will continue to run for the whole term so there will be no need to sign up your child again after the half-term holiday.

If you need help or have any queries about clubs please contact the school by phone or email.

## Interform







On Tuesday 25th and Wednesday 26th November, Selwood Academy's PE Department hosted an exciting Interform Competition, bringing together pupils from across the school for two lessons of teamwork, skill, and friendly rivalry. With help from tutors, each form group was divided into three teams who then competed in either benchball, tag rugby, or netball.

From the first whistle to the final point, pupils demonstrated outstanding attitude and effort. It was fantastic to see everyone supporting one another, showing great sportsmanship, and giving their very best in every game. We were also lucky with the weather, which stayed dry.

All teams performed brilliantly, making the results very close. The final standings will be revealed during the Year Group Rewards Assemblies at the end of term.

A huge thank you goes to all pupils who took part with such enthusiasm, and to the staff and tutors who helped organise and run the event so smoothly.

Well done, everyone!

## ESFA County Qualifiers



On Monday 10th November, our Year 5 & 6 girls travelled to Strode College to represent Selwood Academy in the ESFA County Qualifiers. Despite narrowly missing out on qualification, the girls demonstrated excellent teamwork and skill, scoring some incredible goals and winning two of their matches. Well done!

## Cross Country Success

On Wednesday 26th, thirteen pupils from Years 7 and 8 travelled to Millfield School to take part in the Mendip Schools Cross Country Championships. In the weeks leading up to the event, we held a series of trials, and the top runners were selected to represent Selwood.

All pupils performed fantastically well, with an impressive eleven qualifying to represent Mendip Schools in the County Championships to be held in January — a tremendous achievement! Our Year 8 pupils were also competing in the same age category as Year 9s, making their qualification even more remarkable.

A special mention goes to Martha in Year 6, who bravely ran up a year group against the Year 7s and finished an outstanding 4th.

#### Qualifiers for the county trials:

Year 7 girls: Martha, BB, Amelie

Year 7 boys: Leonardo, Tom, Sid, Josh, Aaron

Junior Girls: Eva

Junior Boys: Noah, Mykhailo

A massive well done to all who competed. You represented Selwood brilliantly, and we are incredibly proud of your hard work and determination.



## Year & Football

On 3rd December our year 8 boys football team made the long trip to Wadham school (near Yeovil) for our county cup match.

We arrived in good spirits and ready for the challenge. We won the toss and chose to play down hill, the opposition were well organised and started well putting us under pressure.

They scored an early goal, but we didn't give up and grew in confidence. We managed to get the ball forward quickly scoring the equaliser from a corner.

We went in level at the break after both teams scoring a second.

Unfortunately the opposition managed to outscore us in the second half and we ended up losing the match 5-3, despite and late rally to come back.

The attitude of the team was fantastic and we never gave up.

Well done to all involved.

## Year & Rugby Round Up

We have had a really good rugby season so far.

The team have had 3 matches against Millfield, Clarendon and Kingdown.

The help from Paul Lovett from Frome RFC has given us consistency to train every Tuesday and I have seen a remarkable improvement in both skill and commitment. We have also welcomed some new players, which has boosted the squad.

Our first match of the season saw us beat a strong Millfield team. Our latest match saw us travel to Clarendon. This was a tough Match where we ended up outscoring the opposition 5 tries to 4. We displayed some very good rugby, supporting each other and working to our strengths.

On Tuesday 9th December, our year 8's were supposed to travel to Kingdown, however the weather got the better of the pitch and the opposition called the game off. We are hoping to arrange year 8 and year 7 games against Kingdown in the new year.

I would like to say a big thankyou to all the players for their commitment to training and the team. We will continue rugby club for year 7 and 8 on Tuesday after Christmas and Year's 5 & 6 on Thursdays after Christmas.

Have a great Break!
Mr Hershbein

## Maths update

- **Year 5** is moving forward in their 'operations' concept by learning the formal methods for multiplication and division.
- Year 6 has completed their block on measure and transformations and has now started a key concept block on fractions.
- Year 7 is completing their addition and subtraction concepts, with some groups having successfully transitioned to multiplication and division.
- Year 8 is completing their geometry concept, focusing on understanding straight-line graphs in the form \$y=mx+c\$ and learning how to calculate the midpoints of line segments.

Parent Challenge Questions: Christmas edition!

### **Twelve Days of Christmas**

- How many gifts were given on each day?
- 2) How many gifts were given in total?
- 3) How many of each gift were given?

## A HUGE Thank You...



We are incredibly grateful to Chase de Vere for their generous donation of laptops, preinstalled with Windows 11, to our school.
This wonderful contribution will enhance our students' learning experience and provide valuable resources to support their education. A special thank you to the parent from Chase de Vere for facilitating this kind and impactful gift. Together, we continue to create an enriching environment where every pupil can thrive and let their light shine!

## Trampolining Success

Celebrating Carlia Gibb – Southwest
Veteran Champion!
Our very own Carlia Gibb took part in a
trampolining competition — and we're
thrilled to share that she is now the
Southwest Veteran Champion!
This achievement is especially inspiring, as
it took real courage for Carlia to return to
trampolining after a long time away from
the sport. We are incredibly proud of her
determination, commitment, and positivity.
Carlia also shared her heartfelt gratitude
for the fantastic support from her coaches,
which has played a big part in her success.



A huge congratulations to Carlia from all of us—what an amazing accomplishment!

# Smartphone free childhood - Keeping children happy

We're in the middle of a teenage mental health crisis. Teenagers are experiencing far more instances of debilitating anxiety and depression. Research shows that the earlier a child has a smartphone, and the more time they spend on it, the worse the outcomes:

- Children with problematic use are 2× more likely to have anxiety and 3× more likely to have depression1
- Five or more hours a day brings a 40% chance of clinical depression2.
- The average 13–15-year-old spends over 5 hours a day3 on their phone.

Platforms are designed to be addictive. Prepubescent children lack the brain development needed to manage this, leaving them especially vulnerable.

Please think about the use of Smart phones with your child/children. If you wish to find out more please follow the link

Smartphone free childhood

## Year 5 Nativity



Our Year 5 pupils delivered a truly fantastic Nativity performance — they let their light shine on stage, and we are all incredibly proud of them! Their hard work, confidence and joy made it a wonderfully festive evening for everyone.

A huge thank you to Lidl Frome and Sainsbury's Frome for their generous donations of mince pies and mulled wine, which added an extra touch of Christmas cheer to the event.

Well done, Year 5 — you were brilliant!



Fair Frome

Real People, Real Projects, Real Difference

We're a warm space 4:30pm 6:30pm

### **FOOD AT FIVE**

Mondays-Key Centre, The Mount
Wednesdays-Frome Cricket Club
Thursdays- Trinity Church Hall
Hot freshly cooked meals served
with dessert at 5pm
Vegetarian and takeaways available
too (please bring containers)
Hot drinks available
Suggested donation: £1 per meal
Please contact us if you have any
dietary requirements

Just turn
up,
everyone is
welcome!



## Pop-Up Winter Cafe

at The Key Centre



A warm space for anyone in the community to spend time.

FREE home-cooked meals, snacks, hot drinks, creative activities, games for all ages and always a friendly welcome.

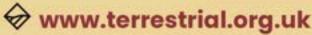
Mondays - Fridays in December & January 10.30am - 4.30pm (2.30pm Fridays)











### your nearest multi-activity camp

Venue: The Key Centre, Frome, Somerset, BA11 5AJ

Dates: Mon 22 & Tue 23 Dec 2025 & Fri 2 Jan 2026

Times:9-3pm (9-1pm for 4 year olds)

Price: £22.82 9-3pm 9-1pm - £13.84 per day

Ages: 4-11

Additional info:\*\*Sibling discount available\*\*



Our Holiday Camps keep children active, safe, and entertained throughout the school holidays.

Join us this Winter as we offer a wide range of fun activities, including sports, performing arts, and games, all at great value. There's something for every child to enjoy as they start 2026!

**Book now** for a holiday full of excitement!

## camps are better with friends!



treat your friends to 20% off...and get 20% off too!

\*Ts&Csapply.ReferaFrienddiscountonnewbookings only.









Supporting My Child's Emotional Wellbeing Through Creativity

Palmer Street, Frome | January - May

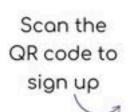
Does yourchildoftenseemanxious, distressedorunhappy? Are you

#### looking for ways to support their emotional wellbeing at home?

Learn, with yourchild, how to process and expressemotionsthrough various forms of creativity. With an emphasis on self-directed creativity and non-judgment, this course will teach you how to give your child the space and the tools they need to explore their own e m o tions. This approach is particularly beneficial for children who find it hard to communicate their feelings verbally.

- For children aged 7 11
- All materials will be provided
- · Children must be supervised at all times
- Sign up online for a trial Starter course

Mondays | 4 – 5.30pm | 3 courses From 12<sup>th</sup> January 2026





\*Please see our website for eligibility information

Book online, or call us

sslcourses.co.uk 0330 332 7997







### What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

## TOYSCALPING FAKES & SCAM

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Online scalping is when individuals or groups use automated software (bots) to bulk-buy high-demand items - such as gaming consoles, concert tickets, limited-edition trainers, or exclusive merchandise – with the intention of reselling them at vastly inflated prices. It's a fast-moving online trend that can frustrate young consumers and expose them to misleading practices or financial harm. As this unethical tactic grows, it's important to help children and young people understand how scalping works and how to navigate it responsibly

### FINANCIAL PRESSURE AND MANIPULATION

up large quantities of stock before the public has a fair chance to purchase. This drives up demand and pushes prices to extreme levels Young people may feel intense pressure to

### **EXPLOITATION OF FANDOMS**

strong fan bases, knowing that loyal followers are emotionally invested. Children and young people may place huge value on owning certain items linked to their favourite artists, sports teams or games, making them more likely to

### ACCESSING UNSAFE

In the rush to secure rare items, young people might click through to unverified sellers, online marketplaces with little consumer protection, or even sites designed specifically to harvest ersonal and financial data. This can expose them to fraud, malware, and identity theft

#### NORMALISING UNETHICAL **BEHAVIOUR**

communities present scalping as a clever money-making scheme rather than an exploitative one. This can normalise dishonest behaviour and blur the line between legitimate younger audiences.

### RISK OF SCAMS OR COUNTERFEIT GOODS

Not every high-priced resale is legitimate Fraudulent sellers may take payment for goods they never send, or ship counterfeit versions of branded items. In some cases, the product may look authentic in photos but turn out to be of poor quality or completely different from what was advertised.

#### REINFORCING INEQUALITY



Scalping makes already expensive items even ess accessible, particularly for lower-income or shared experiences with friends if their family cannot meet the inflated prices, which can lead to with feelings of isolation and disappointment.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

#### TALK ABOUT ONLINE FAIRNESS

Use scalping as an opportunity to discuss fairness, consumer ethics, and how some people exploit markets for profit. Encouraging children to think critically about whether they truly need an item – and at what cost – can

#### SUPPORT INFORMED PURCHASING

Show children how to check seller credentials, read independent reviews, and verify whether a site is secure before making any payment. Knowing how to spot red flags, such as unrealistic promises or missing contact

#### **ENCOURAGE PATIENCE OVER IMPULSE**

Teach young people to wait for official restocks or future releases instead of paying over the odds. Many products come back into circulation, and patience can save significant amounts of money while reducing the likelihood of falling victim to scams.

#### SET SPENDING BOUNDARIES

TOY2-MOTOGRALE MET.RV

ULTRA CONSOLE PRO

Establish clear rules for online spending, including limits on prep cards, gaming gift cards, and online wallets. Discuss the real-wond value of money spent on digital or collector's items so children understand the long-term impact of their purchases

#### 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.





The National College'

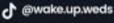
Secret Cool fall releases list on quite page at







(O) @wake.up.wednesday



### What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

WHAT ARE THE RISKS? This festive season, the newest toys on the shelves do not just blink or make noise; they listen. Many now come with artificial intelligence (AI), allowing them to talk, learn, and even respond to a child's emotions. These toys can be educational and engaging, but they also collect, store, and process  $% \left( 1\right) =\left( 1\right) \left( 1\right)$ information. This guide explains what that means for families and why it matters

#### TOYS THAT LISTEN AND LEARN

When a toy uses AI, it collects data such as voice recordings, interactions, and background sounds. This information is sent to remote servers, where it is analysed to improve responses. Your child's voice becomes training data, which may be stored indefinitely or shared with third parties.

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#### **WEAK SECURITY PROTECTIONS**

Some Al toys have poor password protection or open network connections. Others may have microphones or cameras that stay on, even when the toy appears to be off. This can lead to including conversations unrelated to play.

### ARTIFICIAL VOICES,

For very young children, an Al companion may become one of the first voices they interact with regularly. How that voice shows humour, empathy, or authority can shape how a child learns to communicate. If the model is artificial,



### KEEP ENGAGING

engagement, encouraging children to interact more. When children compare how their toys perform, it creates pressure to play more often. This increases the amount of data collected and can make learning feel like competition.

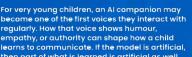
### MARKETING THROUGH PLAY

Toys that learn a child's preferences may feed that data into future advertising. A toy that knows a child's favourite colour or hobby could help a company design more targeted

### PLAYTIME AS DATA TRAINING

The information collected from children helps train Al systems. Their voice, emotional responses, and behaviour shape how machines 'understand' people. Play becomes part of a much larger system that influences how future technologies behave.

## REAL INFLUENCE



## Advice for Parents & Educators

#### START WITH A CONVERSATION

Talk to young people. Explain that some toys learn from what they say and do. Help them understand that even friendly technology should have boundaries, and to ask questions about it. Curiosity is healthy, blind trust is not



#### SET LIMITS ON USE

Turn off Wi-Fi or Bluetooth when the toy is not in use. Check for updates regularly, as they can change privacy or safety settings. Treat connected toys like any smart device; they should be monitored, updated, and switched off when not in use

#### MODEL DIGITAL AWARENESS

Children learn from adults. If they see you checking privacy settings, reading terms, and talking openly about online safety, they are more

#### RESEARCH BEFORE YOU BUY

Look for toys that work offline or store data locally how it behaves. Read privacy policies to understand what data is collected, where it goes. and whether it's shared with others

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#### REVIEW PRIVACY SETTINGS

Find out where the data is stored and who has with advertisers. If the toy connects through an app, check what it requests access to and limit those permissions whenever possible

#### BALANCE AI WITH REAL PLAY

Al toys can be fun and creative, but they are Encourage time away from technology with activities that foster emotional and social d Use Al toys to support learning, not define it

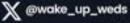
#### Meet Our Expert

Clara Hawking is Executive Director of Kompass Education. She advises governments, school trusts, and global organisations on Al governance and safeguarding, helping schools and families understand how technology shapes learning, wellbeing, and the digital future of children





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