

News from Abbey Park School

Term 1 - October 2024



'Potential into Performance'



**The Park
Academies
Trust**



Message from the Head of School

'Potential into Performance'

Dear Parents and Carers,

This term has been filled with diverse experiences that have not only enriched our pupils' learning but have also fostered a strong sense of community and collaboration among our staff, pupils, and families. I would like to take this opportunity to share some of the highlights.

At the beginning of September, we opened our doors to prospective parents and pupils during our Open Mornings and Evenings. It was a pleasure to showcase our vibrant school community and provide insights into the subjects and activities we offer. Our pupils were exemplary ambassadors, guiding tours and assisting in departments. Our Head Boy and Head Girl both gave fantastic speeches to pupils and their parents; it can be a nerve-wracking experience standing up and speaking in front of large audiences but they did brilliantly. The positive feedback received from parents was a testament to our pupils' dedication and pride in our school, embodying what it means to be APS Proud!

Our new Year 7 cohort have had a strong start. We recognise that the transition from primary to secondary school can be both exciting and scary for pupils and their parents alike. Therefore, earlier in the term, we hosted a Year 7 Tutor Evening which provided parents with the chance to meet with their child's tutor and discuss how they were settling into secondary school life. Equally impactful was our well-attended Year 11 "Key to Success" evening, where pupils and parents gathered to receive guidance on exam preparation and revision techniques, careers and sixth form opportunities, setting a strong foundation for their final year at Abbey Park School.

Our sports teams have also had an impressive start to the year. The Year 7 boy's rugby team demonstrated great determination and skill, triumphing over three other local schools in their first tournament. Our netball teams have continued their tradition of success, achieving commendable results across various matches. Additionally, I am proud of the work of our Student Sports Leaders in providing support and encouragement during primary sporting events this term.

The curriculum this term was further enhanced by several engaging trips and visits. Year 10 and 11 pupils had the pleasure of attending a performance of "An Inspector Calls" at the Bristol Hippodrome, deepening their understanding of the play's themes and characters to support their GCSE English Literature studies. Additionally, pupils visited the Egg Theatre in Bath for a performance of "The Little Prince," inspiring both imagination and reflection. Our budding engineers enjoyed a fascinating STEM visit to the Williams Racing Experience Centre, while those with a penchant for computing explored the National Museum of Computing at Bletchley Park, participating in a coding workshop and learning about the history of modern computing. Furthermore, some of our Year 8 TPAT Scholars attended an enrichment event at Marlborough College, providing the opportunity to engage with some stretch and challenge learning activities.

In recognition of World Mental Health Day on October 10th, pupils participated in a non-uniform day that raised over £700 for the charity MIND. Teams of pupils (and some staff!) from each House enthusiastically took part in a House bikeathon, competing to see who could cover the greatest distance, all in the spirit of camaraderie and support for mental health awareness. We also supported our local community through the Harvest Festival Swindon Foodbank collection, which received generous contributions from pupils and staff.

Finally, our term concluded on a high note with the Autumn Music concert, where our talented pupils impressed with their musical and vocal performances. It was a wonderful celebration of their hard work, dedication and skill.

As we approach the end of the first term and move forward into the next, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your ongoing support and active involvement. It is by working together that we really can help our pupils to turn their *'potential into performance'*.

Regards,

Mr Ward
Head of School

An Inspector Calls Theatre Trip

This week, Years 10 and 11 went to see An Inspector Calls at the Bristol Hippodrome after studying it for GCSE English Literature. It was interesting to finally see the play that we had spent so much time in class and at home reading and analysing. Despite the fact that we all knew what would happen next, it was still an amazing and shocking play.

The play started with a massive plume of smoke that transformed the stage into a city filled with smog and grime. The Birlings' dining room was on stilts above the rest of the stage, which looked like a run-down, dirty city. This gave the idea that the Birlings saw themselves as completely separate to everyone else. The Inspector saw himself as part of the rest of society and never went up into the Birlings' dining room.

After the Inspector's final speech, the dining room collapsed in sparks, bangs and crashes, as the Birling family fell apart, blaming everyone else for the death of Eva Smith. At this point, the Birlings and their dining room had finally joined the rest of society by standing on the stage itself.

It was a brilliant play on an equally incredible school trip. We were all completely absorbed in the play; we even received compliments on our behaviour from a member of the public who was in the audience.

Special thanks to the members of staff who accompanied our pupils on this trip, and to Mr Lyons for organising it. I am so proud of our pupils for behaving so well and for getting some sophisticated analytical ideas from watching this performance.

Mrs Mapleston
Head of English – KS4

Drama

Year 10 Devising Workshop

The Paper Birds Theatre Company came into school on Tuesday 17th September '24 to deliver a complimentary workshop to Year 10 on Devising Skills as part of their facilitator development programme linked to their current UK touring production of "Free Me - What do you care about and why?".



Pupils were encouraged to be creative in their responses to visual stimuli which had both an eco and political edge regarding climate change. They were taught how to explore a range of ways to develop character and given circumstance in an innovative and creative way. Once inhibitions were discarded, the pupils had a lot of fun over-exaggerating their roles and scenarios and taking their ideas in a variety of different directions.

Here are some of the comments from our pupils:

"I enjoyed it because I got to learn new and interesting devising techniques that will help me in the future." EH

"I think it was very good and I was able to work with people I don't usually work with," RA

"It was really fun, we did a range of drama activities and it really helped us learn how to devise better, I also got to work with new people. I think the experience was educational and wonderful!" AG

"I thought the workshop was good and it inspired me to add a flashback into our devised duologue." BB

We would like to say a huge thank you to Paper Birds facilitators Georgie and Beckie as well as to our Drama Participants who fully embraced the experience. You certainly demonstrated Abbey Park PROUD, so well done!

Miss D Browning
Curriculum Lead for Drama

PE has kicked off this term for Abbey Park and the PE department are pleased to welcome pupils back from the summer break.

Rugby

The boy's rugby team have made an electric start to their season with multiple wins for both Year 7 & 9 teams and the 8s playing in a tournament where they saw themselves win a couple of matches. The Year 7 boys also played in a tournament for their first taste of rugby and beat all three teams (Dorcan 3-1, Commonweal 1-0 and Lawn 3-1). The boys came away buzzing and they have already recruited more players for their future fixtures to come. The U16s are hoping to claim their first win these coming weeks in their first match.

Netball

The netball season has also been a busy one for the girls with all 5-year groups representing their school in weekly fixtures against other schools in the Swindon league.

A special mention to Year 7s & U16s who have won most of their matches and U16s coming 2nd in their group for the National Schools tournament.

The U14s hope to continue their success in the penultimate week in their National Schools tournament.



APS sport leaders have also been busy this term with helping out with a Primary first event and Bridlewood Charity run in memory for an ex-pupil. All showed brilliant organisation and positivity across both events.

There has been a fantastic turn out for session 6 clubs during term 1 and next term sees the likes of basketball & football returning and a new dodgeball club starting.

Thank you to all the pupils who have participated and represented the school in fixtures and tournaments this term and we look forward to continuing our success into the Christmas period.

The PE department

Humanities Competition

Antarctica Day Flag Competition 2024-2025



After the huge success last year, it is back again -
Design a flag for Antarctica!

The winning entry from APS will be sent to Antarctica to be photographed in the frozen wilderness. Here is our entry from last year in Antarctica with a member of the British Antarctic Survey.

The flag could have wildlife from Antarctica, the outline or countries that are part of the Antarctic treaty. Or be creative and choose something else related to this icy continent.

Flags should be no bigger than A4 and can be drawn by hand or on the computer. Use bold colours so they stand out against the white background in Antarctica.

Deadline for entries: **Tuesday 5th November 2024** –
hand into Mrs Graham in GF45



Further guidance to help your design

1. Keep it simple

The flag should be so simple

2. Use meaningful symbolism

The flag's images, colours, or patterns should relate to what it symbolises.

3. Use 2-3 basic colours

Limit the number of colours on the flag to three, which contrast well and come from the standard colour set. When it comes to designing your flags please try and make them as bright and colourful as possible – flags that are mostly white can be difficult to see against the snowy backdrop of Antarctica!

You are allowed to include the APS school logo.

You can hand draw or use the computer



Y7 Art Competition Results

Please find a selection of our runners-up and highly commended entries to the Y7 'Wonderful Water' photography competition below:



Winner



World Mental Health Day

'Potential into Performance'

The 10th October marked **World Mental Health Day**. Many staff and pupils wore yellow, helping to raise awareness of mental health.

Teams of 11 pupils across the year groups cycled throughout the day on exercise bikes promoting the link between exercise and good mental health. All pupils showed resilience, persevering even when it was tough. They did their houses proud. Well done!!

Several staff members also jumped on the bikes to help their houses cover the distance. Large crowds gathered to cheer them all on. There was a real sense of togetherness and community feel within the school, with pupils and staff coming together to raise money for an incredibly important cause.

The final results from the cycling competition:

1st - Whitehorse 150.3km

2nd - Stonehenge 149.5km

3rd - Kennet 148.2km

4th - Barbury 144.33km

5th - Avebury 140.89km



Many pupils entered the mental health poster and acrostic poem competition. The standard was incredibly high and very hard to judge. Each showcased APS PROUD skills and also contained many important messages.

The results of the competition are below:

Mental Health Poster Competition:

1st Place - Evie H (Y8)

2nd Place - Daniella N (Y7)

3rd Place - Teegan W (Y7)

Mental Acrostic Poem Competition

1st Place - Gracie C (Y7)

2nd Place - Phoebe H (Y7)

3rd Place - Jenson C (Y8)

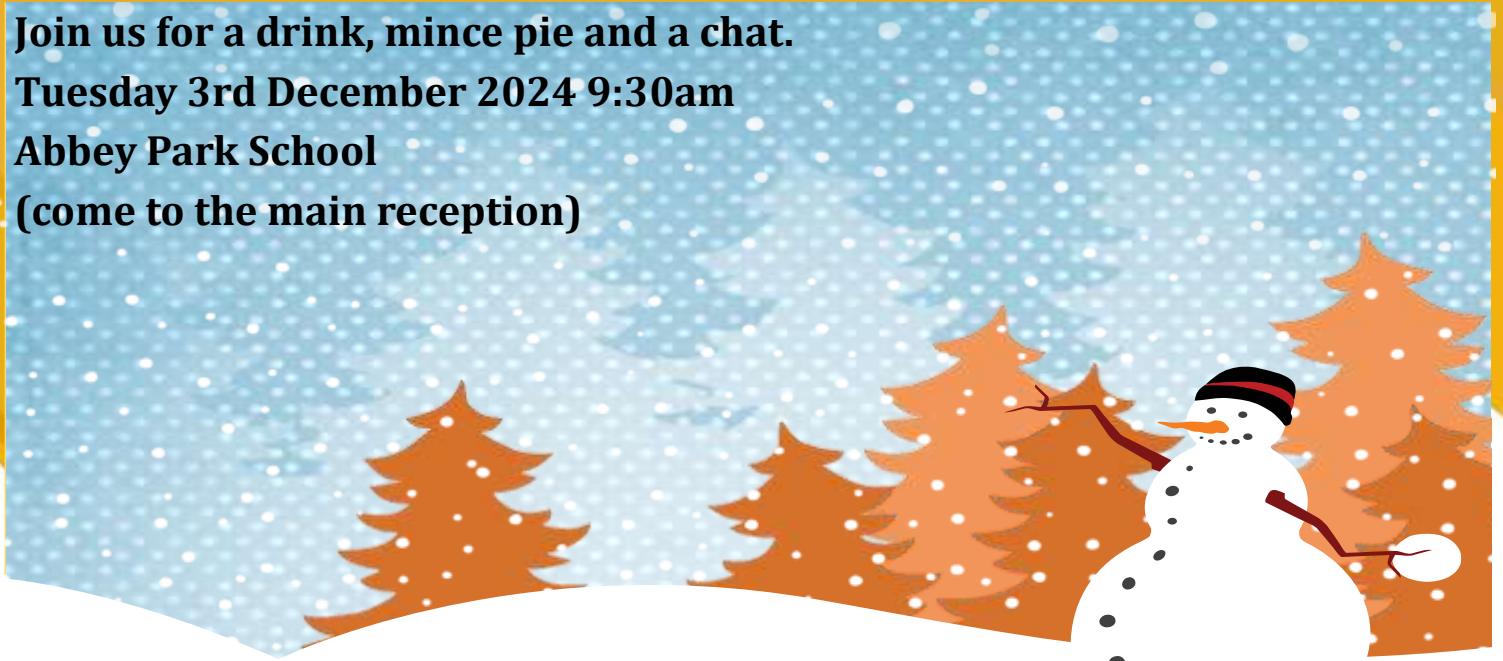


Mrs Kopinska

Assistant Principal

SEND Coffee Morning

Join us for a drink, mince pie and a chat.
Tuesday 3rd December 2024 9:30am
Abbey Park School
(come to the main reception)



School Uniform Donations



Do you have any pieces of branded Abbey Park uniform lying around that are still in good condition and could be used by someone else? Perhaps they no longer fit or you no longer need it. Are you just not sure what to do with it? If so, we might be able to help you!

Pre-loved uniform will be put to good use by supporting our pupils and their families. We are looking for donations of branded Abbey Park uniform, specifically blazers and ties but we will happily take trousers, shoes, jumpers and PE kit too.

If you do have any items you no longer need, then please drop them in at reception. All we ask is that donations are in good condition and have been cleaned.

Many thanks in advance for any support you might be able to offer.

Mr Stubbs
Assistant Principal

Pupil Laptops

When pupils are given a school laptop to use at home, please ensure the software and antivirus are updated by turning the laptop on weekly.

Please return the laptop to the school reception or IT office if it is no longer in use at home so that it can be distributed to pupils who now need a device.

If you're experiencing any problems with the laptop at home, please let us know.

IT Support



Welcome to the Library!

It has been a very busy start to the new academic year, the library has been a hive of activity welcoming back previous pupils and helping the new year 7s find their way around.

We started the term with our star reading test which was a very busy couple of weeks. We then ran introductory lessons for each class covering the general rules, how fiction is organised and how non-fiction is set out.

As pupils are finding their feet in the school environment, I wanted to inform you of a few details regarding the library and its use.

Opening hours:

Monday-Thursday 8.30am-4.15pm

Friday 8.30am-4.00pm

The library is open every break time and during lunch. It will also be open after school for those that wish to revise or do homework.

Book loans and expected behaviour

There are posters up around the library with rules of expected behaviour. As we start to issue books from the library pupils will be expected to be responsible for them. Books are on loan for two weeks. After this, pupils will have to renew them or return them. If books are damaged or lost, we may ask parents/carers to reimburse the school at a charge of £5 per book. This will be payable through Arbor.

Accelerated Reader

The library has been arranged to work alongside our Accelerated Reader programme. This is a scheme that aims to get all pupils reading and improve their reading ability. It has taken a lot of time and effort to implement and will be continually worked on to give your children the reading opportunities they deserve.

Now the pupils have settled in and have started library lessons, this has led to an improvement in the diversity of fiction books and reference books available. As a result, there are books available that may cover topics of a sensitive nature, such as violence, self-harming, abuse and mental health issues. Many of these titles are known to the children due to BookTok, Netflix and other social media/tv outlets. These titles are appropriate in nature for secondary age children. Part of the selection process is that they are classified as YA fiction, with appropriate age levels.

At Abbey Park school we do not wish to censor reading and believe that the children, with support from staff and parents, can make informed decisions on which books are suitable for them to read. All books are available to all our pupils however, we do understand that you may not wish your child to have access to these books. If you would like your child to be excused from having access to these titles until year 9 then please email me with your child's name and tutor group.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in contact with me via email at Bowien@abbeyparkschool.org.uk

Miss Bowie
Librarian

Useful Information

Buying books

In the library we try to keep a wide variety of books and authors, however it is impossible to stock everything. If your child enjoys reading it can be difficult to keep up with buying them books, especially in the current economic climate.

So here are a few tips to keep costs down:

- Join your local library, it is free to join and you can borrow up to 16 books at a time.
- While at the library, many have a withdrawn section where you can take as many books as you can carry for £1.
- Charity shops often have a book section, the bonus is you can return them when you have finished and support a good cause.
- Discount book shops such as The Works offer a wide range of books at discount prices.
- Online WoB (World of Books) is a secondhand book shop which offers books at a reasonable price and offers free delivery in the UK.

Local libraries

North Swindon Library

Orbital Retail Park, Thamesdown Drive, Swindon, SN25 4AN

01793 707120

northswindon.library@swindon.gov.uk

Current opening hours

- Monday - 2.00pm - 6.00pm
- Tuesday - closed
- Wednesday - 10.00am - 2.00pm
- Thursday - closed
- Friday - 1.00pm - 5.00pm
- Saturday - 10.00am - 2.00pm
- Sunday - 11.00am - 3.00pm

Central Library

Regent Circus, Swindon, SN1 1QG

01793 463238

central.library@swindon.gov.uk

Current opening hours

- Monday - 10.00am - 5.30pm
- Tuesday - 10.00am - 5.30pm
- Wednesday - 10.00am - 5.30pm
- Thursday - 10.00am - 5.30pm
- Friday - 10.00am - 5.30pm
- Saturday - 10.00am - 4.00pm
- Sunday – closed

Local Bookshops

Bert's Books

54 Godwin Court, Swindon, SN1 4BB

07949 190977

bert@bertsbooks.co.uk

Opening hours

- Monday - 8.30am – 5.30pm
- Tuesday - 8.30am – 5.30pm
- Wednesday - 8.30am – 5.30pm
- Thursday - 8.30am – 5.30pm
- Friday - 8.30am – 5.30pm
- Saturday - 8.30am – 5.30pm
- Sunday - 10.30am – 4.00pm

Waterstones

3 Canal Walk, Swindon SN1 1LD

01793 436465

www.waterstones.com

Opening Hours

- Monday 9.00am – 5.30pm
- Tuesday 9.00am – 5.30pm
- Wednesday 9.00am – 5.30pm
- Thursday 9.00am – 5.30pm
- Friday 9.00am – 5.30pm
- Saturday 9.00am – 5.30pm
- Sunday 10.00am – 4.00pm



At Abbey Park we are committed to ensuring a culture of safeguarding in our school and it is paramount in all we do. We hope that our termly safeguarding update will give you an overview of our approach, offer some useful guidance and information and inform you of what your child is learning in school about how to keep themselves safe. For more information about safeguarding, please look at our website.

What does Safeguarding look like at Abbey Park?

At Abbey Park School we follow the Government policy document 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'. This is statutory guidance for all schools in England to follow and comply with. It has recently been updated and therefore our safeguarding policy has been updated to reflect this. You can find this on our safeguarding section on the school website. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's responsibility**. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in making sure that children grow up having the best life chances. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all adults should make sure their approach puts the child at the centre of the decision making and that the best interests of the child are always considered. We believe that it is in the best interest of our children to have opportunities to learn how to stay safe both in and outside of school. Our safeguarding themes are woven into lessons across the curriculum, into assemblies and throughout daily life in school. Here are just a few examples of how we teach safeguarding at Abbey Park:

Dedicated safeguarding team in school every day

Pastoral support for each group.

Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSA's) and Pastoral Support Assistants who have specialist training in supporting a child in their social and emotional needs

Members of staff who have completed basic mental health training

Mental health pupil ambassadors

Mental health staff ambassadors

A dedicated mental health lead – Mrs Stevens

Wellbeing Wednesday each Wednesday Tutor time looking at how to look after mental health

Assemblies and lessons taught throughout the year, including but not extensively, anti-bullying, equality, diversity, fire, sun, children's safety, exploitation, sexual harassment and violence and online safety.

PHSE curriculum covering how to be healthy, having healthy relationships and developing emotional literacy

Online safety curriculum

RSE (Relationships and sex education) curriculum

Weekly tutor time reminders about staying safe in school and our expectations

If you need any support with your child, please contact a member of the safeguarding Team.

Abbey Park Safeguarding team

Designated
Safeguarding Lead
Mrs Kara Stevens

Deputy Designated
Safeguarding Lead
Mrs Lorraine Hatcliffe

Deputy Designated
Safeguarding Lead
Miss Vanessa Redondo

Deputy Designated
Safeguarding Lead
Mrs Karen Candy



Contact details and circumstances – please keep us up to date!

It is vitally important that we have the correct contact details for every parent/carer. If you change your phone number, e - mail or move house, please let the admin team know or update it on Arbor. We also need at least two emergency contacts for your child.

We also ask that you keep us up to date with any changes in your personal circumstances that may impact your child.

Mrs Stevens: stevensk@abbeyparkschool.org.uk

Mrs Hatcliffe: hatcliffel@abbeyparkschool.org.uk

Miss Redondo: redondov@abbeyparkschool.org.uk

Mrs Candy: candyk@abbeyparkschool.org.uk

Contact details:

Please can we ask that you ensure the school has at least two contact details in case of an emergency. This can be done on Arbor



Useful contacts:

Swindon MASH (Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub) have added a new front door service called 'Contact Swindon'. If you have concerns about a child and want to speak to a social worker, family services worker without going through school please call - 01793 464646.

If you have concerns that a child is at immediate risk of harm, please call the Police on 999.

School Nursing team – for support to help children with their physical, mental and emotional well-being and referring to other specialist agencies.

Tel – 01793 465050 or email: snn@swindon.gov.uk

Online safety guidance for parents: <https://swgfl.org.uk/>

Assembly and PSHE this term:

At Abbey Park School all pupils attend Assemblies and PSHE sessions each week.

During PSHE this term pupils have been learning about the following topics:

Year 7	Health and Wellbeing: Transition and safety
Year 8	Living in the wider world: CITIZENSHIP - Global issues
Year 9	Living in the wider world: CITIZENSHIP British Rights & Values
Year 10	Health & Wellbeing: Exploring influence: Discrimination & Conflict
Year 11	Living in the wider world: Next steps

Social care or external agency involvement

A polite request to keep the Pastoral team updated if your child is receiving support from social services or any external agencies. This will enable us to ensure the right support is given at the right time.

Special guardianship orders or unofficial care givers

Just a reminder to keep the school updated if a child is under a special guardianship order or unofficial care placement to ensure they receive any support needed.

Attendance matters:

Research shows that there is a direct link between good attendance to school and better outcomes for young adults.

If you are struggling with your child's attendance please contact your child's Head of Key stage, PSA or Mrs Evenett for support.



Online safety: Each term we will add support guides for parents. All of these guides can be found on our website under the safeguarding section.

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about THE DANGERS OF VAPING

Data collected for ASH (Action on Smoking and Health) shows an increase in 11 to 17-year-olds experimenting with vaping: from 7.7% in 2022 to 11.6% in 2023. It's concerning that these age-restricted products are getting into the hands of under 18s as most contain nicotine, which can be detrimental to brain development and cause long-term addiction. Some schools have reported students having their focus in lessons affected by nicotine cravings; vaping in school toilets; and even trying vapes found in their local park. Raising awareness of the risks among young people could help to prevent these problems from escalating and reduce the number of young vapers.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

NICOTINE ADDICTION

Since they were initially developed to help people stop smoking, the vast majority of vape liquids contain nicotine. Not only is this a highly addictive stimulant, but it can also have detrimental effects on brain development in the under-25s. Nicotine can decrease the ability to pay attention, weaken impulse control, affect mood and increase the likelihood of substance addiction as an adult.

POTENTIAL TOXICITY

Many vape liquids have been found to contain 'heavy' metals such as lead, tin, nickel and (in some cases) mercury – all of which are toxic. These metals often take the form of tiny shards inside a device's liquid tank, which are then inhaled into the body. Some media reports have suggested these metals are particularly prevalent in illegally imported vapes which don't comply with UK regulations.

UNCLEAR LONG-TERM CONSEQUENCES

The liquids in vapes also contain solvents, which can create carcinogens at the point of evaporation. Vapes were only introduced into the UK in 2005 – and, because of the relatively short timeframe involved, there is insufficient medical evidence to assess the long-term harms that regular inhalation of these chemical fluids might have on the human body.

ATTRACTIVE PACKAGING

The packaging of many disposable vapes is very appealing to young people, frequently echoing the colours and flavours of the sweets or fizzy drinks they're used to buying. There's a relative lack of regulation around vape marketing, and vaping is often depicted positively on social media – which can lead young people to develop favourable views of vaping and overlook the possible harms.

ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

In the UK alone, around 5 million disposable vapes go to landfill every week. Due to such significant numbers of these products not being recycled, their components – a lithium battery and a chemical liquid – pose a toxic risk to the environment, the ecosystem and wildlife. Vapes are also predominantly made of plastic and metal; materials that, of course, do not naturally decompose.

WHAT IS VAPING?

Vapes contain a liquid (vape juice/e-liquid) that is heated by a battery and evaporates, creating a chemical vapour which the user inhales. They can be **disposable** (once the liquid or battery runs out, the vape is thrown away) or **rechargeable** (the user replaces the liquid and recharges the battery on demand). Most vape liquids contain nicotine and other chemicals.

LACK OF AWARENESS

A proportion of young people tend to view vapes as harmless, mainly because of the products' appearance and the perception (often strengthened on social media) that "vaping is cool" and an trend. In many instances, young people don't fully appreciate the concept of addiction; that is, they aren't adequately aware of the risk of becoming hooked on nicotine before trying a vape.

WIDER HEALTH CONCERNS

Studies are already showing a link between vaping and oral health problems such as tooth decay and gum disease. This is because vaping reduces the amount of saliva in the mouth, while increasing bacteria – resulting in bad breath and a build-up of plaque. There are also concerns that, in some users, vaping could lead to the development of asthma, a persistent cough and breathing difficulties.

UNREGULATED VAPING PRODUCTS

The number of retailers willing to sell vapes to under-18s is a worry, as the chance of these products being unregulated (and therefore containing illegal chemicals and higher levels of nicotine) is high. A related concern is that the mechanisms inside unregulated products are unlikely to have been tested and safety checked – presenting a possible fire risk if the liquid and battery come into contact.

SCARCE INFORMATION

The lack of information about the ingredients and potentially harmful chemicals in a vape is troubling. Some vape fluids (unregulated in the UK) contain traces of nuts, which can cause an allergic reaction or anaphylactic shock. To date, medical warnings aren't required on vape packaging – with only medical disclaimers being found on the websites of the various brands.

VAGUE INGREDIENTS LISTS

Early research has suggested that the chemicals used to produce some strawberry and banana flavour e-liquids can kill cells in the blood vessels and heart. These ingredients aren't identified on the packaging, instead falling under the umbrella term 'natural and artificial flavourings'. Such vague listings mean that consumers aren't aware of the liquid's content so can't identify potential risks.

Meet Our Expert

Run by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Healthy Schools Service (commissioned by Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council), Catch Your Breath is a school-based project aimed at young people. Its goal is to embed a proactive, coordinated approach among both primary and secondary schools by encouraging students and staff to become

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

SNAPCHAT

AGE RESTRICTION
13+

Snapchat is a messaging app which allows users to send images, videos and texts to others. Its best-known feature is that anything sent 'disappears' 24 hours after it's been viewed; however, users are known to take screenshots or use another device to obtain a photo of their screen. In 2023, Snapchat added a chatbot function called 'My AI'.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

SCAMS AND BLACKMAIL

Predators can exploit Snapchat's disappearing messages feature by, for example, telling a user they have naked photos of them (regardless of whether it is true or not) and will share them online unless they send them money. Teens then (understandably) panic and worry about the long-term consequences. Snapchat's own research found that 65% of teenagers had experienced this – either on this app or others.

EXCESSIVE USE

Snapchat works hard on user engagement, with features like streaks (messaging the same person every day to build up a high score). The app also has sections called 'Discover' and 'Spotlight'. It claims the content shown here is relevant to each user, but it could also be seen as an easy way to hook users into watching videos endlessly. Furthermore,

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Some content on Snapchat simply isn't suitable for children. The hashtags used to group content are determined by the poster, so even an innocent search term could still yield age-inappropriate results. The app's 'disappearing messages' feature also makes it easy for young people to share explicit images on impulse – so sexting continues to be a risk associated with Snapchat.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

My AI is Snapchat's new chatbot, which replies to questions in a human-like manner. However, the software is still in its infancy and has significant drawbacks, such as biased, incorrect or misleading responses. There have already been numerous reports of young users turning to AI for medical help and diagnoses, which could be inaccurate and therefore potentially dangerous.

ONLINE PRESSURES

Although many of Snapchat's filters are designed to entertain or amuse, the 'beauty' effects on photos can set unrealistic body image expectations – creating feelings of inadequacy if a young person compares themselves unfavourably with other users. Snapchat now also has 'priority' notifications (which still get displayed even if a device is in 'do not disturb' mode), increasing the pressure on users to log back in and interact.

VISIBLE LOCATION

A feature called 'SnapMaps' highlights your device's exact position on a virtual map, which is visible to other users. There are options to restrict who can see this information: all friends, selected friends or just you. Snapchat also has real-time location sharing, which is intended as a buddy system to help friends keep track of each other – but it could also be used to track a young person for more sinister reasons.

Advice for Parents & Educators

SET CONTROLS VIA FAMILY CENTRE

Snapchat has parental controls called 'Family Centre'. You must invite a child to the Family Centre for them to join. This allows you to view their friends list, see who they have chatted with in the last 7 days (but not to view the specific messages) and report any concerns.

TALK ABOUT REAL LIFE SCAMS

If a young person is mature enough to have Snapchat, then they are mature enough to have a conversation about scams, nudes and blackmail. Have this discussion before you let them join. Share some real-life examples. Discuss the importance of never adding strangers and discourage them from sharing nudes. If they are lured into a scam, encourage them to tell you immediately, then block and delete the predator and screenshot any evidence.

DISCUSS AI

Although My AI's responses can often give the impression that it's a real person, it's essential that young people remember this certainly isn't the case. Encourage children to think critically about My AI's replies to their questions: are they accurate and reliable? Remind them that My AI shouldn't replace chatting with their real friends, and that it's always better to talk to an actual person in relation to medical matters.

CHAT ABOUT CONTENT

It may feel like an awkward conversation (and one that young people can be reluctant to have) but it's important to talk openly and non-judgementally about sexting. Remind children that once something's online, the creator loses control over where it ends up – and who else sees it. Likewise, it's vital that children understand that some 'challenges' which become popular on the platform may have harmful consequences.

KEEP ACCOUNTS PRIVATE

Profiles are private by default, but children may make them public to gain more followers. Snap Stories are visible to everyone a user adds unless they change their settings. On SnapMaps, their location is visible unless Ghost Mode is enabled. It's safest for a child to avoid adding people they don't know in real life – especially since the addition of My Places, which allows people to see where users regularly visit.

BE READY TO BLOCK AND REPORT

If a stranger does connect with a child on Snapchat and begins to make them feel uncomfortable through bullying, pressure to send explicit images or by sending sexual images to them, the child can select the three dots on that person's profile and report or block them. There are options to state why they're reporting that user – such as annoying or malicious messages, spam or masquerading as someone else.

Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Butherford is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

Term 2 Curriculum Map - KS3

'Potential into Performance'

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
English	20th & 21st Century Literature: Star by Star	19th Century Literature: A Christmas Carol	Literature and Context: Of Mice and Men
Maths	Prime Factorisation, Order of operations, Positive & negative numbers, Expressions	Forming and solving inequalities, Linear graphs , Accuracy & estimation, Ratio review	Tree diagrams, Simplifying Algebra, Forming and Solving Equations , Linear Simultaneous Equations
Science	Forces, Reproduction & Inheritance	Digestion and Heat Transfer	C1 Atomic Structure & Periodic Table
MFL	Spanish: Mi Tiempo Libre French: En classe	Spanish: Todo Sobre Mi Vida French: J'adore les fêtes	Spanish: Oriéntate French: Projets d'avenir
Humanities	Geography: Medieval History and Christianity History: Medieval Britain PT: History unit	Geography: History unit History: The Victorian Age PT: Victoria	Geography: Living World (AQA Unit) History: Nazi Germany and the Holocaust PT: Changing Economic World
Business Computing	PowerPoint	Artificial Intelligence & Machine Learning	App Development
Design Technology (DT)	Pupils will complete the following on rotation across the year: Chocolate box, swivel lid box, pencil case, food prep & nutrition	Pupils will complete the following on rotation across the year: Travel game, boom box, character cushion, food around the world	Pupils will complete the following on rotation across the year: Photoshop adobe, auto desk projector, tote bag, food prep & celebration
Visual Arts	Jim Dine	Peace Poster	Protest
Performing Arts	Drama: Toyshop Music: Arriba!	Drama: Commedia Dell'Arte Music: Blues/tech	Drama: Devising workshops to explore drama techniques from different stimuli Music: Time Lapse/ Time Lapse sequencing
PE	Basketball, Football, Dance, Badminton, Netball, Dance, Handball	Volleyball, Football, Table Tennis, Badminton, Netball, Football, Hockey	Trampolining, Football, Fitness, Badminton, Handball
Personal, Social, Health & Citizenship Education (PSHCE)	Living in the wider world – developing your own identity	Financial Awareness	CEIAG: Setting goals and employability skills

Term 2 Curriculum Map - KS4

'Potential into Performance'

	Year 10	Year 11
English	Non-fiction Writing: Language Paper	Revision for Dec. mocks
Maths	Foundation: Graphs , Transformations, Ratio and Proportion, Data Higher: Solving Quadratic Inequalities and Simultaneous Equations, Fractions, Decimals, Percentages and Ratio, Probability	Foundation: Shape and Number
Science	P2 Electricity, C4 Chemical Changes, P3 Particle Model of Matter	Paper 1 Retrieval, P6 Waves
MFL	Spanish: Mi vida en mi insti French: Le temps de loisirs	Spanish: Mi vida en mi insti French: Le temps de loisirs
Humanities	Geography: Challenges of Natural Hazards History: Medicine in modern Britain 1900-present, Historic environment – The British Sector of the Western Front, 1914-1918: injuries, treatment and the trenches. PT: Christian Practices Sociology: Research Methods	Geography: Changing Economic World History: End of the Cold War 1970-91 PT: Religion, peace and conflict Sociology: Paper 2: Crime and Deviance
Business	1.2 Spotting a business Opportunity	2.2 Making Marketing Decisions
Computing	3.4 Computer Systems, 3.3 Fundamentals of Data Representation, 3.2 Programming	3.6 Fundamentals of Cyber Security, 3.1 & 3.2 Algorithms & Programming
Design Technology (DT)	Theory: Energy generation & storage. Developments in new materials Food: 3.2.2 Micronutrients 3.2.3 nutrition and health Food skills	NEA Food: 3.6.2 Food processing and production Food skills
Visual Arts	Natural Forms Transforming Portraits	Identity Contd. Circles Contd.
Performing Arts	Drama: Introduction to the play 'DNA' by reading through the script Music: Melody: melodic movement sequences structure	Drama: Group pieces monologues/duologues Music: Listening activities and practice questions MOCK REVISION
PE	Basketball, Trampolining, Rugby, Handball, Table Tennis, Fitness	Trampolining, Fitness, Badminton, Football, Handball, Table Tennis
Personal, Social, Health & Citizenship Education (PSHCE)	Debate SoW - Citizenship	RSE: Healthy relationships

October half-term:

Monday 28th October - Friday 1st November

Return to school (all pupils):

Monday 4th November

Contact details and consents

Having up-to-date contact information enables us to communicate with you promptly in the unlikely event of an emergency school closure during the day. This ensures that we can communicate effectively and keep you informed of any urgent developments. Please also take a moment to review the contact details and consents we have recorded for you on the Arbor Parent Portal are correct. If your circumstances have changed and your child can no longer go home by themselves in event of an emergency school closure, you can update the consent accordingly on Arbor.

Monday 4th November	Event: Art Peace project- judging
Tuesday 5th November	TRIP: Y11 TPAT to 6th Form Experience Day, LPA
Wednesday 6th November	TRIP: Y7 County cup TRIP: Y9 Drama to Blood Brothers, Kings Theatre, Portsmouth
Monday 11th November	*SYFL EVENT: Primary Author event 10-11am
Tuesday 12th November	SYLF TRIP: Wyvern Theatre Trip
Wednesday 13th November	TRIP: Y10 D&T to BMW, Swindon TRIP: Y10 to Gloucester Uni (Villiers Park) SYFL EVENT: Y7 Author visit - Ash Dickinson
Thursday 14th November	TRIP: KS4 Music to The Platform, Swindon SYLF EVENT: Author Talk
Friday 15th November	SYLF TRIP: Ridgeway Book Quiz
Monday 18th November	Inset Day - school closed to pupils
Tuesday 19th November	Inset Day - school closed to pupils, however Y11s with exams scheduled for this day are expected to attend
Wednesday 20th November	EVENT: Y5 Maths Challenge SYFL TRIP: KS3 to the Illustration Award
Tuesday 26th November	EVENT: Y9 Holocaust guest speaker

*SYFL - Swindon Youth Literature Festival

Important Notices & School Calendar - Term 2

'Potential into Performance'

Tuesday 3rd December	TRIP: KS4 to Marlborough College
Wednesday 4th December	EVENT: TPAT Christmas Concert TRIP: TPAT Scholars to Marlborough College
Friday 6th December	TRIP: Y11 Art to Southbank, London
Wednesday 11th December	TRIP: Y9 English to Globe theatre, London
Friday 13th December	EVENT: Y7 School Disco
Tuesday 17th December	TRIP: Young Carers to Kaspas, Swindon
Wednesday 18th December	TRIP: Y11 & Y7 to Robin Hood, Theatre Royal, Bath
Thursday 19th December	EVENT: Carol Concert
<u>Friday 20th December</u> Last day of term 2 (lunchtime finish)	

Christmas Holidays

Monday 23rd December - Friday 3rd January

Return to school (all pupils):

Monday 6th January

School Calendar 2024-25



Abbey Park School Terms and Holidays 2024 - 2025



September 2024						
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

October 2024						
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

November 2024						
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

December 2024						
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

January 2025						
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

February 2025						
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28		

March 2025						
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

April 2025						
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

May 2025						
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

June 2025						
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

July 2025						
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

August 2025						
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

INSET Days 2nd and 3rd September, 18th and 19th November, 2nd June, 21st and 22nd July

Lunchtime Finish 20th December and 18th July

Bank Holidays 2024/25 UK

25 December '24	Christmas Day	18 April '25	Good Friday	26 May '25	Spring Bank Holiday
26 December '24	Boxing Day	21 April '25	Easter Monday	25 August '25	August Bank Holiday
1 January '25	New Year's Day	5 May '25	May Day Holiday		