



Every Student Thriving

9 May 2025

Dear parent/carers,

Yesterday was VE day and Mr Clarke organised an exceptional experience for some of our History students by involving them in the Holocaust 360 programme. This was an interactive Virtual Reality session that allowed students to ask a survivor questions about their experiences, as well as view the location of his former childhood home in Germany, the concentration camp where he was imprisoned and finally where he was liberated.

VE Day is celebrated for many reasons, for the individual looked at yesterday, Manfred Goldberg, VE Day was when he was liberated by British tanks on the German Baltic coast. Whilst it was the end of the war for Manfred another battle endured, one to find his surviving family and to find out what happened to his younger brother. Whilst he was able to be reunited with his mother and father, he was never able to learn of how his brother died. It was an incredible story of one man's journey through one of the darkest periods of human history and a reminder that it continued to shape the lives of those who experienced it long after VE Day.

This was a superb use of modern technology and a salient reminder that as each year passes the distance between us and the horrors of the world wars grows and we need impactful reminders lest we forget. Israeli educational psychologist Haim Ginott writes about a letter that teachers would receive from their principal, a survivor, each year::

"I am a survivor of a concentration camp. My eyes saw what no person should witness: gas chambers built by learned engineers. Children poisoned by educated physicians. Infants killed by trained nurses. Women and babies shot by high school and college graduates.

So, I am suspicious of education.

My request is this: Help your children become human. Your efforts must never produce learned monsters, skilled psychopaths or educated Eichmanns. Reading, writing, and arithmetic are important only if they serve to make our children more human."

Dangers of reservoir swimming : Members of our local community have highlighted concerns about reports of children accessing local reservoirs. As temperatures rise, it's natural for children to seek ways to cool off, but swimming in reservoirs poses serious and often underestimated dangers. Unlike pools or designated swimming areas, reservoirs have hidden currents, sudden drop-offs, and extremely cold water beneath the surface—even on the hottest days—which can cause cold water shock and make it difficult to swim or even breathe. We would urge parents to speak to their children about these risks and make sure they are not swimming in reservoirs.

On an upbeat note I was delighted to hear from Mr Dawkins about the **Gold DofE practice** from last weekend that saw students negotiating the Welsh landscape in the Brecon Beacons with the wonderful experience of waking up to ice on the tent due to the significant drop in temperatures at the weekend. Character building stuff!

Take care - Ian Brierly

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REMINDERS & NOTICES

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Year 8 History Trip	-	10 May
End of half-term	-	23 May
Return to school	-	2 June
Year 10 MFL support evening	-	3 June
PGL Parents evening	-	11 June
FOCUS week	-	23 -27 June

THE MEDICAL ROOM

We have had some recent issues with parents/carers who are telling their child to come to the medical room if they are feeling unwell for our medical officer to call to get them collected. A number of these students are well enough to stay in school and when this is explained the students become rude and confrontational using the notion that 'my mum/dad said..'

Please support us by ensuring that the right messages are sent to your child about remaining in school. If you send your child into school then they are well enough to be here and the medical officer is eminently qualified to judge if a student should be sent home. Thank you.

CAREERS

Work Experience

We still have a number of our year 10 students looking for a work experience placement for 23rd-27th June. If you are able to offer a placement please contact Mrs Sinacore, our careers adviser at wex@johncolet.co.uk, we are particularly keen to find placements in construction, carpentry or sports related roles.

CURRENT VACANCIES

- Cover Supervisor
- Assistant to the Head of Sixth Form
- Geography / Business Studies teacher

Please check our website for further details [here](#).

SAFEGUARDING LEADS & INFORMATION

If parents have any concerns about this practice or, believe that any young person at John Colet School might be at risk, then please do contact one of the members of our Safeguarding Team via - safeguarding@johncolet.co.uk

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PARENT SUPPORT : Click [HERE](#) for practical tips

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about MAKING FRIENDS ONLINE

In today's digital world, it's increasingly common for children to form friendships with people they've never met in person. While online connections can offer children a sense of belonging, they also carry significant risks. Around 19% of children aged 10 to 15 in England and Wales have chatted online with someone they've never met face to face. This guide offers expert advice for parents and educators on helping children navigate online friendships safely.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

ONLINE GROOMING THREATS

Predators can use games, chat apps or social media platforms to build relationships with children and gain their trust. This may quickly develop into grooming or exploitation. Between April 2017 and March 2023, UK police recorded nearly 34,000 online grooming offences – an 82% increase in just five years.

EXPOSURE TO INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Children may encounter distressing or explicit material while interacting with online contacts – especially via TikTok, Instagram or Snapchat. This is evidenced in a survey by the Children's Commissioner for England, which found that 45% of children aged 8 to 17 had seen content online that made them feel uncomfortable, worried or upset.

PRIVACY AND DATA RISKS

Children and young people often overshare personal details – such as where they live or go to school – without understanding the consequences. In fact, 4.4% of 10 to 15-year-olds in the UK have met up in real life with someone they'd only spoken to online.

COMPROMISED PERSONAL SAFETY

Meeting an online 'friend' in real life risks placing a child in serious danger. From abduction to coercion, the consequences can be devastating. Reports of children being harmed after such meetings are becoming increasingly common in the UK, highlighting the need for safeguarding intervention.

PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS

Online harm – such as cyberbullying, grooming or exposure to disturbing content – can lead to long-term emotional issues, including anxiety, depression and PTSD. 'Sextortion' gangs, who threaten to release sexual information about a person unless they pay them money, have reportedly targeted children as young as 11, leaving them traumatised and ashamed.

LONG-TERM REPERCUSSIONS

Children exposed to harmful online relationships early on may develop unhealthy beliefs about relationships, consent, or self-worth. In a recent case, a 26-year-old posed as a girl on Snapchat to befriend children aged 10 to 16, manipulating them into sexual activity and causing profound emotional distress. One 12-year-old tragically died by suicide, highlighting the long-term psychological harm online friendships with strangers can cause.

26 FRIENDS ONLINE NOW

Advice for Parents & Educators

TEACH SAFE ONLINE HABITS

Help children understand how to use privacy settings, protect their personal information, spot fake profiles, and report anything suspicious or concerning, like pressure tactics. Encourage them to think critically about what they share – and whom they're talking to.

ENCOURAGE REAL-WORLD CONNECTIONS

Support children in building friendships through school, clubs, hobbies and activities in the real world. Strong offline relationships help reduce children's reliance on online platforms for social interaction, and can help them develop resilience and social confidence.

KEEP CONVERSATIONS OPEN

Let children know they can talk to you about their online life. Avoid reacting with anger or judgement, as this may prevent them from opening up in the future. A child who feels listened to is more likely to disclose problems before they escalate.

USE PARENTAL CONTROLS

Parental control settings on devices, games and apps can help manage screen time, filter out inappropriate content, and monitor activity. While no system is perfect, they provide a valuable layer of protection as children explore digital spaces.

Meet Our Expert

Gabriella Russo is a safeguarding consultant with over 30 years' experience in supporting children, families, and adults across education, local authority, and mental health settings – both in the UK (including at Parliamentary level) and internationally.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College



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TOOLED UP - PARENT SUPPORT



Dear parents and carers,

We hope that you and your families are settling into the new summer term. We are writing as we wanted to remind you that our school subscribes to Tooled Up Education.

This gives you **privileged access** to an online platform packed full of **resources, podcasts, webinars, activities and practical advice** to help **support you** in all matters to do **with parenting and family life**.

Here are **two quick resources** highlighting how you can make the most of your Tooled Up membership.

- **10 Things About Tooled Up Parent Benefit Sheet** - this is attached to the email
- [Tooled Up Tour Video Link](#) - this is a 5 minute video walk through of the platform, showing you how to navigate its features

If you have already signed up for an account: simply click this [link](#) to access

To register for your free account now: click [Create my Tooled Up Account](#), enter your email address and our unique school PIN (available from the school office).

To view the platform on your phone: click this [link](#) or scan the QR code with your phone camera.



If you have any question, please just click on the '[Support](#)' button on the website and one of the Tooled Up team will be happy to assist you.

[NETFLIX:ADOLESCENCE](#) → RESOURCES

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COMMUNITY SUPPORT / ACTIVITIES



The Parent's Portal - a free online support tool for Buckinghamshire parents

To provide early help and guidance and an online community of support, Buckinghamshire Council have partnered with specialist local charity Autism Early Support, to offer parents unlimited access to The Parent's Portal.

This is a self-guided learning tool, designed for parents of children aged 2-17 years who:

- Have noticed differences in their child and they're exploring neurodivergence.
- Have Googled, 'is my child autistic?' or 'what is ADHD?'
- Have an autistic child(ren).
- Are awaiting a neurodevelopmental assessment.

Since its launch on 1 December 2024, nearly 700 Buckinghamshire families have signed up.



Scan the QR code to register or visit portal.autismearlysupport.org.uk/bucks-registrations

Using the Parent's Portal

The Parent's Portal by AES is an online resource that contains:

- **Resources to watch and read** - A multimedia library of information available to view and download, available 24/7, covering topics such as reasonable adjustments to school distress, neurodiversity and SaLT, and use of medication.
- **Live workshops and parent support groups** - Interactive sessions on key topics, bookable in advance, and delivered by speakers with lived experience and professionals in the field.
- **Discussion forums** - Exchange ideas and perspectives with parents and practitioners.

Recent feedback from parents:

- 94%** of parents felt they had a better understanding on topics after attending workshops.
- 82%** felt better equipped to support their child or young person.



The resources are split into four sections:

- Understanding my child
- Supporting my child with education
- Supporting my child at home
- Family relationships and sibling support

No referral is required for families to use the Parent's Portal, and registration with Autism Early Support is simple and straightforward.



Funded by



A FREE two-hour workshops for parents and carers of children at Secondary school in Buckinghamshire

Help your Child to Think Critically to Gain Confidence and Self-Esteem (FMWB023)

Support your child to build self-esteem and confidence by developing problem solving strategies and creative thinking.

Wednesday 23rd April, 7:00pm - 9:00pm

Help Your Autistic Child at Home Workshop (FMAC134)

We will help you to understand autism and its characteristics. Help you create a supportive and inclusive environment for your child at home.

Wednesday 7th May, 9:30am - 11:30 am

Thinking About Volunteering Workshop (FMVW018)

Build your confidence and explore volunteering as an optional step to start or return to employment.

Wednesday 30th April, 7:00pm - 9:00pm

To book your FREE place, choose a date and contact our enrolment team on 01296 383582, scan the QR code or click on the link. For more information call/text Kathryn on 07770 641997.





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COMMUNITY EVENTS



CRICKET COACHING MASTERCLASS

Learn from the pros and take your game to the next level

Coaches: Andy O'Connor, Numan Javid, Brenden Fourie & David Ripley (All Level III or IV with First Class Playing Experience)



Specialist 121 & Net Coaching

28th – 30th May (hour slots from 9.30am)

From £55 per session @ Stowe School



All abilities catered for. For more information and to book, please email info@cricketcoachingmasterclass.co.uk

www.cricketcoachingmasterclass.co.uk

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25K,
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Routes



Sunday 8th June 2025
Stoke Mandeville Stadium

tourdevale.com

info@tourdevale.com

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