

# Parent Bulletin



30<sup>th</sup> January 2026

As the term moves forward, it's been wonderful to see our school community continuing to engage so positively together. A big thank you to all the parents who joined us for our Year 11 Revision Evening last night — it was fantastic to see such strong support, and we're glad everyone enjoyed the delicious curry!

This week, students and staff once again showed great respect and reflection as we marked Holocaust Memorial Day on Tuesday. Through tutor activities and discussions, our community took time to remember the victims and to reflect on the importance of empathy, understanding and standing up against prejudice.

We have also reached the end of our first Aim Higher Week, and it has been truly encouraging to see so many positive conversations taking place around progress, aspiration and how to be active, reflective learners. The enthusiasm and self-awareness shown by our students has been inspiring.

Finally, thank you to all our Year 10 parents who attended online appointments with Miss Passmore yesterday. It was a great turnout, and we really appreciate the constructive and supportive conversations that took place. As a reminder, students or parents who are finding it difficult to secure a work experience placement are encouraged to speak to Miss Passmore for further support.

Stay safe and take care,

**Team Trafalgar**

## Health Update

We wanted to share an update following the information regarding scabies sent to parents yesterday which is available on Class Charts. We are continuing to work closely with the NHS and the UK Health Protection Team, and are following their expert guidance.

Cases in the Portsmouth area are on the rise at the moment. We have had a small number of cases at Trafalgar and they have been treated appropriately, in line with NHS guidance.

### **What is it?**

It is a common condition that can be treated easily and effectively. It is usually passed on through prolonged skin-to-skin contact, most often through hand contact, and around 80% of cases affect the hands only. Please be assured that it is not linked to poor hygiene and is very unlikely to spread through clothing, bedding or towels.

### **What are the school doing?**

- We are reinforcing the importance of good hand hygiene with staff and students, as this remains one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of infections.
- Additional cleaning is taking place across the school, focusing on areas that are frequently touched.
- All spaces are thoroughly cleaned daily and the school's industrial cleaning team, Green Fox Ltd, are working with us to deep clean and sanitise high touch areas.

For more information, please see the NHS guidance: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/scabies>.

We appreciate your continued support in this matter and if you have any further questions please direct them to [studentservices.trafalgar@salterns.org](mailto:studentservices.trafalgar@salterns.org)

## Key Dates

**Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> February** - PD Day 2

**Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> February** - Year 8 Parents' Evening (virtual)

**Monday 16<sup>th</sup> - Friday 20<sup>th</sup> February** - Half Term

**Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> - Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March** - Year 11 Mock Exams



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# Social Media Rules May Be Changing – How Can Parents Help?

Social media is a big part of life for most young people in secondary school, and it can bring both positives and negatives. Teens use it to keep up with friends, follow hobbies and interests, and find support from like-minded communities. At the same time, many parents worry about screen time, unkind comments, unrealistic images and what their child might see or share.

Recently there has been a lot of discussion about whether children should have full access to social media, and what age is appropriate for apps like TikTok, Instagram and Snapchat. The UK government is consulting on new rules that could include stricter age limits, tougher age-checks when young people sign up, and curbs on addictive features such as endless scrolling and streaks. These proposals are aimed at placing more responsibility on tech companies to keep children safe, rather than putting extra pressure on families.



For parents, all of this can feel confusing and sometimes worrying. One helpful step is to keep conversations open and regular rather than having a single "big talk" about social media. Ask your child what they like about the apps they use, what worries them, and what they do if something online makes them upset or uncomfortable. Agree simple family guidelines together, such as talking to an adult if they see something worrying and taking breaks from apps that affect their mood.



It can also help to model the kind of online behaviour you want your child to copy, such as putting phones away at mealtimes or when someone is talking to you. If you are unsure about how a platform works, you might try it yourself or look up parent guides so you feel more confident about the features and safety tools available. You do not need to be a tech expert to support your child well; showing interest, listening and problem-solving together will do much more good than reacting in the heat of the moment.

If you would like to read more about social media and teens, you can find a helpful BBC Bitesize Parents' Toolkit article here: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/z4xdb7h>.

## Reading Plus Winner

Congratulations Alfie in Year 8, our Reading Plus winner of the week!

Alfie chose historical fiction novel D-Day Dog by Tom Palmer. Happy reading!

By keeping up with your Reading Plus you stand the chance to win one of our new books from the book vending machine! Which book would you choose?

Also, well done 7G3 for topping our reading leaderboard!

Don't forget to help your class climb the table by keeping up with your English home learning.

Leaderboard	
Top Classes - Total Avg. Reading Lessons (5R)	
1. 7G3/En 25/26	<b>56.5</b>
2. 7G1/En 25/26	<b>45.5</b>
3. 7R2/En 25/26	<b>41.7</b>
4. 7R1/En 25/26	<b>38.5</b>
5. 8R1 25/26	<b>35.7</b>



## Students Reflect on the Power of Women Who Changed History

On Tuesday, 14 students had the opportunity to attend Honouring Courageous Women, a powerful event celebrating trailblazing women who have stood firm against tyranny, fought for human rights, and marched for equality.

The talk, delivered by acclaimed author Kate Mosse, was truly inspiring.

Our students were a credit to Trafalgar, listening with great interest as Kate spoke passionately for over an hour about the remarkable women who shaped history.

They left the event feeling both humbled and uplifted, with a renewed sense of belonging to a community capable of achieving greatness.



# OPEN EVENT



City of  
Portsmouth  
College

11  
FEB

WEDNESDAY  
4.30-7.30pm  
Cake and coffee on us!

Highbury  
Campus

Sixth Form  
Campus

North Harbour  
Campus

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# What Parents & Educators Need to Know about MENTAL HEALTH MISINFORMATION ONLINE

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

A research study by Ofcom revealed that children aged 9-15 increasingly use online platforms like TikTok for mental health advice, with 50% relying on social media for information. Unverified medical content online is concerning, with the potential to cause confusion, anxiety, or incorrect self-diagnoses. This guide provides expert strategies to help parents and educators tackle misinformation effectively and ensure safer digital experiences for young people.

## POPULAR ONLINE SOURCES

Platforms like TikTok and Instagram are two of the main sources of young people's mental health content. Videos and posts frequently feature unqualified influencers, contributing to misinformation, myths, and oversimplifications. While appealing to young audiences, this unverified content can distort perceptions, and create unrealistic expectations and misunderstandings about mental health conditions.

## RISK OF SELF-DIAGNOSIS

Social media's misleading content encourages young people to self-diagnose complex mental health conditions inaccurately. Misdiagnosis can exacerbate anxiety, cause unnecessary worry, or delay essential professional intervention. This has the potential to escalate manageable conditions into more significant mental health issues requiring comprehensive clinical support.

## LACK OF FILTERS

Social media platforms struggle to filter misinformation effectively, allowing false content to spread widely and quickly. Without proper guidance, young viewers may not discern fact from fiction, potentially internalising inaccurate beliefs about mental health. This can negatively influence their decisions about seeking professional help or managing mental wellbeing.

## IMPACTFUL PAST TRENDS

Historically, online mental health misinformation has led to harmful trends, including inappropriate coping strategies or sensationalised symptoms. For example, past TikTok trends on self-harm or anxiety 'hacks' have spread damaging advice, underscoring the risk when misinformation is not promptly addressed or corrected by knowledgeable adults.

## MISLEADING CLINICAL TERMS

Online trends often include the misuse of clinical terms, such as 'trauma' or 'OCD', making serious conditions seem trivial or inaccurately understood. Such misinformation can diminish empathy, and lead young people to misunderstand mental health complexities, potentially preventing them from identifying real mental health issues in themselves or others.

'EVERYONE HAS THAT'

## REPLACING PROFESSIONAL HELP

Frequent reliance on digital content can deter young people from seeking professional mental health care, substituting expert support with unverified online advice. This substitution can prolong issues, complicate recovery, and reduce the effectiveness of future professional interventions, ultimately impacting overall mental health and wellbeing negatively.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### MONITOR ONLINE ENGAGEMENT

Regularly review and discuss a young person's online activity, providing appropriate guidance on discerning accurate content. Tools such as parental controls or co-viewing content can help mediate exposure to harmful misinformation, facilitating safer digital habits and informed critical thinking about mental health.



### SCHOOL-HOME COLLABORATION

Strengthen collaboration with educators to integrate digital literacy into the school curriculum, emphasising misinformation awareness. Jointly delivered education sessions on identifying and responding to misinformation can significantly improve pupils' ability to critically assess mental health content, supporting their mental wellbeing effectively both online and offline.



### IDENTIFY RELIABLE SOURCES

Teach young people to critically evaluate mental health content by checking credentials, source authenticity, and evidence-based information. Encourage them to refer to trusted medical or educational platforms and to consult healthcare professionals for clarification. This reduces young people's reliance on potentially harmful or misleading online sources.



### ENCOURAGE OPEN DIALOGUE

Foster a non-judgemental environment where young people feel comfortable discussing online content. Regularly talking about their online experiences and perceived mental health concerns helps clarify misunderstandings, mitigates misinformation, and builds trust, thereby enhancing their resilience and digital literacy. Model situations where you have sought advice from accurate sources and not solely relied on social media for health advice.



### Meet Our Expert

Anna Bateman is Director of Halcyon Education Ltd, Director for Wellbeing and Family Services at Leigh Trust, and lead expert for mental health at The National College. Anna specialises in strategic mental health solutions for schools, supporting educators and families to promote resilience, emotional literacy, and overall wellbeing for children across the UK.



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