

# Parent Bulletin

8<sup>th</sup> May 2026

We hope that all families enjoyed a restful and enjoyable bank holiday weekend last week, and that students returned refreshed and ready for the busy weeks ahead.

GCSE examinations are now fully underway, and we would like to congratulate all students who have already sat one or more exams. Their calm focus, preparation and determination have been evident, and we are incredibly proud of the way our Year 11 students are approaching this important period. We would also like to say a particular well done to our Year 10 students who sat their first Citizenship GCSE paper this week as part of an early entry. They conducted themselves brilliantly throughout the exam and approached the experience with maturity and confidence — a fantastic first step in their GCSE journey. To those with exams still to come, please remember that each paper is a fresh opportunity to show what you know; and steady routines, confidence and self-belief will go a long way.

This week also marks a notable milestone, with Sir David Attenborough celebrating his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. His lifelong commitment to learning, curiosity and care for our planet provides a powerful reminder of the impact that passion, perseverance and education can have over a lifetime — values we continue to encourage in our own young people.

Looking ahead, our Year 10 students will begin their work experience placements next week. This is an exciting and valuable opportunity for them to develop independence, confidence and employability skills over the two-week placement. We wish them every success and hope they make the most of their time in the workplace. We look forward to hearing about their varied and enriching experiences when they return to school.

Inside this bulletin, parents will also find helpful advice from The National College on supporting young people with exam day readiness. We encourage families to take a look, as small routines and reassurance at home can make a big difference during this demanding time.

Until next week,

**Team Trafalgar**



## Key Dates

**Monday 11<sup>th</sup> - Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> May** - Y10 Work Experience

**Monday 25<sup>th</sup> - Friday 29<sup>th</sup> May** - Half Term

**Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June** - Students back in school

**Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> June** - Art Gallery Event 17:30-18:30

## Uniform & Equipment

Please ensure your children have the correct uniform & equipment with them each day. If you require any support, contact your child's form tutor. Please ensure students have a bag. You can find full details of what they need [here](#).



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# Blue Skies Update - Year 9 Students Take Flight with Visit to NATS

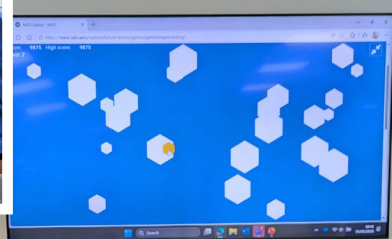
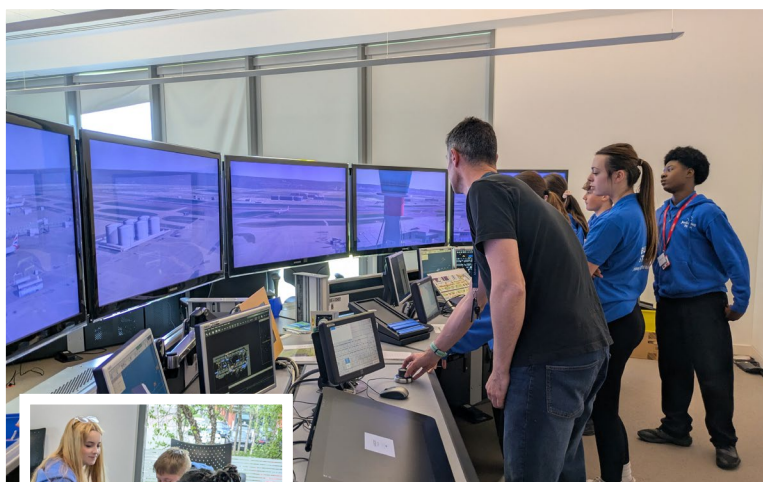
As part of our ongoing work with the Blue Skies Project, a group of our Year 9 students recently enjoyed an exciting and inspiring visit to NATS, the organisation responsible for managing air traffic services across the UK.

During the trip, students took part in a range of team-building activities designed to develop communication, problem-solving and collaboration skills. These activities encouraged pupils to work together under pressure, mirroring the real-life challenges faced in aviation and air traffic management.

One of the highlights of the visit was experiencing a realistic air traffic control tower simulator. This hands-on experience gave students a fascinating insight into how aircrafts are guided safely through controlled airspace, helping them to better understand the technology, precision and teamwork involved in keeping skies safe.

The visit provided a valuable opportunity for students to see how the skills they develop in school can be applied in high-tech careers. It also supported the aims of the Blue Skies Project by broadening horizons and sparking interest in future pathways within aviation, engineering and STEM-related fields.

Overall, the trip was an engaging and memorable experience that left our students motivated, informed and inspired.



# Reading Plus Winner



Congratulations to Summer in Year 7, our Reading Plus winner of the week! Summer chose Percy Jackson and the Olympians, Wrath of the Triple Goddess by Rick Riordan. She has read other Percy Jackson books and was excited to have this one.

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 (SR)	
1. 7G3/En 25/26	84.1
2. 8R1 25/26	62.8
3. 7G1/En 25/26	62.5
4. 7R2/En 25/26	59.8
5. 7R1/En 25/26	52.3

**BILLS**  
COST OF LIVING  
**FOOD**  
SUPPORT & ADVICE  
**DEBT**

FOR ADVICE AND SUPPORT IF THINGS ARE TOUGH

We know times are still tough for people in Portsmouth, and many are impacted by high costs. There is lots of assistance to:

Check what financial support you're entitled to

Find out how you can keep your costs down

Get advice to help you get out of debt

Visit our online cost of living hub, a one-stop source of local advice and support, at [portsmouth.gov.uk/costofliving](https://portsmouth.gov.uk/costofliving) or call **023 9284 1047**. The helpline is available from 9am-5pm on weekdays (closes 4:30pm Fridays).

**NEED MONEY HELP?**

A new crisis and resilience fund will launch April 2026, replacing the government's household support fund. It will provide preventative support to individuals and communities, as well as helping low-income households facing a financial crisis. Find information on our dedicated webpage: [www.portsmouth.gov.uk/crf](https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/crf)

**MORE HELP ONLINE**

Visit our online cost of living hub for information on how you can get support with food, bills, and essentials, saving money and dealing with debt, housing, health and wellbeing, and jobs and skills.

You can also find support for families, help for local businesses, and ways you can help your community.

[portsmouth.gov.uk/costofliving](https://portsmouth.gov.uk/costofliving)

**YOUR LOCAL HOUSING OFFICE**

If you're a council tenant, your housing officer has access to specialist money advice to help make sure you're getting all the money you're entitled to:

[portsmouth.gov.uk/contact/#housing](https://portsmouth.gov.uk/contact/#housing)

**ADVICE PORTSMOUTH**


You can get help with a range of money matters, including debt advice, benefit entitlements and applications, household bills and budgeting, consumer issues and employment rights:

[adviceportsmouth.org.uk](https://adviceportsmouth.org.uk) ☎ **023 9279 4340**

**SWITCHED ON PORTSMOUTH**

As a Portsmouth resident, you can access a number of ways to save energy, money and carbon:

[switchedonportsmouth.co.uk](https://switchedonportsmouth.co.uk) ☎ **freephone 0800 260 5907**

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# 10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

## EXAM-DAY READINESS

The lead-up to exams can be an emotionally challenging time. As the date approaches, nerves can become harder to manage. From nutrition to emotional support, this guide offers 10 practical strategies to reduce stress and enhance performance. Whether at home or in school, these tips encourage focus, resilience, and wellbeing – giving every student the best opportunity to approach exam day with clarity and self-belief.

### 1 FUEL THE BRAIN



Encourage students to eat a balanced breakfast and hydrate before exams. The brain is around 80% water, so even mild dehydration can reduce memory and concentration. Provide water, cereal bars, or fruit on exam day – especially helpful if anxiety affects appetite. A little fuel can go a long way towards better performance.

### 2 PROMOTE POSITIVE SELF-TALK



Support young people to challenge negative thoughts. Help them replace “I’m going to fail!” with “I’ve worked hard; I can do this!”. Positive affirmations boost confidence and reduce anxiety. Practise these together at home or in school settings.

### 3 PRACTISE RELAXATION TECHNIQUES



Encourage daily use of calming techniques, such as diaphragmatic breathing, guided muscle relaxation, or mindfulness. These techniques help regulate stress responses. Consider running short morning sessions before exams, or practising together at home to promote calm focus.

### 4 CREATE FAMILIAR COMFORT



Ensure a supportive adult is visible and available before exams. The calm presence of a parent or teacher can offer a sense of safety. Schools can provide ‘calm zones’; parents can support with consistent routines and reassuring conversation.

### 5 ENCOURAGE VERBAL EXPRESSION



Invite students to talk about their exam worries. Whether it’s a quick check-in with a teacher or chat with a parent, open conversations reduce emotional pressure. Active listening is often more powerful than immediate problem solving.

### 6 ORGANISE EXAM-DAY LOGISTICS



Prepare exam-day essentials in advance. Schools can coordinate staff to greet students and manage pre-exam spaces. Parents can prepare clothes, equipment and transport the night before to prevent stress.

got this!

### 7 BUILD A COPING TOOLKIT



Teach students simple ‘in-the-moment’ coping strategies. These include calm breathing, focusing on what they can control, and using grounding techniques. Practise these together so they become easy to recall under pressure.

### 8 EMBRACE A BALANCED ROUTINE



Reinforce healthy routines: regular sleep, nutritious meals, movement and time to unwind. Families and schools can support students by encouraging outdoor time, screen breaks and restful evenings before exams.

### 9 NORMALISE EXAM NERVES



Let students know that feeling anxious is normal and doesn’t mean they’re unprepared. Reassure them that a certain level of stress is natural – and can actually improve focus and performance when managed well. A calm, understanding tone – at home and at school – helps build confidence and resilience.

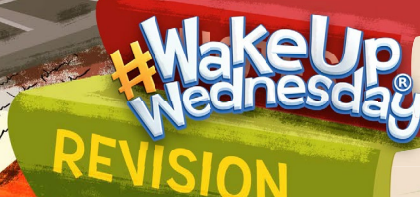
### 10 KEEP SPACES CALM



Reduce pressure in exam-day environments. Whether in the school common room or family kitchen, avoid last-minute cramming. Instead, use soft lighting, gentle music, and quiet time to support a composed mindset.

### Meet Our Expert

Stefan Fusenich is a teacher educator and DfE subject learning coach (advanced practitioner). Stefan has extensive management and teaching experience across various posts in education, and is a qualified lecturer with Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills status.



The National College®

Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/exam-day-readiness>

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