

# Parent Bulletin

19<sup>th</sup> January 2024

Welcome to our latest Parent Bulletin!

In this edition you can learn about what Team Science have been up to, find out information about an important national survey, and discover exciting job opportunities here at Trafalgar. There are also some reminders of upcoming open events at local colleges for our Year 11s still unsure of their next steps, along with some helpful tips on helping your child manage the world of social media and protect their mental health.

Year 10 students are busy finding themselves placements for work experience which takes place in May. Support will be on offer over the upcoming half term to help students secure placements. Please be encouraging them to contact potential employers and if you need any additional advice or support, please send them to see Miss Passmore in the library at the earliest opportunity or email [WEX@trafalgarschool.org.uk](mailto:WEX@trafalgarschool.org.uk).

Stay safe and take care,

**Team Trafalgar**

## Community Circles

This week in Monday's check-in, the question was **"What do you normally eat for lunch?"**.



This is in keeping with our January theme of 'Healthy body, healthy mind'. Interestingly, some staff and students were using January as a month to reset their eating habits, which was reflected in their lunch choices. What it really highlighted was how much we all tend to form habits around what we eat! A lot of students eat either the same or similar foods everyday, others would eat different things depending on what the canteen has on offer. Reflecting on what we eat can allow us to make more mindful and considered choices.

Open up the discussion and get curious with your friends and family. **#joinin #healthybodyhealthymind**

## College Open Events Coming Up

For our Year 11 students, here are some upcoming dates of open events at local colleges this term:

- Fareham College - Wednesday 28th February, 4-7pm
- City of Portsmouth College - Wednesday 28th February, 4:30-7:30pm
- HSDC South Downs - Thursday 29th February
- Eastleigh College - Monday 4th March, 4:30-7pm
- HSDC Havant - Wednesday 6th March
- City College - Thursday 21st March, 5-7pm

## Key Dates

**Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> February** - PD Day 3

**Monday 12<sup>th</sup> - Friday 16<sup>th</sup> February** - Half Term

**Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> February** - Year 8 Parents' Evening

**Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> March** - Year 9 Options Evening

**Friday 15<sup>th</sup> March** - RAP Meetings - all years (students not in school)

2024

### 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. You can find details of what they need [here](#).



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# Science Department Update

## Year 7

"An expert is a person who has made all the mistakes that can be made in a very narrow field." – Niels Bohr

As we continue our science education journey, we say well done to our Year 7 students who are learning about forces, energy and sound! This has involved learning about mass and weight and the role gravity has in this. They are also investigating pressure.

## Year 8

"If you want to have good ideas, you must have many ideas." – Linus Pauling

As we continue to progress science, we say well done to Year 8 who have now completed their chemistry landmark assessments. Having done this, our Year 8 students continue their physics education, learning all about electricity, energy transfers and light! Here, Year 8 have enjoyed making circuits, crushing cans using only air pressure and will later be bending and separating light!

## Year 9

"Science and everyday life cannot and should not be separated." – Rosalind Franklin



Having completed the fundamental topics for each science, our Year 9 students have moved into their key stage 4 topics, learning about cell organelles and cell division (mitosis) in animals, plants and bacteria. Upon completing these, our Year 9 students will learn and develop their understanding of fundamental chemistry separation techniques.

## Year 10

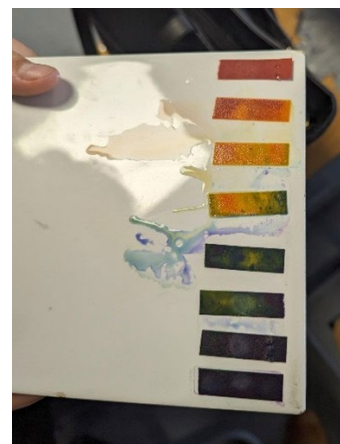
'Nothing in life is to be feared, it is only to be understood. Now is the time to understand more, so that we may fear less.'— Marie Curie.

Our Year 10 students have been learning about disease, evolution, acids, metal reactions and radioactivity. With the large volume of topics and materials

taught, Year 10 need to be thinking about their upcoming landmark Science assessments! The assessment period starts Monday 5<sup>th</sup> February (the week before half term) until the 23<sup>rd</sup> of February. Revision resources, practice exam questions and lesson slides are provided in each Google Classroom to ensure that we continue to support our Year 10s and make sure they are ready to excel in their Science GCSEs next year.

## Year 11

"Study the science of art. Study the art of science. Develop your senses- especially learn how to see. Realize that everything connects to everything else." – Leonardo da Vinci



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Well done to our Year 11 students who have been continuing their science education learning about circuits, power, energy and magnets! In addition to their classwork, our Year 11s have been attending science interventions with an eye clearly towards their upcoming GCSEs this summer. The science department has been helping our students ensure that they have a deep understanding of the fundamental biology, chemistry and physics topics, and can apply this knowledge and excel in their GCSEs.

**Home Learning:** Home Learning is set weekly via an online platform called SENECA on Classcharts. This platform is tailored to each class and reinforces the key concepts being taught in each lesson. SENECA can be accessed by any device and students should ensure that they are able to access it with their username and password, both of which can be provided by their science teacher. For any student who may struggle with their science home learning, there is a weekly Wednesday science support club they can attend in Science 1.

Alongside this platform, revision materials and mock exam questions are set frequently for Year 10, uploaded on Classcharts and mirrored in their Google Classrooms. Every Week 1 Monday, science interventions are scheduled where bespoke support is provided to Year 11 students as we prepare them for their upcoming GCSEs.

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## 'The Big Ambition' National Survey

### Message from the Children's Commissioner for England:

"I just wanted to offer my final thanks for your support with my national campaign 'The Big Ambition' which will be closing on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> January.

I have been overwhelmed by the response the survey has received. Over 300,000 children, young people, parents and carers have participated, making it one of the largest surveys of its kind!

This is the final push to hear from even more children before the survey closes, it is so important that every child in England has an opportunity to tell policy makers what they want and need ahead of the General Election.

By sharing my survey with your pupils and parents or carers, you can make sure that the children and young people of Portsmouth are fairly represented in the results."

Children and parents or carers can complete the survey here: [www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/thebigambition](http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/thebigambition)

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## Job opportunities at Trafalgar School

We are currently recruiting for the following roles to join our fantastic team here at Trafalgar:

- Subject Lead: Geography
- Teacher of Art and Design Technology
- Pastoral Support Worker (Temporary contract)
- SEMH Lead
- Learning Support Assistant
- Deputy Senior Art and Design Technology Technician
- Exam Invigilators
- Trust IT Operations Manager
- Trust Chief Finance Officer

If you think you, or someone you know, would be great for any of these roles, then visit our website to find out more and apply!



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# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about SOCIAL MEDIA & MENTAL HEALTH

An estimated one-third of children have a social media account, so it's important that trusted adults know what content young people are consuming, what they're posting and the interactions they're having. On social media, it can be easy to go down 'rabbit holes' that aren't beneficial to our wellbeing. As platforms grapple with managing such 'legal but harmful' content, lives are being impacted – sometimes to tragic effect. We might be daunted by the scale of the tech giants and their content which so entrails young people, but we can still help children to be aware of their mental wellness: recognising when something isn't OK... and knowing what to do about content that upsets them.

## 1. UNDERSTAND THE ALGORITHM

Algorithms rank content by user interest: someone who regularly interacts with sports news, say, will see the latest results at the top of their feed. Likewise, if a user browses content that can cause harm, that's what will be recommended to them in future. Someone who's had a bad day and looks for posts which reflect their mood will find similar content being suggested to them more and more.

## 2. AVOID THE MAIN FEEDS

Avoiding the default feeds on social media platforms limits the amount of recommended content that's shown. Users can opt to only scroll through the accounts they follow, use restricted modes, or highlight posts that they don't want to see more of. Explore the platform safety settings to see how you can take control of what your child's phone shows them when they open the app.

## 3. DISCUSS WHAT THEY'VE SEEN

Chatting about what your child's seen online keeps you aware of the content they're interacting with. Don't assume that platforms are screening out inappropriate material, or even that your child would recognise content as being harmful. Discuss who they follow, what posts they like and what comes up in their feeds: if alarm bells ring, it could be time for a more in-depth talk or to seek support.

## 4. LEARN HOW TO HIDE CONTENT

If your child stumbles across unsuitable content on social media, there's the option to hide that post as well as indicating you'd prefer any similar material not to be suggested in future. On some platforms, you might also be able to block posts that contain specific words, which is an excellent way to start taking control of what your child sees online.

## 5. SET DAILY LIMITS

Phones and most apps can tell you how much they're being used. Spending too long online can mean a child misses out on other activities that are important to all-round wellbeing. You could set some family rules – for everyone to follow – around device use, such as screen time limits and tech-free spaces: involving your child in creating this agreement makes them more likely to stick to it.

## Meet Our Expert

Shazia Sarwar-Azim is executive headteacher at a specialist primary school and, as an emotional therapy coach, works with school leaders to focus on the SEND, mental health and wellbeing agenda. A passionate advocate for vulnerable learners, Shazia is a Fellow of the Chartered College of Teaching and the author of *The Rainbow Within*, a book which supports children with SEMH needs.



Sources: <https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-53248595>  
<https://iprosocial.com/insights/social-media-algorithms/>

## 6. MONITOR THEIR ACTIVITY

Keeping a discreet eye on how your child is using social media can help ensure they're not entering potentially dangerous situations. As they grow up, of course, children need space to exercise their independence – but you can still occasionally ask to see what they're looking at. Be transparent about your own social media use and try not to sound judgemental about your child's.

## 7. TURN OFF PUSH NOTIFICATIONS

Even for adults, it's tempting to check an email or message as soon as the alert sound pings. Push notifications encourage people to open their apps and spend time on their device, so turning them off will help your child to practise mindful use of tech. Most of us have other things that we need to focus on as a priority – and those notifications will still be there later, when we have more time.

## 8. USE DEVICES TOGETHER

Giving children internet-enabled devices and complete freedom to explore platforms on their own can result in exposure to hugely damaging content. You could consider making a particular area at home a designated space to use phones, tablets and so on – making it much easier to monitor what content your child is viewing and (if necessary) steer them away from any potentially harmful paths.

## 9. ENCOURAGE OTHER ACTIVITIES

Mental health professionals often highlight the importance of exercise, quality time with loved ones, a balanced diet and restful sleep for our mental wellbeing. Spending hours on social media can cause us to sacrifice other activities that our brains need to feel well – so encouraging your child to put down their phone and enjoy something that doesn't involve a screen can be immensely beneficial.

## 10. TALK ABOUT PEER PRESSURE

Most platforms default children's accounts to private, so only people they've accepted as friends can see their posts. This reduces the risk of bullying or unkind comments, but – just like offline life – the digital world can still make children feel as if they need to act or look a certain way to fit in. Talk to your child about peer pressure, and listen to any concerns so you can provide the support they need.