



WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

23rd Jan 2026

Dear Parent/Carer,

Our Year 10 football team competed in the final of the Peterborough Schools Football Competition last night and I am absolutely delighted to report that they beat Ken Stimpson 4:1! Huge congratulations to all those involved. Please see inside the newsletter for a full match report!

Year 11 revision timetables have been issued. I would encourage Year 11 students to take full advantage of these sessions and to attend as many as possible.

There has been an increasing number of vehicles coming on to the school site at the start and end of the school day. This is making our school site dangerous and at times has meant that the school buses cannot get parked or even onsite! I must reinforce that unless you have a parking permit issued by the college or are accessing the college's disabled parking bays with a valid badge, parents and carers are not permitted to come on to the school site at the start and end of the school day. Please help us in keeping our school site as safe as possible for students and staff.

On the subject of safety, I would like to remind you that we are a nut free school. This helps to protect those students with severe nut allergies. Further information is included within this week's newsletter. Aerosols and sprays (water based or otherwise), are also not to be used in school as these can trigger asthma attacks which can be life threatening. Thank you for your support with ensuring that students adhere to these rules.

Next week, as well as the annual residential trip to Paris, we have a group of students visiting the Royal Opera House in London to watch La Traviata and we will also be taking part in the Katherine of Aragon Festival at Peterborough Cathedral. A reminder that it is also Year 9 Parents' Evening on Thursday. This is an especially important Parents' Evening as you and your child work towards final choices for subjects in Years 10 and 11.

Best wishes to you all for the weekend.

*Dawn White
Principal*



Article on Sir Harry Smith Published

Jack Harris, a former student and current governor at SHS, is delighted to share some exciting news! Back in 2022, during his teacher training at the school, he helped to design a project with students which explored how interpretations of our namesake, Sir Harry Smith, have changed over time. He has since written an article about the project which has recently been published in the Historical Association's 'Teaching History' journal, an academic publication which is read by history teachers across the country.

The article explores how complex historical figures are remembered - not just by historians, but by wider society in the form of monuments, speeches and even the names of pubs! Jack explains that by exploring local sites connected with Smith, and by studying primary sources in Whittlesey Museum, he was able to make the concept of historical interpretation clearer and more exciting for his students.

Jack has always been passionate about local history, and hopes this achievement provides a chance to put Sir Harry Smith and Whittlesey on the map!



Year 10 – Cup Final Match Report

On Thursday 22nd January 2026 the Year 10 football team travelled to St John Fisher to play in the Peterborough Schools cup final. It felt like an age for the game to finally arrive after being postponed before Christmas due to poor weather.

The team had the perfect record going into the final having won all their group games and putting in a strong performance to win their semi-final back in November. Their route to the final started in October when they played their first two group games. They comfortably beat The Peterborough School 11-0 and then played superbly to beat Nene Park Academy, who are always one of the favourites, 4-1. Moving into November the team knew a win or draw against QKA would see them into the semi-final for the second year running. The team battled hard against a strong QKA side and came out deserved 2-1 winners on the day and secured a place in the semi-finals. The day of the semi-final arrived, and the Year 10 side put in another great team performance to dispatch TDA 5-2 although it was a very tight game until a few late goals made the game safe.

So, onto the final and the team arrived in good spirits and with the opportunity to be the first Sir Harry Smith team to win a football competition for a very very long time!! Ken Stimpson Academy were the team standing in their way of glory. The first exchanges of the game were in favour of KSA, who started the much better side. The ball broke to their winger about 25 yards out from goal, who hit a wonderful strike into the bottom corner. We were one-nil down and losing a game for the first time in the whole competition. How would the team respond to this??

The answer to that was: quite brilliantly. The goal seemed to shake the cobwebs off, and the momentum switched, the side became more combative and started to play good football leading to some good chances on goal. It was this excellent interplay that led to the first goal. Moving the ball nicely down the right we got Tommy into space who crossed the ball with pace to Presley, who had taken up a great position to send the ball into the net. 1-1.

Not long after this Presley won a free kick in a dangerous position. He took the kick and sent in a dipping shot which was difficult for the keeper to deal with. He spilt the ball and after a few attempts, Tommy tapped the ball home, and we were in the lead. 2-1.

Into the second half, we started slowly but soon picked up. Thomas made an excellent kick out of his hands which was flicked on by Tommy straight into the path of Finley who took the ball forwards and expertly lobbed the goalkeeper. 3-1 and just the cushion we were after.

The team kept pushing for more goals and created plenty of chances that just did not fall our way. Eventually we got the fourth goal. Jack, on one of his many marauding runs forward, beat several players before putting a great cross in for Tommy to volley in to make it four. 4-1.

Thomas had an excellent game in goal and put the icing on the cake with an excellent penalty save. It was a well struck penalty into the bottom corner that he saved and held. Throughout the game he held onto many shots and crosses, thwarting danger each time. Thank goodness Miss Tyson headed over with his gloves after he left them in the changing room at SHS!

Year 10 – Cup Final Match Report

Jack, Jack, Harry, and Jaiden were solid in defence for the whole game, winning headers and made some wonderful last-ditch tackles. The midfield of Presley, Jacob, Zach, Jenson, and Caleb worked hard to win the ball back and caused their defence many problems with their attacking passes and runs forwards. Tommy, Fin, and Ryan were a constant threat up front drawing the keeper into many saves and making great runs into dangerous spaces.

Tommy must have been the top scorer in the competition with an incredible total of 14 goals in 5 games. The team scored 26 goals and only conceded 5 goals in 5 games. A fitting way to become the first Sir Harry Smith Football team to win the Peterborough Cup in years, I am sure you will agree!

A huge well done and massive congratulations to all the students involved in the games! You deserved this victory!



Big Schools' Birdwatch

We're joining the **Big Schools' Birdwatch**, a huge national survey where thousands of students across the UK help scientists understand how birds are doing. This isn't just a school activity — it's real research, and the information we collect will be added to a nationwide study that helps protect wildlife.

We'll be heading outside to **spy on birds around our school**, learning how to spot different species and see what they're doing. You'll use bird guides to become a bird-spotting expert, and no experience is needed — curiosity is all that matters!

Working in teams, we'll **count and record every bird we see** and send our results to the RSPB. Even if we only spot a few birds, that data is incredibly important because it helps scientists track changes in bird populations across the whole country.

If you love animals, enjoy being outdoors, or just want to be part of something bigger, this is for you! You'll be helping wildlife, contributing to a national survey, and having fun while doing it.

If students would like to join in, they need to see their form tutors for the meeting times. It would be great to have as many students as possible so that we can cover the entire school. We also need an IT whizz to enter the data in to the national database at the RSPB. Students will also be working towards their Participation Pledge.



Nut-Free School Reminder

Sir Harry Smith is proud to be a **nut-free school**. This policy is in place to protect students and staff who have severe nut allergies, where even small traces can cause serious, life-threatening reactions. By working together as a school community, we help ensure a safe and inclusive environment for everyone.

We kindly remind families that **all foods brought into school must be free from nuts and nut products**. This includes items sent in lunchboxes, snacks, and food for class events.

Examples of popular foods that are not permitted include:

- Peanut butter or Nutella sandwiches
- Chocolate bars or biscuits containing nuts (e.g. Snickers, Ferrero Rocher)
- Cereal bars or muesli bars with nuts
- Cakes, brownies, or cookies made with nuts or nut flour

Please always check ingredient labels carefully, as nuts can be present in unexpected products. Thank you for your continued support in helping us keep Sir Harry Smith a safe place for all our students.



Year 11 Revision Sessions

Revision sessions for Year 11 are well under way. Students should check with their subject teachers or form tutors for a full timetable of sessions available to them. Information for after-school sessions available to all students is below.

Monday	Tuesday	Tuesday
Food Prep - Sherwood German - BL15	Sport - GR05 English - OR01	Drama - PR05 D&T - Sherwood
Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Science - Cobalt	Maths - GL01	French - BL12 (Lunchtime) Art - MG09

Useful Information



The **Christian Union Group** meets every **Monday lunchtime in OL05**. Students can take their lunch along with them to enjoy the group, **1.20-2.00pm**.

We would like to remind parents and carers of Year 9 students that their **Parents' Evening will take place on Thursday 29th January**. Appointments are now open for booking, and we encourage you to book early to secure your preferred times.

Thank you again for your continued support.



Selected students from our French Dept are travelling to France on **Friday 30th January** and travel home overnight on 2nd February, arriving back at school on **Tuesday 3rd February** at approximately 9am.

Careers Information & Guidance Drop-In Sessions are running in the College Library on **Mondays & Tuesdays, 3.00-4.00pm**.

Please come along if you would like help with: Post-16 & Post-18 Pathways, Apprenticeship & T-Level Routes, applications and CVs.



Useful Information

At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about DIGITAL DEVICES & WELLBEING

Children aged 7 to 14 now spend roughly 3 to 5 hours a day on phones, tablets, consoles, and computers. That much screen time has parents and educators worried – not just about the hours logged, but about online safety and the knock-on effects on mental health. This guide brings together practical, expert-backed strategies so adults can nurture healthier digital habits and help young people thrive both on and offline.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

SLEEP DISRUPTION

Excessive screen time, especially before bed, can interfere with melatonin production and delay sleep onset. Children may struggle to concentrate or regulate emotions due to poor sleep hygiene linked to late-night device use.

ONLINE PEER PRESSURE

Social media platforms expose children to unrealistic standards and peer validation loops. Likes, comments, and follower counts can influence self-worth and lead to anxiety or risky behaviour to gain approval.

CYBERBULLYING EXPOSURE

Children may encounter bullying through messaging apps, games, or social media. This can be persistent and anonymous, making it harder to detect. Victims often feel isolated and reluctant to report incidents.

REDUCED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Time spent on screens often replaces outdoor play and physical activity. This sedentary lifestyle can contribute to obesity, poor posture, and reduced cardiovascular health.

EMOTIONAL DYSREGULATION

Fast-paced digital content can overstimulate young brains. Children may become irritable, impatient, or struggle with boredom and emotional control when not engaged with screens.

PRIVACY AND SAFETY RISKS

Children may unknowingly share personal information or interact with strangers online. Without guidance, they may not understand the long-term consequences of digital footprints or unsafe online behaviour.

Advice for Parents & Educators

SET CLEAR BOUNDARIES

Establish screen-time limits and device-free zones, e.g. classrooms and dinner tables. Use parental controls and co-create a digital use agreement with children to encourage accountability. Trying a visual schedule or timer app can help children understand and stick to limits.

MODEL HEALTHY HABITS

Children mirror adult behaviour. Demonstrate balanced device use, take regular screen breaks, and prioritise face-to-face interactions to reinforce positive behaviours. Making a habit of putting your phone away during meals and conversations can show that real-life interactions come first.

ENCOURAGE OPEN DIALOGUE

Create a safe space for children to talk about their online experiences. Ask open-ended questions like, "What did you enjoy online today?" to build trust and awareness. Try setting aside 10 minutes each day for a digital check-in where children can share what they've seen or done online.

PROMOTE DIGITAL LITERACY

Teach children how to evaluate online content, recognise misinformation, and understand privacy settings. Empower them to think critically and act responsibly in digital spaces. You could use real-life examples from the news or social media to help children practise spotting fake information.

Meet Our Expert

Adam Gillett is Associate Vice Principal for Personal Development at Penistone Grammar School and works on secondment one day a week for Minds Ahead, which works with schools on improving their mental health provision.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

Key Information

Term Dates

SPRING TERM 2026	
START OF TERM	Monday 5th January 2026
Professional Day (college closed to students)	Friday 13th February 2026
Half Term	Monday 16th to Friday 20th February 2026
Last Day of Term	Friday 27th March 2026

SUMMER TERM 2026	
START OF TERM	Monday 13th April 2026
May Day Bank Holiday (college closed)	Monday 4th May 2026
Half Term	Monday 25th to Friday 29th May 2026
Last Day of Term	Friday 17th July 2026
Professional Day (college closed to students)	Monday 20th July 2026

Contacting Us

Please visit our website to find out the best way of contacting the person you would like to get in touch with. Please do remember that if you are contacting a member of our teaching staff, they will have teaching commitments during the day so please bear with them. If you would like to meet with a member of staff then please do arrange an appointment first.

In any cases of an emergency, please call the school on **01733 703991**.

Social Media

Please be sure to follow us on social media. We have Facebook pages for Sir Harry Smith Community College, Park Lane Primary School, New Road Primary School and the Aspire Learning Trust.

