



## WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

27th March 2026

Dear Parent/Carer

For those of you who attended the college's productions of Oliver Junior this week, I hope that you enjoyed it as much as I did! All those involved, both on the stage or behind the scenes, performed with such professionalism and enthusiasm. We really are so lucky to have such a wealth of talented students. Thank you to all those staff involved, particularly Miss Wray, Mrs Steele, Miss Kuc, Mrs Freeman, Mrs Gray, Mrs Grant and Ms Reed, for the many, many hours they have spent ensuring that the performances were a huge success! I hope that all those involved enjoy a well-deserved rest over the holidays.

It is great to see so many of our students wearing blue today in support of the National Autistic Society's 'Wear it Blue Day'. It has been a busy fundraising couple of weeks. Last week's Comic Relief non-uniform day raised £486.70. Two of our sixth form students have also been carrying out cake sales for their chosen charities. £80 from this has been raised for The Brain Tumour Charity (with £500 raised in total from all of her endeavours) and another £209 for Great Ormond Street, following on from last term's successful non-uniform day (£890 in total). Thank you to you all for your support!

We will be welcoming some new staff members to the college after Easter. Mrs Collins will be joining us as a Teacher of English, Mr Wiles as a Teacher of Geography and Mrs Friguglietti will become a permanent Teacher of Maths.

Following on from my past newsletters where we informed parents that we were reviewing passes and toilet access, I would now like to inform you of the following: from Monday 13<sup>th</sup> April, all current passes for students will expire regardless of the renewal date that may be on them. We recognise that some students have genuine medical conditions which may require them to have access to toilets during lesson times. If this affects your child/ren we ask that you book an appointment with our school First Aider, Mrs Gosling, via the college's reception, where a support plan can be agreed and put in place for your child. All other students will be expected to access the toilet before school, at break time, lunch time and after school. Please can I ask that you talk to your child about this so that they are aware not to ask to go to the toilet during lessons, as the answer will be no.

Please can I also remind you that if your child suffers an injury that requires them to be on crutches or affects their mobility, you do also need to meet with Mrs Gosling to agree an appropriate risk assessment and any additional support required during your child's recovery time.

 01733 703991

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# Headteacher's Welcome

A reminder that as previously mentioned, the black jumper which students can choose to wear underneath their blazer is optional only for the colder weather. Once students return after the Easter break, the expectation is that students in Years 7, 8 and 9 will no longer wear this. Students can, however, choose to wear a long or short-sleeved shirt/blouse underneath their blazer. To be clear, students that come into college wearing their black jumper will be asked to remove it.

As the Spring term now draws to a close, I would like to wish you all a healthy and relaxing Easter break and look forward to seeing all students return to college on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> April. A reminder that on that date, students in Year 8 whose parents/carers have provided consent, will be receiving their HPV vaccine. Any Year 9 student that did not receive their MenACWY/DTP vaccination on 2<sup>nd</sup> March, will also be receiving this that day. If you have not yet provided consent via the link you would have received directly from the NHS, please do so as soon as possible.

Kind regards

*Dawn White*  
*Principal*



# School Absence Policy

We would like to remind all parents and carers of the correct procedure if a student feels unwell during the school day.

Students must report to First Aid where they will be assessed by trained staff. If a student is considered well enough to remain in school, they will be supported appropriately and expected to continue with their day. Parents/carers will only be contacted by the school where there are clear medical indications that a student needs to go home.

Students should not contact parents/carers directly to arrange collection. This is not in line with school policy. Where this occurs, and the correct process has not been followed, absences may be recorded as unauthorised. This can also lead to confusion and unnecessary frustration for both families and staff.

We are also aware of an increase in students reporting that they have been sick without any additional symptoms. Please note that a single report of sickness, without further indicators of illness, will not automatically result in a student being sent home. In these cases, students will be monitored and supported in school as appropriate.

We ask for your support in reinforcing these expectations with your child. Following the correct procedures ensures student safety, consistency in our approach, and helps develop appropriate independence and responsibility as students prepare for adult life.

Thank you for your continued support.



# Rail Crossing Awareness

## Important Safety Reminder: Rail Crossing Awareness

We have recently been made aware of a concerning incident involving a group of students near the level crossing on Aliwal Road.

It was reported that several young people, believed to be wearing school uniform, were seen playing around the manual crossing gates. This included misusing the railway telephone and running across the tracks. As well as causing disruption to the rail network, this behaviour is extremely dangerous and could have resulted in serious harm.

While we are not able to identify the individuals involved, this serves as an important reminder to all students about the risks associated with railway environments. Level crossings and train tracks are not places for play, and misuse of railway equipment—such as emergency telephones—can have serious consequences.

We ask parents and carers to reinforce this message at home. Trains can approach quickly and quietly, and the consequences of unsafe behaviour near tracks can be severe.

As a school community, student safety is our highest priority. We encourage all students to act responsibly, remain aware of their surroundings, and report any unsafe behaviour they may witness.

Thank you for your continued support in helping us keep all members of our community safe.





# Oliver Jr. Production

Congratulations to all the staff and students involved in this years' school production Oliver! JR What a fantastic opening night; the staging, costumes and performances were so professional. We have some amazingly talented students in school, everyone is so proud that their talent is being showcased. Thank you to all the staff that have worked so hard to make this possible and those who volunteered to support at each performance.



LIONEL BART'S  
**Oliver!**  
JR



# Peterborough Cathedral Trip

Year 9 had the wonderful opportunity yesterday to visit Peterborough Cathedral. The day was split over two halves with the first half of the day dedicated to the history of the cathedral, in particular relating to the Tudors, which included creating clay coats of arms and dressing like monks. The second half of the day was dedicated more to the religious aspects of the cathedral which included dressing in clergy robes and baptising babies! We are extremely lucky to have such an amazing teaching tool on our doorstep and we are also extremely grateful for the support received from the Mayor's Learning Fund which contributed to our ability to offer such a good trip.

Mr Harvey.



# Careers Fair - Can You Help?

As a part of our Careers Information and Guidance programme we are planning to hold a Careers Fair on **Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> July 2026**. It will be open to all of our students throughout the day between 9.00am and 3.00pm.

In order to provide our students with as much information and guidance as possible we would like a very wide range of organisations to be present, covering FE and HE opportunities, apprenticeships, employment, traineeships, technical qualification providers, different career sectors and pathways, and work experience and gap year information.

We wondered if any of our parents/carers would be able to send a representative/s from their organisation to attend our Careers Fair to offer guidance to our students and help them with their future plans.

**If you feel the organisation you work for could help, please contact our Careers Coordinator, Angela Curtis: [acurtis@sirharrysmith.com](mailto:acurtis@sirharrysmith.com) or 01733 703991.**

It would be fantastic to see you there!



# Useful Information



**Year 10 & Year 11 Progress Checks** were sent home this week via email – these also appear on Edulink accounts. **Year 11 mock exam results have also been sent home.**

## 30th June – Art Exhibition

Our fabulous Art Exhibition will showcase our students' wonderful artistic achievements from this year.



## 7th July – Sports Awards

A celebration of sporting success at Sir Harry Smith this year, with guest speaker **Mark Sagers – former England hockey player, talkSPORT presenter and BBC broadcaster.** Mark has interviewed some of the very best, including Muhammad Ali and Tiger Woods, and is a wonderfully entertaining and knowledgeable speaker. He has covered all of the major sporting events worldwide including several World Cups, International Cricket and won a Sony Award for his work on the Grand National that never was.

## 8th July – Summer Concert

Our musicians will showcase their talent one final time this year.



# 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](https://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.

