



## SPRING 2 – WEEK 2

We have been enjoying a bit of sunshine this week and getting out and about in the fresh air.

It is lovely to see Spring flowers arriving, and we're looking forward to our older learners making some more planters for us to fill in due course!

A big thank you to parents and carers for your support with our Behaviour and Attendance strategies, we have noticed an increase in communication around absence in particular, which has been much appreciated.

### Joke of the week - Benji

What is a tornado's favourite game?  
Twister!

### Dates for the diary

Coffee morning: 13th March -  
Maple class

## Headteacher's Award



This week the Headteacher's Award goes to

**Poppy**

for consistently meeting behaviour standards and always being polite and positive!

### NEW TERM DATES

Available now on our website! Head to the 'parents' area and scroll down to find 2025-2026 term dates.

# careers FAYRE

**TUESDAY 18TH MARCH  
4-5.30PM**



**MAGDALEN**  
COURT SCHOOL



Our Careers Fayre is coming up on Tuesday 18th March.

There will also be an opportunity to speak to your child's teachers as we are incorporating a face-to-face parents' evening as part of this event.

Don't forget that there is also a way for parents to get involved by supporting our Careers Presentation event, talking about your job and your route into that career. Please contact Sophie or David if you'd like to help with this by emailing the office: [office@magdalencourt.org](mailto:office@magdalencourt.org).


## YEAR 11 & POST 16 UPDATE

Personalised exam timetables have been sent out to parents of older students with details of their exam entries, as well as emails to parents of learners leaving us at the end of the academic year - please contact the office if this applies to you and you have not received an email.

### Support for young people transitioning into adulthood

As part of Devon's SEND Local Offer, they are providing a series of information sessions to help pupils prepare for life after school. Topics include career opportunities, independent living, managing money, and mental health.


Training and Employment Opportunities

 Tuesday 18 March 2025, 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm

Independent Living and Housing Options

 Tuesday 15 April 2025, 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm

Money Management

 Wednesday 7 July 2025, 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm

Good Mental Health and Resilience

 Tuesday 16 September 2025, 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm

These sessions are open to young people and their supporters, with live Q&A opportunities. Recordings will also be available for PSHE lessons.

For full details and future dates, please visit their website:

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/education-and-families/send-local-offer/preparing-for-adult-life-ages-14-25-years/transitions-support-sessions>

## HIGHLIGHTING... BEHAVIOUR

Our new posters have been a great success, with learners increasingly understanding the importance of our focus for this half term:

**Be in the right place, at the right time, doing the right thing**

We would also like to remind parents and carers of the potential dangers of vaping as we are aware of some learners using vapes, and have included some information about this on the next page.

If we believe a learner has a vape or any other prohibited item we will conduct bag searches. We have made learners aware of this, however it is vital that parents and carers are supportive of our approach to protect children's health.

# Belong Believe Achieve

## Our School Community Behaviour Standards

Try your best, in everything you do:

- Be in the right place, at the right time, doing the right thing.
- Work hard, let others work too.
- Be Respectful: self-respect, respect for our school community – people and property.
- Respect other's personal space – no physical interactions.
- Treat others with kindness.
- Wear school uniform – show you are a member of our school community.

Practice our school values.



# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about THE DANGERS OF VAPING

Data collected for ASH (Action on Smoking and Health) shows an increase in 11 to 17-year-olds experimenting with vaping: from 7.7% in 2022 to 11.6% in 2023. It's concerning that these age-restricted products are getting into the hands of under 18s as most contain nicotine, which can be detrimental to brain development and cause long-term addiction. Some schools have reported students having their focus in lessons affected by nicotine cravings; vaping in school toilets; and even trying vapes found in their local park. Raising awareness of the risks among young people could help to prevent these problems from escalating and reduce the number of young vapers.

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### NICOTINE ADDICTION

Since they were initially developed to help people stop smoking, the vast majority of vape liquids contain nicotine. Not only is this a highly addictive stimulant, but it can also have detrimental effects on brain development in the under-25s. Nicotine can decrease the ability to pay attention, weaken impulse control, affect mood and increase the likelihood of substance addiction as an adult.

## WHAT IS VAPING?

Vapes contain a liquid (vape juice/e-liquid) that is heated by a battery and evaporates, creating a chemical vapour which the user inhales. They can be **disposable** (once the liquid or battery runs out, the vape is thrown away) or **rechargeable** (the user replaces the liquid and recharges the battery on demand). Most vape liquids contain nicotine and other chemicals.

### LACK OF AWARENESS

A proportion of young people tend to view vapes as harmless, mainly because of the products' appearance and the perception (often strengthened on social media) that "vaping is cool" and on trend. In many instances, young people don't fully appreciate the concept of addiction; that is, they aren't adequately aware of the risk of becoming hooked on nicotine before trying a vape.

### POTENTIAL TOXICITY

Many vape liquids have been found to contain 'heavy' metals such as lead, tin, nickel and (in some cases) mercury – all of which are toxic. These metals often take the form of tiny shards inside a device's liquid tank, which are then inhaled into the body. Some media reports have suggested these metals are particularly prevalent in illegally imported vapes which don't comply with UK regulations.

### UNCLEAR LONG-TERM CONSEQUENCES

The liquids in vapes also contain solvents, which can create carcinogens at the point of evaporation. Vapes were only introduced into the UK in 2005 – and, because of the relatively short timeframe involved, there is insufficient medical evidence to assess the long-term harms that regular inhalation of these chemical fluids might have on the human body.

### ATTRACTIVE PACKAGING

The packaging of many disposable vapes is very appealing to young people, frequently echoing the colours and flavours of the sweets or fizzy drinks they're used to buying. There's a relative lack of regulation around vape marketing, and vaping is often depicted positively on social media – which can lead young people to develop favourable views of vaping and overlook the possible harms.

### ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

In the UK alone, around 5 million disposable vapes go to landfill every week. Due to such significant numbers of these products not being recycled, their components – a lithium battery and a chemical liquid – pose a toxic risk to the environment, the ecosystem and wildlife. Vapes are also predominantly made of plastic and metal; materials that, of course, do not naturally decompose.

### WIDER HEALTH CONCERNS

Studies are already showing a link between vaping and oral health problems such as tooth decay and gum disease. This is because vaping reduces the amount of saliva in the mouth, while increasing bacteria – resulting in bad breath and a build-up of plaque. There are also concerns that, in some users, vaping could lead to the development of asthma, a persistent cough and breathing difficulties.

### UNREGULATED VAPING PRODUCTS

The number of retailers willing to sell vapes to under-18s is a worry, as the chance of these products being unregulated (and therefore containing illegal chemicals and higher levels of nicotine) is high. A related concern is that the mechanisms inside unregulated products are unlikely to have been tested and safety checked – presenting a possible fire risk if the liquid and battery come into contact.

### SCARCE INFORMATION

The lack of information about the ingredients and potentially harmful chemicals in a vape is troubling. Some vape fluids (unregulated in the UK) contain traces of nuts, which can cause an allergic reaction or anaphylactic shock. To date, medical warnings aren't required on vape packaging – with only medical disclaimers being found on the websites of the various brands.

### VAGUE INGREDIENTS LISTS

Early research has suggested that the chemicals used to produce some strawberry and banana flavour e-liquids can kill cells in the blood vessels and heart. These ingredients aren't identified on the packaging, instead falling under the umbrella term 'natural and artificial flavourings'. Such vague listings mean that consumers aren't aware of the liquid's content so can't identify potential risks.

## Meet Our Expert

Run by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Healthy Schools Service (Commissioned by Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council), Catch Your Breath is a school-based project aimed at young people. Its goal is to embed a proactive, coordinated approach among both primary and secondary schools in discouraging smoking and vaping behaviours.



HEALTHY SCHOOLS  
CAMBRIDGESHIRE & PETERBOROUGH

The National College



## HIGHLIGHTING... ATTENDANCE

Please ensure that information about absences is communicated to the school office by 8.15am - whether it's illness, an appointment or another reason: 01392 494919 or [office@magdalencourt.org](mailto:office@magdalencourt.org), or send a message via the Arbor app

Please include your child's full name and the reason for their absence. This is required daily, even if the reason for ongoing absence is the same.

Class DoJo is for communication with teachers only - absence information **must** be given directly to the school office.

For further details about how to communicate with school, including how to use class DoJo, please check out the document on the 'Communicating with school' section of the website for Parents.

### UPDATING SCHOOL RECORDS

The admin team are currently working to check and update our school records - thank you if you have already taken the time to complete our Parents and Guardians Data Check form. Please complete this as soon as possible, or let the admin team know if you need any support to complete this form or if you would prefer a paper copy.

### Idiom & word of the week for Spring Term 2, week 3:

#### Idiom of the week

##### Apple of my eye

This describes someone who is cherished deeply and held in high regard. It often refers to someone's favourite person.

##### Origin

First found in the Bible, in the past the pupil was called the 'apple' of the eye, and is a very precious and important part.

##### How to use it?

*Tom's daughter is the apple of his eye, he loves her unconditionally.*



#### Word of the Week

##### Jettison

*Verb*

To get rid of something by throwing or dropping, or to decide not to use an idea or plan.

##### Example

The rude man chose to **jettison** his rubbish out the car window.

##### Synonyms

Offload  
Dump  
Discard

The manager had to **jettison** the project as sales were poor.

# THERAPY FOCUS

We practice interoception as part of our school curriculum. Paying attention to our senses helps us know about what's going on for us physically and emotionally. The ability to notice body signals increases our ability to identify and manage emotions.

It can be easiest to notice these signals when an activity provokes a strong sensation. These activities help us practice paying attention to those feelings.

Here are this week's interoception practice prompts for **EARS**:

In a movie theater	During a thunder storm	After a loud sound	Wearing headphones	Watching TV	In a crowded place	Underwater	In the Shower
Someone whispering to me	Listening to rain	Listening to birds	Playing name that sound	Listening to favorite song	In a quiet room	In cold/hot weather	After listening to directions

## FOOTBALL UPDATE

Last Friday we took 21 of our learners to a football festival at the Devon FA in Newton Abbot, that had 30 teams attend! We finished the tournament with one of our year 8/9 teams winning their whole age group and our year 10/11 team finishing 3rd , not losing a single game and missing out on first by 1 point! All three teams worked really hard and should be very proud of themselves!

Players of the tournament:

A Team - Billy Russell

B Team - Tommy Jay Holmes

C Team - Cameron Price



## Our Values Stars of the Week

**MAGDALEN**  
COURT SCHOOL



Respect  
&  
Resilience

Health  
&  
**Happiness**

Kindness  
&  
Independence

The value this term is **happiness** and we've seen some great examples of this quality in school this week.

### **Larch**

Alfie for a friendly welcome to new class members

### **Olive**

Cameron for always bringing a positive attitude to the school day

### **Elm**

Noah for creating a helpful system to make our days happier!

### **Lime**

Lidia for being a positive person in class

### **Beech**

Both Maisie B's for introducing a fun new game to the class

### **Holly**

Aaron for being a positive member of Holly class

### **Ash**

Holly for spreading happiness among her friends

### **Aspen**

Marcus for being so positive and helping others

### **Oak**

William for his 'can do' attitude

### **Hazel**

Neve for being an uplifting and positive member of the school community

### **Maple**

Justin for his cheerful and engaged attitude

### **Juniper**

Lola for her effort to be in class this week

### **Birch**

Theo for filling the classroom with smiles

Next week:



# SPRING 2 - WEEK 3



## MONDAY

**Outdoor Education**  
Birch & Larch

**Food Tech**  
Elm & Aspen  
Cheese & chive scones  
Ash  
Dough balls  
Alley House  
Chicken, sweet tomatoes  
& potato wedges

## TUESDAY

**Outdoor Education**  
Beech, Oak & Ash

**Food Tech**  
Larch  
Bacon & mushroom risotto  
Olive  
Assessments  
Birch  
Bread loaf

## WEDNESDAY

**Outdoor Education**  
Elm, Aspen & Juniper

**Food Tech**  
Oak  
Dough balls  
Holly  
Thai green veg curry  
Hazel  
Thai green veg curry

## THURSDAY

**Outdoor Education**  
Hazel & Maple

**Food Tech**  
Lime  
Thai green veg curry  
Juniper  
Chicken, sweet tomatoes &  
potato wedges

## FRIDAY

**Outdoor Ed**  
Lime, Holly & Olive

**Food Tech**  
Beech  
Cheese & chive scones  
Maple  
Thai green veg curry

## Safeguarding

This week's focus is on online dating. On the next page you'll find a guide with helpful information to support parents and carers with understanding and managing the risks around online dating and associated apps.

If you would like any support with any of our safeguarding topics, please reach out to Jane.

# What Parents & Educators Need to Know about ONLINE RELATIONSHIPS & DATING APPS

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Dating apps are used to help people find new relationships – whether casual or more long term – matching users based on age, interests, gender and more. Some may consider dating apps harmless to under-18s because they aren't able to use them, but effective age verification measures are quite scarce, and it's been known for young people to end up on apps of this type.

### EASE OF ACCESS

The relatively lax age verification process of many dating apps makes them incredibly accessible to children who really shouldn't be using them. This carries the obvious risk of exposing under-18s to a dating scene populated by adults – who may not even be aware of the young person's true age. This is concerning when we consider the 'hook-up culture' common on these apps – with many people using them to arrange casual sexual encounters.

### CONTACT AND CONDUCT RISKS

Once someone is active on a dating app, their social media profiles can be linked to the app and might be accessed by others. This can lead to random users 'sliding into their DM's' (sending a direct message) without consent. Complete strangers could start bombarding a young person's inbox with pictures, messages and sexual comments.

### SCAMS AND SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Some young people may feel they've formed a real bond with someone through online dating, but there's always a risk that it's not genuine. Scammers on these apps often build romantic connections with their victims – then once they feel they have their victim's trust, they begin asking for money under false pretences (such as suggesting they meet in person and requesting a 'loan' to cover a train ticket).

### UNVERIFIED ACCOUNTS

As with all online interactions, you may not be talking to whom you think you are. Without paying a subscription, users of dating apps can often only view a certain number of profiles at a time. A TikTok trend has advised young people to set their age limit to 80 years and over – putting them in a sparse and more 'exclusive' category to bypass the usual restrictions. Unfortunately, this can lead to matches with someone much older.

### PEER PRESSURE

The pressure to be in a relationship can be huge, and many young people use online dating apps as a cost-effective way to meet others. Some users find it difficult to meet people organically due to their lifestyle, and may not have the time or money to go out and socialise. It's also common for young people to set up accounts for their single friends in the hope of finding a match for someone they know.

### SKewed PERSPECTIVES

Dating apps can promote an unrealistic view of what makes someone attractive. With such vast options, some users can become both picky and extremely harsh about others' appearance. Ultimately, all you see on these apps are pictures (with no insight into someone's personality), and some young people struggle with the fear of being judged. Even when someone does start dating, there's a persistent paranoia that their partner is only one swipe away from a potentially better match.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### TALK ABOUT DATING APPS

Let young people know that they can talk to you about anything, even something as private as their dating life. At school, the relationships, sex and health curriculum can assist with conversations around healthy relationships, consent and online safety. Emphasise the message that you want to help them make healthy, safe and informed choices. If they feel embarrassed talking to you, make sure they have a trusted adult who can help them.

### ENCOURAGE DATA PROTECTION

Empower young people to protect their data and personal information. Explain why including things like their school, age and surname in their profile could potentially be dangerous. Make sure they know never to give out personal details, and that there's no reason for other users to ask for them. If they feel uneasy about a situation online, they need to speak to someone that they can trust.

### VERIFICATION STAMPS

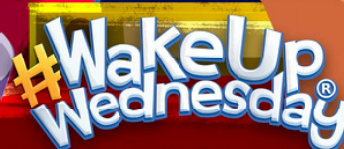
Explain that someone using a dating app should only communicate with those who have gone through a verification process. Online dating apps use a variety of methods to ascertain a user's identity, including scanning valid documents (such as a driver's licence or passport). Verification can also involve users taking a selfie to ensure that the photos on their profile match it.

### REPORT AND BLOCK

Remind young people that they can always report or block (or both) anyone who makes them feel uncomfortable on any platform. Ask if they know how to do this and offer to help them figure it out if they're unsure. Every app should have advice on how to report or block another user, so be sure young people are familiar with the settings.

### Meet Our Expert

Rebecca Jennings works at RAISE ([www.raiseducation.org.uk](https://www.raiseducation.org.uk)) in the field of relationships, sex and health education, providing educational, age-appropriate workshops for pupils around the more sensitive areas of the curriculum – including online safety and healthy relationships.



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