

MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Parents and Carers

Happy New Year, and welcome back! I hope you all had a wonderful and restful holiday season. It's been a funny start to the term with the weather – floods on Monday and cold, icy conditions for the remainder of the week. Despite this, we've settled back into the routine of school life very well, and it's been great to see the students return with energy and enthusiasm.

Year 11 Progress Evening

A reminder that our Year 11 Progress Evening is taking place on **Thursday, 16th January**. This will be a virtual event, and parents and carers can now book appointments online. This is a fantastic opportunity to discuss your child's progress and next steps as they prepare for their upcoming exams.

Year 9 Options Process

This week marks the beginning of the Year 9 Options Process. This morning, Mr. Jerred delivered an informative assembly to our Year 9 students, guiding them as they embark on the exciting journey of choosing their own learning paths for the first time. Mr. Jerred will be writing to all Year 9 parents and carers shortly with further details, so please keep an eye out for his correspondence.

Year 7 Attendance

Today we celebrated with those Year 7 students who have acquired 100% attendance so far this year. The students were treated to a waffle breakfast in the dining hall.

School Musical: Disney's *The Little Mermaid*

We're thrilled to announce that our school musical, *Disney's The Little Mermaid*, is just around the corner! Performances will take place on **Monday 27th, Tuesday 28th, and Thursday 30th January**. Tickets are available via ParentPay, and they are selling fast, so I would urge you to secure yours as soon as possible. From what I've seen in rehearsals and the stunning set design, the production promises to be truly epic!

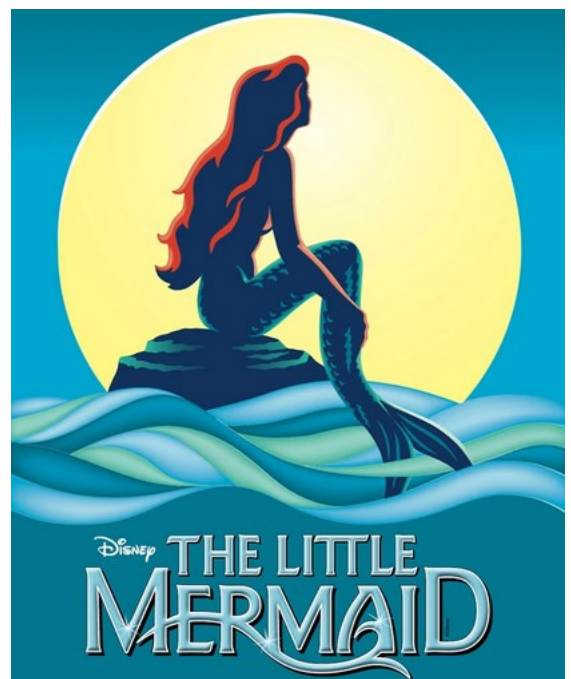
Community Cinema

We're pleased to invite you to our latest community cinema event on **Tuesday, 14th January**, where we will be screening *Wicked: The Good and The Bad*, the latest Hollywood blockbuster that tells the backstory of the Wicked Witch of the West. It's an excellent film, and I highly recommend it to anyone looking for a fun evening out. Tickets are priced at £4.00 and can be purchased from the main reception. The proceeds are going towards the Year 11 Prom Fundraising Committee.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support. Have a wonderful weekend, and let's all hope for some warmer weather next week!

Warm regards,

Pete Leatherland—Principal





What Parents & Educators Need to Know about JUSTALK KIDS

JUSTALK KIDS is a child's version of the JusTalk app – a highly popular social networking platform – designed for users up to 13 years of age, allowing them to video call, message and participate in group chats. While adults can link their own JusTalk account to their child's and make use of parental controls, it's important to understand the risks associated with the app.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

SUBSCRIPTION FOR PREMIUM ACCESS

While JusTalk Kids is free, there's the option to subscribe to a kids premium account or a premium family account. At a cost, this feature allows children to have access to more fun features such as games they can play with others in a safe, monitored setting; a badge denoting them as a premium subscriber; and exclusive features and themes.

RESISTANCE TO CONTROLS

JusTalk Kids endeavours to allow children the sense of having a chat-based app while allowing parents to set controls (within the app or through their own device). JusTalk Kids offers a range of parental controls, but some children are challenging these controls by refusing to use JusTalk Kids, preferring to use the adult version without any restrictions in place.

KNOWING THE PARENT PASSCODE

After downloading JusTalk Kids, parents can set a passcode which users must enter to add contacts. The parental controls help to manage which contacts can be added and who children can add as a contact. This then allows children to chat with friends in a controlled environment. However, prospective contacts don't have to know a specific user's name. In theory, someone could type in a random name and then add them as a friend.

POTENTIAL DATA LEAKS

JusTalk and JusTalk Kids claim to be secure and encrypted, going so far as to state that even the developers themselves won't access your data. However, a security issue in 2022 highlighted that messages were not in fact encrypted – leading to concerns around the security of the app and the transparency of the development team.

CYBERBULLYING

Online chats can provide a sense of anonymity, leading some users to post things which they wouldn't normally say in person. Combined with the option of group chats, there's a risk of group bullying. Parents can be aware of this with this kind of behaviour, recognizing it further and potentially turning what should be a fun experience into something deeply negative.

TOO MUCH SCREEN TIME

A report by the UK Parliament Education Committee highlighted a 52% increase in children's screen time between 2020 and 2022 – as well as finding that 23% of children used their smartphones in a manner consistent with screen addiction, introducing children to social networking apps when they're too young can lead to long-term habits and an reliance on technology from an early age.

Advice for Parents & Educators

JUSTIFY THE CONTROLS

If parents allow their child to use JusTalk Kids, they should explain that they're putting parental controls in place to make the app safer. Make sure the child knows not to put their full name on the account and doesn't use a photo of themselves as their profile picture. This type of open discussion will help to ensure that a child is aware of the app's potential risks and knows how to reduce them.

TALK ABOUT ONLINE FRIENDSHIPS

Young children could be excited to use this app. However, highlight that they must do so in a positive, respectful and responsible manner. While it can be easy to get caught up in a group chat, it's important to talk to others privately and not out any unflattering behaviour. Discuss the importance of sending their contacts to people they know in real life and use parental controls to enforce this.

DOS AND DON'TS OF SHARING

Some children might not understand the potential dangers of oversharing online. Set clear guidelines around what is and isn't safe to share on the internet, and discuss the concept of a digital footprint. Children need to understand that the things they say and share online can never be completely erased. Even if they delete it themselves, it can be saved and distributed by others.

ENCOURAGE OPEN COMMUNICATION

Apps like JusTalk can sometimes lead themselves to bullying behaviour. Parents should monitor what their child is sending and receiving, check in with them regularly and encourage them to show their feelings (both positive and negative) of friends. Remind them that they can block a contact if someone is treating them disrespectfully.

Meet Our Expert
Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and setting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.

#WakeUpWednesday The National College

Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/justalk-kids>
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10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators SUPPORTING CHILDREN TO RETURN TO ROUTINE

Most of us look forward to the school holidays as an opportunity to slow down and relax, stay up later, sleep in and generally approach life in a more leisurely fashion. However, this does mean that returning to normal school-day routines can feel like an uphill battle. Here are some practical tips to ease that transition, reduce stress and set children up for success.

1 START SMALL AND EARLY

Begin reintroducing elements of the school routine a week before term starts. Gradually adjust bedtime, wake-up times and mealtimes to be more in line with school-day rhythms. Small changes can make a big difference in avoiding last-minute panic and helping children to readjust smoothly.

2 REVISIT THE SCHEDULE

Involve your child in mapping out their daily routine so they understand what's going to change. Start with big chunks or activities that help keep things on track, such as getting up and brushing teeth. When children understand and anticipate their personal timetable, they feel more secure and in control.

3 CREATE A SLEEP PLAN

Sleep can present one of the biggest challenges, as children can sometimes become night owls, prone to staying up late during the holidays. Limit screen time before bed and encourage winding-down activities like reading or listening to calming music. A regular night's sleep improves focus, mood and overall wellbeing, making mornings much smoother.

4 ENCOURAGE FRIENDSHIPS

Help your child to reconnect with school friends by organising playdates, catch-ups or arranging to go to their school outside. Re-establishing social bonds can make the return to school more exciting and less intimidating, allowing youngsters to focus on the positive aspects of the new term.

5 GRANT RESPONSIBILITY

Give children control over some aspects of the morning routine. Maybe they could be in charge of waking everyone up, serving breakfast or choosing the radio station that everyone listens to while getting ready. Something that gives them a sense of ownership over their morning schedule can help them view the task as one they've chosen to do, rather than being told to do it.

6 FOCUS ON NUTRITION

Make sure children are receiving balanced meals. Focus on regular healthy snacks to boost energy and concentration, putting them in the best possible state to return to education. A nutritious breakfast is particularly crucial for a positive start to the day. Involve children in meal planning to make it enjoyable and collaborative.

7 COMMUNICATE OPENLY

Talk with your child about how they're feeling about returning to school, whether they're excited, nervous or a mix of both. Validating their emotions helps them feel supported and understood. Try talking them about the things they're looking forward to at school, such as seeing their friends again. Focusing on the positives can be useful for children struggling with change.

8 RECONNECT WITH LEARNING

Ease children back into a learning mindset by incorporating fun, educational activities into their home life. Reading a favourite book, playing games that involve maths or discussing an interesting topic can gently reawaken their focus and prime their minds to learn, which can have helpful impacts on their academic performance.

9 PREP TOGETHER

Turn preparation into a shared activity, to shoulder the responsibility together and provide support where needed. Post-school hours, lay out uniforms and plan lunch the night before. This not only reduces early morning stress but also gives children a sense of ownership over being ready for school.

10 BE PATIENT AND FLEXIBLE

Transitions take time, and every child adjusts differently, so it's important to stay calm and supportive, especially if they're reacting adversely to the change in their daily life. Be ready to tweak routines as needed, and work with the child to make the return to education easier possible for them. Patience can go a long way in setting a positive tone for the new school year.

Meet Our Expert
Roxie Dorrison is an education expert with a focus on mental health and wellbeing. Passionate about empowering adults who spend time with and care for young people, Roxie specialises in creating practical strategies that promote wellbeing and resilience in children during life transitions.

#WakeUpWednesday The National College

Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/10-top-tips-for-parents-and-educators-supporting-children-to-return-to-routine>
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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.

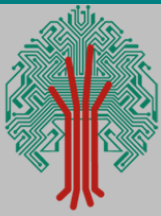


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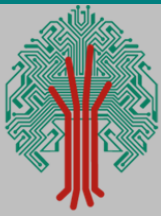
**The Prom Committee will be showing WICKED
on Tuesday 14th January 2025**

Doors open at 5.30pm—film starts at 5.45pm

Tickets are currently on sale from the front office

£4.00





PROM 2025 & CAMPS INTERNATIONAL
EVERY TUESDAY & THURSDAY BREAK UNTIL FEBRUARY HALF TERM
served from the outside hatch of the dining hall



Hot Chocolate - £1.00
Hot Chocolate & Sweet Treat - £1.50

SERVING
Hot Chocolate

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Welland Park Academy Lunch & Deli Menu
Week commencing 13th January 2025

WEEK 1	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Concept	Indian	American	Best of British	Eastern	Fun Friday
Option 1	Chicken Tikka Masala	Spicy Beef Burrito	Sticky Red Onion Sausages	Meatballs in Bharat Tomato Sauce	Battered Chicken Breast Nuggets
Option 2	Vegetable Rogan Josh	Crispy Topped Mac n Cheese	Veggie Bangers	Cumin Chickpea & Vegetable Bake	Vegetable Sausage
Sides	Wholegrain Rice / Kachumber Salad	Chunky Tomato Salsa / Coleslaw	Cheesy Chive Mash / Roasted vegetables	Moorish Cous Cous / Mixed vegetables	Chips Beans
Authentic Italian	Authentic Italian Pizza and Pasta Bar				
Hot Deli	Cheese & Tomato Panini Jacket & Topping	Tuna Melt Panini Jacket & Topping	Cheese & Onion Panini Jacket & Topping	Roasted Veg Panini Jacket & Topping	Cheese Panini Jacket & Topping