



I know that this will be another very busy couple of weeks for our Year 10 students; they have their Year 10 exams and I know that many of them have been revising hard. A big part of exam preparation is understanding the routines and regulations for exams, and I know you will be supporting your daughter or son in this process. Expectations have been reiterated to Year 10 previously in assembly and they will have constant reminders to support them to do everything 'right' over the next fortnight. Year 11 and Year 13 are completing revision activities in class as they move ever closer to their external exams, and, where additional support is needed, extra revision sessions are being provided; I will write to you later this term with information about the Exam Masterclasses which are running at Easter which you may want your daughter or son to take part in.

Attendance is key to exam success; this message has been reinforced again this week and you will see the importance of this later in the eZine in the Year Team updates. There are a lot of statistics around attendance and how crucial it is to future life chances; it is very simple, though, and the key message is attending school every day will mean you achieve better exam results and will be paid more in your future employment. A huge thank you for all of your support in ensuring that your daughter or son is in school and learning every day.

Year 9 and Year 10 students took part in the Girton College Roadshow today; they have learnt about opportunities for studying at the University of Cambridge. I know there will be many of our students who have been inspired by this and will be aiming to achieve a place for university study there in the future; as you know, a huge part of our work is about supporting students to make choices about their futures and providing this information underpins our careers' work.

I hope you have a restful weekend; as always, please get in touch if needed via [Gospel Oak School - Contact Us](#) .

Upcoming Dates

Thursday 10th April – Year 7 Parents' Evening

Friday 11th April – Year 11 Drayton Manor Trip

Assembly Themes

Assembly focus this week was Women's History Month

w/c 31/03 – Eid

w/c 07/04 – Autism Awareness

Please take the time to talk to your child about what they have learnt in Assembly.

Year Team Updates – w/e 21/03/2024

Year 7:

Last week was a truly productive and inspiring one for our Year 7 students, packed with exciting learning opportunities and extracurricular activities.

Firstly, our students played a key role in raising awareness for the deaf community. Several students took part in British Sign Language (BSL) interventions, enhancing their communication skills and understanding of the deaf community. We were also privileged to welcome Damien Wood, a player from the England Deaf Football Team, who delivered an incredible football coaching session. He shared his experiences of playing at the highest level and taught students some BSL to help bridge communication gaps in sport.



In addition, our Brilliant Club was back in action! The group was delighted to have Tina, their PhD tutor, guiding them through their academic journey. With her expertise and support, students are refining their skills as they prepare to write their essays – an excellent opportunity to develop higher-level thinking and research abilities.




Another exciting event was the launch of our Morgan Stanley programme, which introduced students to essential career skills and goal setting. They worked collaboratively to design innovative ideas for a 'Dragons' Den'-style pitch. In a few months, they will present their environmentally beneficial projects to members of the Morgan Stanley Trust. We can't wait to see what they come up with!



On the sports front, our Thursday boxing club continues to thrive. A special shoutout to Rajdeep, who was named 'Boxer of the Night' for his outstanding effort and determination. We encourage all students to join after-school clubs like boxing to build resilience, discipline, and teamwork.



However, one area that needs urgent improvement is attendance. Our overall attendance dropped to 92% last week, falling below the national average of 94%. It is vital that students attend school every day, even if they have minor illnesses. To maximise learning and opportunities, we need to push attendance above 95% next week. Let's work together to achieve this target!




ATTENDANCE

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Children are required by law to attend 190 school days per year. The Government states that every pupil's attendance should be at least 95%.

HOW DO YOU MEASURE UP?

Attendance	Days Absent	Weeks Absent	Lessons Missed
95%	9 Days	2 Weeks	50 Lessons
90%	19 Days	4 Weeks	100 lessons
85%	29 Days	6 Weeks	150 lessons
80%	38 Days	8 Weeks	200 lessons
75%	48 Days	10 Weeks	250 lessons
70%	57 Days	11.5 Weeks	280 lessons
65%	67 Days	13.5 Weeks	340 lessons




EVERY SCHOOL DAY COUNTS!

89% and below
 Drastic effect on academic achievement

95% - 90%
 Cause for concern

100% - 96%
 Excellent

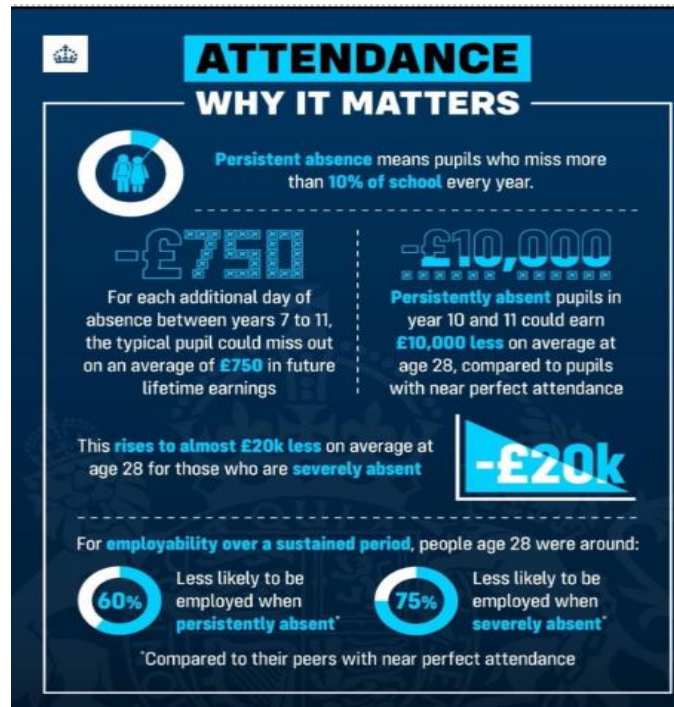


Finally, we are incredibly proud of the vast majority of Year 7 students, who are consistently demonstrating fantastic behaviour and achieving over 100 positive points each week! Their hard work and commitment to our school values do not go unnoticed. To ensure we maintain these high standards, we want to address a slight increase in negative points early. We kindly ask parents and carers to continue encouraging their children to stay focused in lessons, avoid distractions, and contribute positively to the learning environment. By working together, we can ensure every student thrives and continues to make great progress.

Well done to all our Year 7 students for their hard work and engagement Let's keep up the momentum for another fantastic week!

Year 8:

Week 4 of this academic half-term has proved a challenging one for team Year 8. Last week, our attendance took a considerable dip, falling from a record high of 95.2% for the week ending Friday, 14th March to 88.5% last week. While we acknowledge that illnesses and injuries have contributed to this decline, it is crucial that we refocus our efforts and prioritize attendance once again. We would like to extend our gratitude to the many students within our school community who, despite being unwell, still attended and gave their best. The exemplary attitude, effort, and attainment demonstrated in lessons serve as a true reflection of your commitment to your education and the progress you've made in Year 8 thus far. It is imperative that we all continue to uphold these standards, as attendance plays a pivotal role in ensuring success. We all need to ensure we are doing this to prove that **attendance matters**.



Let's give a huge shout-out to Year 8 for some AMAZING progress in punctuality and cutting down on lateness to lessons! Over the past week, we've slashed our total minutes late from a whopping 377 minutes to 168 minutes—HOW INCREDIBLE IS THAT?! This fantastic improvement shows just how much the Year 8 team is stepping up, taking responsibility, and showing real dedication to their education. Keep that momentum going—remember, it's all about pace and purpose! Being on time to lessons is key to making those big achievements and crushing those goals! Keep it up, Year 8!

Mr. Johnson, Miss Smith, and Mr. Marrs couldn't be more PROUD of Year 8 right now! The hard work and dedication to improving behaviour have truly paid off, and last week, we hit an incredible milestone—a **record low for the total number of detentions in a week!** This is an outstanding achievement, and it shows just how far the year group has come. The progress Year 8 is making is nothing short of brilliant, and we are absolutely thrilled to see everyone stepping up and making positive choices. Keep this momentum going—you're proving just how amazing you all can be when you put your minds to it! Keep shining, Year 8!

Year 9:

Week 4 of this academic half term and we saw some challenges thrown our way didn't we Year 9? We took a massive hit on our attendance last week going from our best ever day the week before on **Thursday 13th March with 94.8%** to our WORSE ever day on **Friday 21st March with 83%**!

We know that we have faced challenges in the form of illnesses and injuries but we really need to get ourselves back on track and prioritise our attendance again, thank you to the many students in our family that despite being unwell, still showed up and gave their best. The 10/10 attitude, effort and attainment in lessons is a true testament to your dedication to your education and your Y9 journey so far. We all need to ensure we are doing this to prove that **attendance matters**.

One thing to shout about loud and clear is that Year 9 have made some incredible strides in their punctuality and lates to lessons. Over the past week, we have **managed to reduce our total minutes late to lessons from a staggering 137 minutes to just 27 minutes**—an INCREDIBLE improvement! This is an achievement that speaks volumes about the Y9 family and their growing sense of responsibility and commitment to their education. Pace and purpose remain a priority because remember you need to be in those lessons, on time, in order to achieve and succeed!

And as if that wasn't enough, last week saw the **deadline for our Guided Choices Option Process!** Options have now been picked by the majority of you and we can start to look ahead towards that future pathway of our chosen subjects that will lead to our future careers and adult jobs and journeys! You know more than anyone that career preparation doesn't just begin in Year 11—it starts now for our Y9 Family! It's never too early to start thinking about the skills and experiences that will shape your futures, and you know that Miss Ralph, Mr Bhatti and Mrs Kler will continue to encourage every student to take ownership of their learning journey from now. The only way is up for you all Y9, but remember, education is your power with anything and everything you want to do, but YOU are the only ones that can make it happen! 10/10 always!

Year 10:

1 more week to go everyone until our Mocks starting on Monday the 31st. We have to keep screaming and shouting about punctuality and attendance more than ever.

You can see below the overview of attendance so far...



At KS4 pupils who attend school with an attendance rate of 95-100% are 1.9 times likely to achieve Grade 5 in English and Maths compared to pupils at 90-95%

Late to school is a very high concern at the moment especially with the risk of students missing their exams you can see the below numbers.

PLEASE ensure students are arriving at school at 8:20 to start on the MUGA at 8:25

Finally, we are working incredibly hard to ensure all students are on time to all their lessons. To say we have improved is an understatement we have moved from a shocking 4,000 minutes lost to 100. Please encourage and motivate so we can reach the 0 minutes lost mark – WE CAN DO IT !

Year 11:

I cannot believe that we are now in the last week of March and the road to the start of exams gets shorter by the day.

Thank you to all those pupils who made such good use of the extra intervention sessions last week, both during and after school.

Attendance continues to be a bit of a rollercoaster ride! Last week we had a strong Monday to Thursday only for a huge drop on the Friday - one of our worst days in a while. I cannot stress how important **EVERY DAY** is now, and we all must work together to ensure that attendance stays high for all **FIVE** school days!!

Don't forget to make the most of the opportunities we having coming up in the next few weeks

- Get your leavers hoodie – deadline extended until the end of March.
<https://apertureuniforms.co.uk/collections/gospel-oak>
- Drayton Manor trip – your consent form and £20 payment are due by the end of the week (28th March)
- Prom – see our Facebook page for more details – Tickets will be £35.

Sixth Form

On Thursday year 13 were invited to attend a University student finance talk. Hope from Aston University gave a presentation and information on student finance, loans and applying for grants. For anyone who wants further information I will be sending this out shortly.

On Friday Year 12 and 13 attended an assembly regarding the Bank of England – a representative came in and they were given information about what the role of the Bank of England, the history of the Bank of England and careers at Post 18.

A reminder to be logging on and completing your online learning.

We are still taking applications for anyone that would like to join the Gospel Oak 6th Form.

Your sincerely,

Mr Bala
Associate Assistant Principal Post 16

Year 12 student of the week – Lilie May

Year 13 student of the week – Varni

Year12 attendance – 100 %

Year 13 attendance – 95.5%

Events –

8th – 10th July - Year 12 work experience



To: Yr 11 Parents/Carers

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28th March 2025

Our Ref: SBO.KH.3243

Your Ref:

Dear Parent/Carer,

Re: Year 11 Prom – Thursday 26th June 2025

We are thrilled to announce that the Year 11 Prom has been officially booked for Thursday, 26th June 2025. This formal event will give us the perfect opportunity to celebrate the past five years at Gospel Oak School and mark the end of a significant chapter for our students.

The Prom will take place at the Black Country Museum, from 6:00pm to 10:00pm. Upon arrival, the gates will be open for cars, and students will be greeted with a red carpet entrance. To make the evening even more special, there will be historical characters, vintage cars and buses available for photographs.

We have a number of exciting surprises planned for the event, and we'll share more details in due course.

Tickets are now on sale! [Link here](#)

We would love for all Year 11 students to attend this memorable event. Tickets are priced at £35 and can be purchased via the school gateway. For tickets, please see Mr. Minton or Mr. Wilson. Tickets are limited and will go quickly, so be sure to get yours soon.

We look forward to seeing you there and making it a night to remember.

Kind regards,

Miss S Bott
Senior Vice Principal

At The National College, our WakeUp/Wednesday 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 BLUESKY SOCIAL APP

AGE RESTRICTION
13+
With an App Store rating of 17+ & Google Play rating Mature

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

While Bluesky has been around since 2019, it's suddenly taken off in a big way thanks to a significant exodus from X (formerly Twitter). Indeed, it looks and behaves a lot like Twitter before Elon Musk bought the platform. Bluesky has been touted in recent months as a safer, more open-minded alternative to X – but like any social media site, it still has its share of risks.

NO PRIVATE ACCOUNTS

While most social networks allow accounts to be private, at the time of writing, all Bluesky accounts must be public. The development team has indicated this might change in the future, but the app is built as a public-first protocol. If private accounts are ever introduced, it may only be in a limited way – such as through the implementation of group chats.

INTERACTIONS WITH STRANGERS

Every account being public means that anyone can be contacted by anyone else. While users don't have to respond and can easily block people and move on, it does mean that youngsters are at particular risk of being contacted by scammers, messaged by predatory adults or exposed to others with ill intentions. These hazards can be compounded by the fact that Bluesky doesn't require its users to provide their real name.

TROLLING AND BULLYING

While Bluesky currently feels a lot friendlier than X seems to have become, its lack of private accounts means that there's nothing to stop users from trolling and cyberbullying younger people. While accounts can be blocked and reported, a persistent bully could simply create a new profile, potentially making their victims feel unsafe in continuing to use the app.

DANGEROUS MISINFORMATION

Established news organisations have fact-checking and editing processes, but social networks have no such controls and can often serve as breeding grounds for misinformation and disinformation. Bluesky will possibly be no different once it reaches a certain size, and children may not have the critical thinking skills to tell fact from fiction – or to discern an informative, honest user from a malicious one.

ADULT TARGET AUDIENCE

Bluesky isn't designed with children in mind, and there aren't many parental controls on the platform. In an interview with the BBC, Bluesky's CEO originally said that the app would only allow users aged 18 and above to sign up, but a spokesperson later clarified its age restriction as 13+. This could imply the app was originally meant for an adult audience and suggests that making the platform more child-friendly might not currently be a priority.

RAPID GROWTH

At the time of writing, Bluesky seems calm in comparison with other social networks where moderation is lax and the atmosphere toxic – but that's due at least in part to its smaller community. The app has recently been adding as many as a million users per day, and if that continues, there'll be more unpleasant users to handle, and moderators could struggle to maintain the pleasant environment Bluesky is currently known for.

Advice for Parents & Educators

USE THE ADULT CONTENT FILTER

Bluesky doesn't have much in the way of parental controls, but there are content filters which can hide sexual and graphic imagery. These are enabled by default for underage accounts but can be manually turned on in the 'Moderation' section of the app's settings. The 'advanced' Bluesky Moderation Service lets you restrict content even further, hiding – for example – self-harm content, extremist rhetoric, and even nude posts.

ENCOURAGE BLOCKING AND REPORTING

Another tool that Bluesky uses to ensure a decent experience is muting and blocking accounts. The former prevents you from seeing a specific user's content, while the latter stops them from seeing yours. If a child is encountering trolls or bullies on the platform, encourage them to use this function, while also reporting the offenders to help make the platform a nicer place for everyone.

LOOK OUT FOR FAKES

Impersonation is a problem on all social networks. While the consequences are usually benign, imposters sometimes attempt to scam or groom children by pretending to be a popular influencer or online personality. Bluesky is unique in that it can be connected to official domains, with users' handles linking to other sites; while this isn't widely used right now, it could be a reliable way to verify celebrities and public figures in future.

KEEP AN OPEN DIALOGUE

As with all social media platforms, moderation and content filters can only do so much; it's highly likely that a child will eventually face something unavourable. For that reason, it's important to make sure that young people are aware of the risks and know how to handle the technology if anything they see on the app makes them feel unsafe or uncomfortable.

Meet Our Expert

Alan Martin is an experienced technology journalist who has written for the likes of Wired, TechRadar, Tom's Guide, The Evening Standard, The Guardian and The New Statesman.



Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/bluesky-app>



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SATURDAY 5TH APRIL
10AM - 2PM

Join us for
Taster Sessions
Coaching
Fun Challenges
Suitable for all ages!


Venue
Tipton Sports Academy
Wednesbury Oak RD
Tipton DY4 0BS

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SCAN





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Do you live in Tipton?
Would you like to be part of a friend's group to help improve the Railer and the Crackers green spaces?

Come along to

 **GRACE COMMUNITY CHURCH,
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 **TUESDAY 1 APRIL
AT 5.15PM**

"Help Make Tipton Cleaner and Greener"

