

Parent Bulletin



14th February 2025

Welcome to our latest Parent Bulletin.

Inside this edition, you'll find some helpful advice on securing Work Experience placements—a great resource for students looking to gain valuable skills and insight into the working world.

This week, several of our students took part in an inspiring event at Fratton Park, where they presented their ideas on Equality and Diversity to a panel of guests. More details and pictures can be found inside!

As part of Apprenticeship Week, we were pleased to welcome the Apprenticeship Bus to Trafalgar. Our Year 10 students had the fantastic opportunity to speak with a range of providers about different career pathways and future prospects.

A huge congratulations to our latest Brilliant Club graduates! Their hard work and dedication has paid off, and we are incredibly proud of their achievements—more details inside.

Finally, in light of Valentine's Day, we have included some important safeguarding tips on online relationships and dating apps to help keep students safe.

We hope you have a great half term!

Stay safe and take care,

Team Trafalgar

Year 10 WEX: 12th - 23rd May 2025

Thank you to parents and students who have secured themselves a WEX placement ready for Year 10 work experience in May.

If all of your child's paper work has been returned to Miss Passmore in the library, you need do no more. We will be running our insurance checks over the next term and will only contact you if there is a problem with your child's potential placement or employers insurance.

If your child has not returned their form, or not yet found a placement, they have until **28th February 2025** to do so. A parent guide to setting up placements including an electronic copy of the WEX form can be found in you Class Charts or [here](#).

If you have any questions, please contact WEX@trafalgarschool.org.uk

Key Dates

Spring 2025

Monday 17th - Friday 21st February - Half Term

Monday 24th February - Students back in school

Thursday 6th March - World Book Day 2025

Thursday 13th March - Year 9 Options Evening

Uniform & Equipment

Please ensure your children have the correct uniform & equipment with them each day. If you require any support, contact your child's form tutor. Please ensure students have a bag. You can find full details of what they need [here](#).



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Congratulations to the Brilliant Club at Trafalgar School!

We are absolutely delighted to congratulate this year's cohort of the Brilliant Club Scholars Programme at Trafalgar School for their exceptional accomplishments. This talented group of students embarked on an extraordinary academic journey, working closely with a PhD tutor to experience university-style teaching and research, and they have truly risen to the challenge.

As part of their studies, the students focused on the fascinating role of the *Xenopus* frog in advancing biological research. Through their 2,000-word essays, they explored how this unique species has made significant contributions to scientific discovery over the years, from breakthroughs in genetics to its pivotal role in understanding human diseases and developmental biology. *Xenopus* has become a vital organism in biological research, and our scholars delved deeply into its impact, showcasing their ability to engage with complex scientific concepts and contribute thoughtfully to the field.



Writing a 2,000-word essay on such a specialised topic was no small feat, and each student worked diligently to develop their research, critical thinking, and academic writing skills. Their ability to tackle a topic that bridges both science and research methodology is a testament to their hard work and intellectual curiosity.

We are incredibly proud of the dedication, perseverance, and enthusiasm these students displayed throughout the programme. Their success is a reflection of their commitment to excellence, and we are thrilled to celebrate their achievements. The Brilliant Club programme has been an enriching experience for all involved, and we have no doubt that these scholars will continue to excel in their future academic endeavours.

Congratulations once again to our Brilliant Club Scholars at Trafalgar School! Your hard work and determination is truly inspiring, and we can't wait to see all that you accomplish in the years ahead. Well done!

Apprenticeship Bus visits Trafalgar!

As part of Apprenticeship Week, we were delighted to welcome the Apprenticeship Bus to Trafalgar, providing our Year 10 students with valuable insight into the world of apprenticeships and career opportunities. This exciting event allowed students to engage directly with professionals, ask questions, and explore various career pathways that could shape their futures.

With over 40 employers and training providers exhibiting, the event showcased various industries, including engineering, business, law, the armed forces, carpentry and joinery, digital marketing, nursing, and many more. The presence of such a wide variety of professionals ensured that students gained a well-rounded understanding of the different opportunities available beyond traditional academic routes.

The event was an eye-opening experience for many, sparking inspiration and helping students consider their next steps as they think about life after school.



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Trafalgar students present at Premier League Inspires Event

On Thursday, our students took part in an inspiring social action campaign run by Pompey in the Community, where they had the opportunity to develop creative and impactful ideas focused on Equality and Diversity.

The event encouraged students to engage with real-world social issues, challenging them to think critically and propose solutions that could make a difference. They then presented their projects to a panel of guests, who decided how much funding to award to help bring their ideas to life. Our students rose to the challenge brilliantly, delivering their presentations with confidence and enthusiasm.

As part of the day, they were also treated to a tour of Fratton Park Stadium, adding an extra special touch to an already rewarding experience.

We are incredibly proud of their hard work and dedication, and we look forward to seeing their projects come to life!



Free Half-Term Activities

Are you looking for fun, free activities to do during February Half Term? Portsmouth City Council are running 6 exciting FREE sessions which include a free nutritious meal for any and all Portsmouth 11-16 year olds. These sessions are at places such as Goals Portsmouth, Pitt Street Skatepark, Flip Out Portsmouth and Peter Ashely Activity Centre.

You can view all the sessions and book onto them by following this link: <https://eequ.org/portsmouthcitycouncilsessions> or by following this QR Code:

Don't forget, PYC adventure playgrounds and youth clubs are open as usual:
[PYC Portsmouth - Play Youth Community](#)

Here are a few additional fun activities they have on offer:

FREE
YOUTH
SESSIONS



Brook Club (11–18-year-olds), Somerstown Central
Tuesday 18 February , 4.30 - 8.30pm
T-shirt Design & Taco Time!
[T-Shirt design and Taco Time! with PYC Brook Club · Eequ · Eequ](#)

Portsea Venture and Youth Club Fun Day (6–13-year-olds), Aylward Street
Wednesday 19 February, 11 - 3pm
[Portsea Venture and Youth Club Fun Day with Portsea Adventure Playground · Eequ · Eequ](#)

PYC Bonfire, hot chocolate & s'mores (6 - 13-year-olds), Landport Adventure Playground
Friday 21 February, 12 - 4pm
[PYC Bonfire, Hot chocolate and smores. with Geoff Chapman · Eequ · Eequ](#)

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.

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.

ENCOURAGE DATA PROTECTION

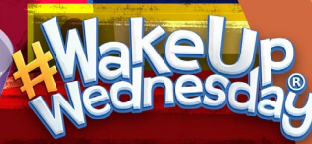
Empower young people to protect their data and personal information. Explain why including things like their school, age and surname in their profile could potentially be dangerous. Make sure they know never to give out personal details, and that there's no reason for other users to ask for them. If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

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) 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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Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/online-relationships-dating-apps>

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