

Parent Bulletin

28th February 2025

Welcome back after half-term! We hope everyone is feeling rested and ready for the new term ahead.

A huge well done to our Year 11 students who attended their intervention sessions over the break. Your dedication is commendable, and we wish you all the best for your final round of mock exams starting next week—keep up the hard work!

In this bulletin, you'll find details about our upcoming Trafalgar Book Week, including the variety of exciting competitions available for students to take part in.

We also have a feature on our Blue Skies Project students' recent trip to Alstom before half-term—find out what they got up to and the valuable experiences they gained.

A reminder to all Year 9 parents and students: our Year 9 Options Evening is coming up on 13th March. This is a great opportunity to learn more about the subjects available at KS4 and to make informed decisions about future studies. Please look out for an invite and more details from Miss Raeburn next week.

Stay safe and take care,

Team Trafalgar

Trafalgar Book Week 2025

Get ready to celebrate all things reading next week with a fantastic lineup of activities and competitions!

On World Book Day (6th March), our staff will be dressing up as their favourite fictional characters—who will get your vote for the best costume? Every student will also receive a WBD voucher to spend at a variety of bookshops.

Don't miss our Hidden Voucher Competition—borrow a book from the library, and you might just find a £10 voucher inside! Test your literary detective skills with Guess the Book, where shredded pages in a jar could lead you to a prize. Feeling creative? Enter our Short Story Competition (max 500 words) for a chance to win a book token and have your story proudly displayed in the library. Submit your entries by 7th March!

Have a wonderful Book Week and happy reading!

Key Dates

Spring 2025

Monday 3rd - Friday 7th March - Trafalgar Book Week

Monday 3rd - Friday 14th March - Year 11 Mock Exams

Thursday 13th March - Year 9 Options Evening

Friday 14th March - Activities Week final payments due

Saturday 15th March - Bronze DofE Practice

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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Blue Skies Trip to Alstom

Students recently had the exciting opportunity to visit Alstom, a leading company in railway technology and innovation. During the trip, they explored how artificial intelligence and digital advancements are being integrated into train systems and communications to improve efficiency and reliability.

As well as gaining insight into cutting-edge transport technology, students learned about the wide range of careers and apprenticeships available at Alstom.

They took part in interactive activities and spoke with current apprentices, who shared their experiences and offered valuable advice about pathways into the industry.

The trip provided a fascinating look into the future of rail travel and the exciting opportunities within this growing sector.



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Reading Plus Leaderboard

Congratulations to 7G2 for topping the Reading Plus Leaderboard this week!

Leaderboard	
Top Classes - Total Avg. Reading Lessons (SR)	
1. 7G2/En (2024/25)	57.4
2. 7R3/En (2024/25)	45.7
3. 7R1/En (2024/25)	43.7
4. 8G1/EN (2024/25)	38.1
5. 7G1/En (2024/25)	33.5

You have smashed it and are currently the best in your year group!

But there's more good news...

Each week the individual student who tops the Reading Plus leader board for the most words read will be rewarded with a book from our Book Vending Machine.

This week's winner is Alexander, who chose 'Waiting for Murder' by Fleur Hitchcock. Happy reading Alexander, you've earned it!

If you would like to win a free book this could be YOU next week!

The programme will be set to the level that is correct for you, so get reading on Reading Plus and enjoy the results.

If you have any questions, see Mr Jenner in the Library.





Trafalgar School Book Week

3rd – 7th March

We will be celebrating all things reading next week!
There will be competitions, activities, free World Book Day £1 tokens and a STAFF dress up, where students are the judge!



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Year 11 Mock Exam Timetable - March 2025

YEAR 11 MOCK EXAMS – 3rd March 2025 (Timetable Week A)

Languages Speaking Mocks to be held Monday 24th February 2025 - Friday 28th February 2025

All am exams start in tutor	Tutor and Lesson 1 (8.50- 10.00)	Lesson 2 (10-10.50)		Lesson 3 (11.10 - 12.00)	Lesson 4 (12:00 - 12.50)		Lesson 5 (13.20-14.10)	Lesson 6 (14.10-15.00)
3 March	Maths Paper 1 Calculator 90 mins (175)			French Listening and Reading (28)			Business 90 mins (61) Hair and Beauty (5)	
4 March	Science Paper 2 Biology 70 mins (153) Triple Biology 105 mins (22)			Spanish Writing Foundation 60 mins (30) Spanish Writing Higher 75 mins (21) Yr10 Home Languages Writing 60 or 75 mins (11)			Film Studies 55 mins (11) GCSE PE Paper 1 90 mins (15)	
5 March	History Elizabeth and Germany 120 mins (62)			French Writing Foundation 60 mins French Writing Foundation 75 mins			Geography Paper 90 mins (118)	
6 March	English Language Paper 1 105 mins (175)						Maths Paper 2 non Calculator 90 mins (175)	
7 March	Science Paper 2 Chemistry 70 mins (153) Triple Chemistry 105 mins (22)			Food Prep 90 mins (36) Computer Science 120 mins (32)			Sociology Comp 1 105 mins (17) Catch up Session	

YEAR 11 MOCK EXAMS – 10th March 2025 (Timetable Week B)

All am exams start in tutor	Tutor and Lesson 1 (8.50- 10.00)	Lesson 2 (10-10.50)		Lesson 3 (11.10 - 12.00)	Lesson 4 (12:00 - 12.50)		Lesson 5 (13.20-14.10)	Lesson 6 (14.10-15.00)
10 March	History USA and Crime 120 mins (62) Travel and Tourism 120 mins (14)						Maths Paper 3 Calculator 90 mins (175)	
11 March	Science Paper 2 Physics 70 mins (153) Triple Physics 105 mins (22)						Geography 90 mins (118)	
12 March	Health and Social Care 75 mins (17) Computer Science 105 mins (32)			Spanish Listening and Reading F (30) Spanish Listening and Reading H (21)			Business 90 mins (61)	
13 March	Child Development 75 mins (16) Sports Studies 75 mins (39) GCSE PE Paper 2 75 mins (15) Sociology Comp 2 105 mins (17)						Statistics Foundation (175)	
14 March	Geography 90 mins (118)			English Literature Paper 1 A Christmas Carol 50 mins (175)			Catch up session	



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What Parents & Educators Need to Know about WHATSAPP

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

With more than two billion active users, WhatsApp is the world's most popular messaging service. Its end-to-end encryption only allows messages to be viewed by the sender and any recipients: not even WhatsApp itself can read them. The UK's Online Safety Bill proposes to end such encryption on private messaging, but for the time being, this controversial feature remains.

AGE RESTRICTION
13+

EVOLVING SCAMS

WhatsApp's popularity makes it a lucrative hunting ground for scammers. Recent examples include posing as the target's child, requesting a money transfer because of a spurious 'emergency' – plus a scam where fraudsters trigger a verification message by attempting to log in to your account, then (posing as WhatsApp) call or text to ask you to repeat the code back to them, giving them access.

CONTACT FROM STRANGERS

To start a chat, someone only needs the mobile number of the WhatsApp user they want to message. Therefore, if a child has ever given their number out to someone they don't know, that person could then contact them via WhatsApp. It's also possible that the child might be added to a group chat or community (by one of their friends, for example) containing other people they don't know.

FAKE NEWS

WhatsApp's connectivity and ease of use allow news to be shared rapidly – whether it's true or not. To combat the spread of misinformation, messages forwarded more than five times on the app now display a "Forwarded many times" label and a double arrow icon. This makes users aware that the message they've just received is far from an original – and might not be entirely factual, either.

CHAT LOCK AND SECRET CODES

In 2023, WhatsApp introduced a feature that lets users keep their chats in a separate 'locked chats' folder, saved behind their phone's passcode, fingerprint or face ID. There is an additional feature – 'Secret Code' – where users set a unique password for locked chats. Unfortunately, this creates the potential for young people to hide conversations and content they suspect their parents wouldn't approve of.

VIEW ONCE CONTENT

The ability to send images or messages that can only be viewed once has led to some WhatsApp users sharing inappropriate material or abusive texts, knowing that the recipient can't reopen them later to use as evidence of misconduct. People used to be able to screenshot this disappearing content – but a recently added WhatsApp feature now blocks this, citing protection of privacy.

VISIBLE LOCATION

WhatsApp's Live Location feature lets users share their current whereabouts, which can be helpful for friends meeting up or parents checking that their child is safe while out, for example. However, anyone in a user's contacts list or in a mutual group chat can also track their location – potentially letting strangers identify a child's home address or journeys that they make regularly.

Advice for Parents & Educators

EMPHASISE CAUTION

Encourage children to treat unexpected messages with caution: get them to consider whether it sounds like something a friend or relative would really send them. Make sure they know never to share personal details over WhatsApp, and to be wary of clicking on any links in messages. Setting up two-step verification adds a further layer of protection to their WhatsApp account.

ADJUST THE SETTINGS

It's wise to change a child's WhatsApp settings to specify which of their contacts can add them to group chats without needing approval. You can give permission to My Contacts or My Contacts Except... Additionally, if a child needs to use Live Location, emphasise that they should enable this function for only as long as they need – and then turn it off.

CHAT ABOUT PRIVACY

Check in with the child about how they're using WhatsApp, making sure they know you only have their safety at heart. If you spot a Locked Chats folder, you might want to talk about the sort of content they've stored in there, who they're talking to, and why they want to keep these chats hidden. Also, if children send any View Once content, it could be helpful to ask them why.

DISCUSS GROUP CHATS

Make children aware that there could be members of a group that they don't know well and that words can be misinterpreted. Encourage them to leave a good impression, to avoid joining in if conversations turn towards bullying, and to respond to such situations in an appropriate way. Make sure they know that it's OK to leave a group chat if it makes them uncomfortable – or for any reason, in fact.

THINK BEFORE SHARING

Help children understand why it's important to stop and think before posting or forwarding something on WhatsApp. It's easy – and all too common – for content that a user posts to be shared more widely, even publicly on social media. Encourage children to consider how an impulsive message or forwarding might damage their reputation or upset a friend who sent something to them in confidence.

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 sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



#WakeUpWednesday®

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Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/whatsapp2025>

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