



NEWSLETTER 16 – 23RD JANUARY 2026

SCHOOL NEWS

HEART OF THE COMMUNITY

As a village school, it is vital that we are both part of and at the heart of the local community that we serve. Since joining Kewstoke, I have made it my mission to be involved as much with the local community as I can. The school has forged links with local businesses, the parish council and the church.

As this year continues, we will continue to look at opportunities to involve the local community in our learning and invite them into our school. Only today, we welcomed Nick Ford the Kewstoke village orderly into school, to talk about his role in keeping the village clean and tidy. He showed us the litter he had collected this morning, and discussed how as a school we can help keep the village looking its best!



ATTENDANCE/LATE ARRIVALS

I would like to remind parents of the importance of school attendance and being on time to school every day. Every minute counts for your child and their attainment. Although I have been lenient towards parents in the past, the significant increase in lateness is an issue that cannot be ignored. North Somerset Council will issue penalty notices not only for term time holidays, but also for irregular attendance. Please ensure your child is in school by 9am, to support their learning and their future.

MR GAVIN BALL, CEO WESSEX LEARNING TRUST

It is with sadness, that I am announcing today the retirement of Mr Gavin Ball, the CEO of the Wessex Learning trust.



Wessex
Learning Trust
We Learn Together

23 January 2026

Dear Parents and Carers

I am writing to inform you that I will be retiring from my role as Chief Executive of the Wessex Learning Trust at the end of this academic year.

It has been a privilege to grow and serve the Trust, and to work with our schools and settings on behalf of the children and young people in our care. I have been consistently impressed by the dedication of our staff and the strong partnerships we share with families and communities.

I am hugely proud of the progress our schools have made and of the values that underpin our work: high expectations, care for every child, and a commitment to continuous improvement. The Board of Trustees is overseeing leadership succession to ensure stability and continuity, and I am confident the Trust will continue to go from strength to strength.

I would like to thank you for your trust, support, and engagement with our schools. It has been an honour to lead the organisation since 2017 on this chapter of its journey.

With warmest regards,

GAVIN BALL
Chief Executive

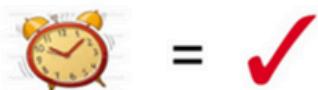
PUPILS ARRIVING LATE TO SCHOOL

As a school, we have a duty of care to you and your children to ensure they attend school every day if possible.

We are noticing some children are regularly arriving late to school. This can not only affect your child's attendance but also their attainment and ability to learn. Being late also disrupts the rest of the class' learning.

If you need support from school to get your child in on time, please do speak to Mr Champs or a member of staff.

Every minute counts



Lateness = lost learning

(Figures below are calculated over a school year)

5 minutes late each day	3 days lost!
10 minutes late each day	6.5 days lost!
15 minutes late each day	10 days lost!
20 minutes late each day	13 days lost!
30 minutes late each day	19 days lost!

Don't let your child miss out!

What you can do:

- Have a regular routine for the start of each day.
- Help your child get their clothes and equipment ready before they go to bed.
- Set a reasonable bed time to make sure they get enough sleep.

Get your child to school on time. If they are late they have a bad start to the day.

If your child arrives late for class:

- They miss out on important learning, which could affect their achievement.
- They don't have the social time to settle into class.
- It can be embarrassing for them.
- They may disrupt the learning of the rest of the class.

TERM TIME HOLIDAYS

As of September 2013, no school is allowed to grant holiday requests under new legislation.

Therefore, any request for term time absence will need to be put in writing, in advance, to the Headteacher. Each case will be considered individually and the absence will only be authorised in specific circumstances.

Schools are required to notify the Local Authority of all unauthorised absences and a penalty notice may be given by the LA.

DID YOU KNOW that if a child is taken away for a two week holiday every year during term time and has an average number of days off for sickness and appointments, then by the time they leave at sixteen they will have missed a year of school?

PARKING

I am very grateful to those parents who choose to park away from the school entrance and off the zig zag yellow lines. We have, however, had a recent issue with one of our neighbours where a parent had parked their car over a neighbour's driveway who needed to get out.

Please consider our neighbours when parking. I have asked North Somerset Council to send an enforcement officer to the school at pick-up times to talk to parents who cannot park respectfully or correctly.

CONGRATULATIONS!

Our 'Stars of the Week' are...

Hedgehogs - Kenji

Badgers - Josie

Foxes - Kaila-Rose

Our 'Values Ambassadors' this week are...

Hedgehogs - Junior

Badgers - Akyedea

Foxes - Austin

Attendance:

The classes with the best attendance this week was...

Hedgehogs - 96.2%

Our year to Date attendance as a school is...

94.1%

KEY DATES

29th January

Foxes Class Assembly

5th February

Badgers Class Assembly

6th February

Hedgehogs beach morning

12th February

Hedgehogs Class Assembly

12th February

PTFA Valentines Crafts Event

13th February

INSET DAY (School closed)

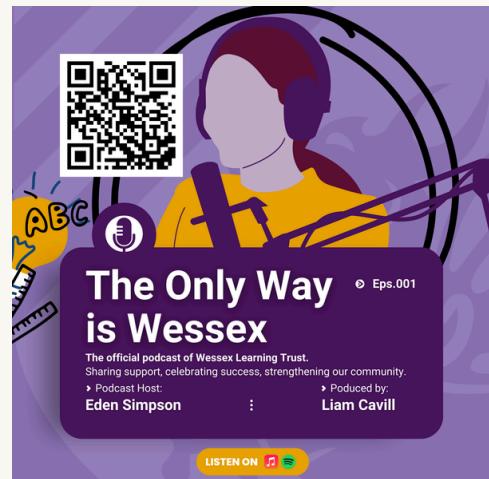
14th February - 22nd February

Half term Holiday

WESSEX PODCAST

In this latest episode of The Only Way Is Wessex, we shine a spotlight on Kings Fitness & Leisure, the fitness hub at the heart of Cheddar.

We explore what Kings Fitness & Leisure has to offer, the values they stand for, and how their work goes far beyond fitness. From supporting wellbeing to strengthening community links, this episode highlights how their partnership is making a real difference to our school and the wider Wessex Learning Trust family.



PTFA

The PTFA have a Number of exciting events lined up for this year, with the next event being a Valentines craft afternoon. Please see the poster below for more information.



Valentine's Day CRAFT'S

THURSDAY 12TH FEBRUARY
15:15 - 16:15

CHILDREN WILL GET
THE CHANCE TO
PAINT, COLOUR AND
DECORATE A BISCUIT.

TICKETS £4
LIMITED TICKETS. BOOK
YOUR PLACE AT
RECEPTION

**What Parents & Educators Need to Know about
MENTAL HEALTH MISINFORMATION ONLINE**

A research study by Ofcom revealed that children aged 9-16 increasingly use online platforms like TikTok for mental health advice, with 50% relying on social media for information. Unverified medical content online is concerning, with the potential to cause confusion, anxiety, or incorrect self-diagnoses. This guide provides expert strategies to help parents and educators tackle misinformation effectively and ensure safer digital experiences for young people.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

POPULAR ONLINE SOURCES

Platforms like TikTok and Instagram are now the go-to sources for young people's mental health content. Videos and posts frequently feature unqualified influencers, causing anxiety, panic, and fear, and oversimplifications. While appealing to young audiences, this unverified content can distort perspectives and spread inaccurate perceptions and misunderstandings about mental health conditions.

RISK OF SELF-DIAGNOSIS

Social media's misleading content encourages young people to self-diagnose complex mental health conditions inaccurately. Misdiagnosis can lead to unnecessary worry, anxiety, and delay essential professional intervention. This has the potential to escalate manageable conditions into more serious mental health issues requiring comprehensive clinical support.

LACK OF FILTERS

Social media platforms struggle to filter misinformation effectively, allowing false content to spread widely and quickly. Without proper filters, young people may discern fact from fiction, potentially internalising inaccurate beliefs about mental health. This can negatively impact their mental health, delaying professional help or managing mental wellbeing.

IMPACTFUL PAST TRENDS

Historically, online mental health misinformation has led to harmful trends, including inappropriate coping strategies or self-harm symptoms. For example, past TikTok trends on self-harm or anxiety have spread damaging advice, underscoring the risk when trends are not properly addressed or corrected by knowledgeable adults.

MISLEADING CLINICAL TERMS

Online trends often include the misuse of clinical terms, such as 'trauma' or 'OCD', making serious conditions seem trivial or minor. This can lead to inaccurate information that can diminish empathy, and lead young people to misunderstand mental health complexities, potentially causing unnecessary worry or denial of mental health issues in themselves or others. *'EVERYONE HAS THAT'*

REPLACING PROFESSIONAL HELP

Frequent reliance on digital content can deter young people from seeking professional mental health care, substituting expert support with unverified online advice. This can prolong issues, complicate recovery, and reduce the effectiveness of future professional interventions, ultimately impacting overall mental health and wellbeing negatively.

Advice for Parents & Educators

MONITOR ONLINE ENGAGEMENT

Regularly review and discuss a young person's online activity, providing appropriate guidance on discerning accurate content. Encouraging open communication or seeking professional help can help mediate exposure to harmful misinformation, fostering a safer digital health and informed critical thinking about mental health.

SCHOOL-HOME COLLABORATION

Strengthen collaboration with educators to integrate digital literacy into the school curriculum, emphasising misinformation. Jointly delivered education sessions on identifying and responding to misinformation can significantly improve young people's ability to discern accurate content, supporting their mental wellbeing effectively both online and offline.

IDENTIFY RELIABLE SOURCES

Teach young people to critically evaluate mental health content by checking credibility, source authenticity, and evidence. Encouraging them to seek out medical or educational platforms and to consult healthcare professionals for clarification. This reduces young people's reliance on potentially harmful or misleading online sources.

Meet Our Expert

Anna Bateman is Director of Holycroft Education Ltd, Director for Wellbeing and Family Services at Leigh Trust, and lead expert for mental health at The National College. She has over 20 years of experience in mental health for schools, supporting educators and families to improve resilience, emotional literacy, and overall wellbeing for children across the UK.

@wake_up_weds **/www.thenationalcollege** **@wake.up.wednesday** **wake.up.weds**

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 28.01.2024

MENTAL HEALTH

Children and young people are increasingly turning to social media for mental health advice, but much of what they encounter online is unverified, oversimplified or misleading. This guide explores why platforms like TikTok and Instagram have become go-to sources, and how misuse of clinical language and viral trends can distort children and young people's understanding of mental health.

SAFEGUARDING

If you have a concern about any child in our school, then it is your responsibility to say something to us. Remember, 'Safeguarding' is everybody's responsibility! You can speak to any member of staff in school. We also have a team of designated safeguarding leads - Mr Champs (DSL), Mrs Mann (DDSL), Miss Speller (DDSL) and our School Safeguarding governor, Mrs Phippen.



They can be contacted on 01934 623430 or office@kewstokeprimaryschool.co.uk

As parents, you can contact support agencies directly on:-

NSPCC: 0808 800 5000

Care Connect: 01275 888 808