

NASS AWARDS FINALISTS!

We are immensely proud to announce that we were finalists in the National Association of Special Schools Awards this year. We were top 3 in the country out of hundreds of other schools in the category of 'Breaking Barriers'. This is in recognition of our treasured and enduring relationship with Royal Court Care Home.



EDEN CAMP VISIT

This term saw the KS4 learners visit the modern history museum Eden Camp. The learners got to step back in time and experience World War 2 all within the grounds of an original prisoner of war camp. Learners enjoyed reading and interacting with the displays and we all had a brilliant day!



CAREERS UPDATE

This half term KS4 learners have been looking at their next steps and visiting colleges in our local areas. Our learners visited Linkage College for a tour around the grounds to see the facilities and had chance to speak to the teachers there about the courses they offer young people. KS3 have been identifying their choices for future careers and the skills and qualities required for different job roles. Next term, the learners will be looking at roles within the transport industry.



BTEC QUALIFICATIONS

This year we have introduced new BTEC qualifications to our bank of qualifications. Learners now have the option to study Art and Design, Sports and Performing Arts as well as Home Cooking. The learners are engaging really well with these new qualifications which are nationally recognised and designed to offer practical skills, confidence and knowledge they will need to progress to independent living, further study or employment.



ATTENDANCE

Congratulations, our attendance this term was the highest in our school history at over 92%!

We'd like to take a moment to stress how important regular attendance is for all our learners. In a special educational needs (SEN) setting, consistency and routine are key to supporting progress, confidence, and wellbeing. When children miss time in school, even for what may seem like short breaks, it can take time for them to re-adjust and regain momentum.

Please avoid booking holidays during term time wherever possible. We understand that family circumstances can be complex, and we will always take a compassionate and contextual approach. However, where attendance remains low or term-time holidays persist, we may need to escalate our procedures to ensure learners are getting the best possible support and opportunities.

Thank you for your continued support in helping every learner attend, engage, and thrive

CHARITY

Our wellbeing theme for this term was 'Charity and Giving'. To honour this the Orchard staff decided to donate their wellbeing budget and provided their own items to give much needed supplies to Doorstep. Doorstep is a local charity which offers housing and support to young people aged 16 - 25 years who are experiencing homelessness.



MACMILLAN COFFEE MORNING



Friday 26th September was the annual Macmillan Coffee Morning. This is a huge fundraising event that aims to support people across the UK living with cancer. This year we had the honour of working with Gallagher's Café and Cakery. As always, the staff there made our learners feel very welcome as they sold cakes to raise a huge £215.51 for such a worthy charity.

STEM - SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, MATHEMATICS

This term as part of our STEM Orchard in the Community event, students made a start working towards their CREST awards. They were able to explore STEM concepts in practical ways, Making their own flying paper rockets and exploring fingerprints!



CURRICULUM OVERVIEW - AUTUMN 2

	Foundation	KS3	KS4
English	Non-Fiction Recount	Book Study Holes	Inspirational Personalities
Mathematics	Number Addition	Fractions, Decimals, Percentages & Ratios	
ICT	Understanding the use of Google Docs		
Science	Chemistry - Basic Food & Hygiene		Chemistry - Chemical Reactions
PSHE	Health & Wellbeing - Healthy Living		Health & Wellbeing - Alcohol Awareness
Human & Social	Geography - Location Knowledge (Africa)		Geography - Location Knowledge (Russia)
People and the Community	Living - Community: Belonging to a Faith		Living & Thinking - Community: Places of Worship
Aesthetic & Creative Arts	Painting - Frida Kahlo		Painting - George Seurat
Talkabout	Social Skills Programme - Body Language		
BTEC and PLP	Various - Project Based Learning		Art Cooking Performing Arts Sport

SAFEGUARDING INFORMATION

If you are needing assistance regarding a potential safeguarding concern during the half term there are services to help over the break: -

- Integrated front Door (Children's Services) Members of the public and professionals can call the IFD on 01472 326292 (option 2, option 2) (Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 5pm and Friday 8.30am - 4.30pm).
- Report a concern to Children's Services - [SaferNEL | Report a concern - SaferNEL](#)
- Children's Social Care also run the Emergency Duty Team (EDT), which you can contact on 01472 326292 (option 2).
- All members of staff will be on a well-deserved break; however the DSL will be checking the Orchard safeguarding telephone at points throughout the half term. Please use the numbers above in case of emergency.

WINTER'S COMING!

We know winter can be a difficult time for many families so if you need support over the colder months here's some information on where you can go for a little help or support.

Asda - Kids eat for £1- All day, every day - [Asda Cafe](#)

Morrisons Café - Kids Eat Free - [Morrisons Cafe](#) | [Morrisons](#)

[Winter Fuel Payment: Overview - GOV.UK](#)

[Cold Weather Payment: Overview - GOV.UK](#)

[Get help with the cost of living from your local council - GOV.UK](#)

ONLINE SAFETY

Online Safety will always be a priority and parents and carers play a vital role in helping our young people stay safe online. If your child is about to get their first phone or a new device then it is a great idea to plan ahead for how they will use it safely. The NSPCC have created a really useful toolkit to make it easier for families to do this.

[Phone safety for your family](#) | [NSPCC Toolkit](#) | [Vodafone UK](#)

DATES AND EVENTS

Monday 3rd November 2025 - Children return to school

Tuesday 11th November 2025 - Remembrance Day

Thursday 13th November 2025 - Michael Rosen Day

Friday 14th November 2025 - Children in Need (£1 donation)

Monday 17th November 2025 - KS3 & KS4 Panathlon Ten Pin Bowling Competition

Friday 21st November 2025 - Student Council Meeting

Thursday 11th December 2025 - Parents Evening

Friday 12th December 2025 - Christmas Disco!

15th & 16th December 2025 - Christmas Dinner

Friday 19th December 2025 - Children break up for Christmas

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about HOW TO COMBAT ONLINE BULLYING



Defined as "ongoing hurtful behaviour towards someone online", cyber-bullying makes its victims feel upset, uncomfortable and unsafe. In the digital world, it has numerous forms – such as hurtful comments on a person's posts or profile; deliberately leaving them out of group chats; sharing embarrassing images or videos of someone; or spreading gossip about them. Cyber-bullying can severely impact a young person's mental health ... so, in support of Anti-Bullying Week, we've provided a list of tips to help trusted adults know what to look for and how to respond to it.

1. GET CONNECTED

Playing online games together with your child or connecting with them on social media (providing they're old enough) is not only fun but also an excellent way of establishing some common ground to discuss things you've both seen or done online – as well as keeping an eye on who your child is communicating with in the digital world.

2. KEEP TALKING

Regular chats with young people about their online lives are good practice in general, but they can also be an excellent refresher to help prevent cyber-bullying situations. Topics you might want to revisit include why it's important to only connect online with people we know and trust, and why passwords should always remain secret (even from our best friends).

3. STAY VIGILANT

Observe your child while they're using technology and just after they've used it. Are they acting normally, or out of character? Possible signs of a problem may include seeming quiet or withdrawn, jumpy or anxious, angry or repeatedly checking their phone. When you feel it's the right time, you may want to check in with them to see if everything is OK.

4. MAKE YOURSELF AVAILABLE

If an online bullying incident does occur, it may take a while before your child is ready to open up about what happened. Just gently remind them that they can always come to you with any problems – and that they won't be in trouble. You might also suggest a trusted family member they could turn to, in case they feel too embarrassed to tell you directly.

5. BE PREPARED TO LISTEN

When conversations about online bullying do take place, they're likely to be difficult, emotional and upsetting for both you and your child. Actively listen to your child while they're bringing you up to speed, and try not to show any judgement or criticism – even if they haven't dealt with the situation in exactly the way you would have hoped.

FURTHER SUPPORT AND ADVICE

If you or your child need additional help with an online bullying issue, here are some specialist organisations that you could reach out to.

Childline: talk to a trained counsellor on 0800 1111 or online at www.childline.org.uk/get-support/

National Bullying Helpline: counsellors are available on 0845 225 5787 or by visiting www.nationalbullyinghelpline.co.uk/cyberbullying.html

The NSPCC: the children's charity has a guide to the signs of bullying at www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/bullying-and-cyberbullying/ and can be reached on 0800 800 5000

6. EMPOWER YOUR CHILD

Depending on their age, your child might not want a parent 'fighting their battles for them'. In that case, talk through their options with them (blocking the perpetrator, deleting the app and so on). By allowing your child to choose the path they take, you're putting them in control but are also demonstrating that you're there to support them along the way.

7. REPORT BULLIES ONLINE

Cyber-bullying often takes place through a particular app, social media platform or online game. If this is happening to your child, encourage them to report the offender to the app or game in question – ideally with screenshots to support their complaint. Most games and apps have reporting tools specifically to stamp out abusive behaviour and protect users.

8. ENCOURAGE EMPATHY

Protecting themselves online is the priority, of course, but young people should also feel empowered to help if they witness other people falling victim to cyberbullying. Even if they don't feel confident enough to call someone out on their abusive behaviour online, they can still confidentially report that person to the app or game where the bullying occurred.

9. SEEK EXPERT ADVICE

Victims of online bullying frequently experience feelings of isolation and anxiety, a loss of self-esteem and potentially even thoughts of self-harm or suicide. If you think that an incident of cyber-bullying has affected your child's mental wellbeing, then seek psychological support for them. There are some useful contact details in the central panel below.

10. INVOLVE THE AUTHORITIES

If the nature of any online bullying makes you suspect that your child is genuinely in imminent physical danger – or if there are any signs whatsoever of explicit images being shared as part of the bullying – then you should gather any relevant screenshots as evidence and report the incidents to your local police force.

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.



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