



## Headteacher's Comment:

We teach our pupils how to show respect to each other within our school and also in the wider community, and it filled me with pride to hear comments from parents/carers this week about how amazing our Year 7 pupils were on their adventure into the 'working world'. Next week, each year group will attend a celebration assembly rewarding pupils for achievement, commitment and attendance. With that in mind, I ask all parents/carers to support their child with 100% attendance next week.



## Book of the Week!

### **The Hunger Games (Suzanne Collins)**

Age recommendation: 12+ (Young Adult)

Short synopsis: In the ruins of a place once known as North America lies the nation of Panem, a shining Capitol surrounded by twelve outlying districts. The Capitol is harsh and cruel and keeps the districts in line by forcing them all to send one teenage boy and one girl to participate in the annual Hunger Games, a fight to the death on live TV.

### **Pupil Review:**

"This dystopian book is a work of art. Suzanne Collins is an amazing author and The Hunger Games is one of my favourite books." - Evie, Year 7



## Steve Eadon Assembly & Workshop:

This week, our MFL department had the pleasure of welcoming Steve Eadon from @MingalabaUK to give an inspiring talk to Year 9 pupils about his fascinating career journey with Arsenal and where languages can take you in the football industry and beyond. This was followed by football-themed workshops in German and French. Pupils were engaged throughout the sessions and it gave them plenty of ideas about the power of learning, and using languages.



## Social Media – Message from our DSL:

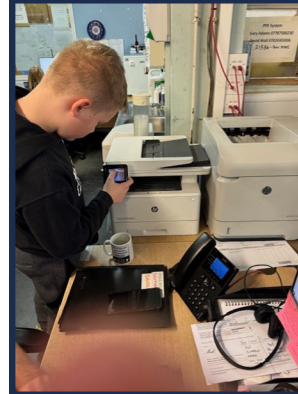
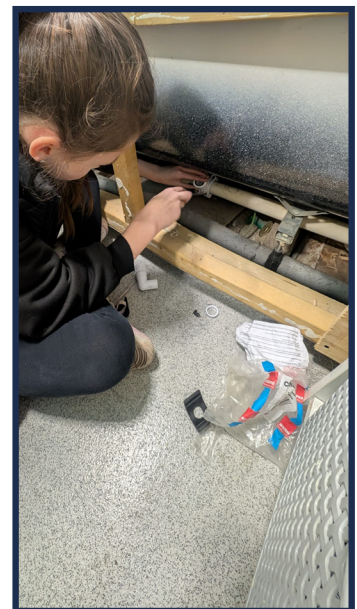
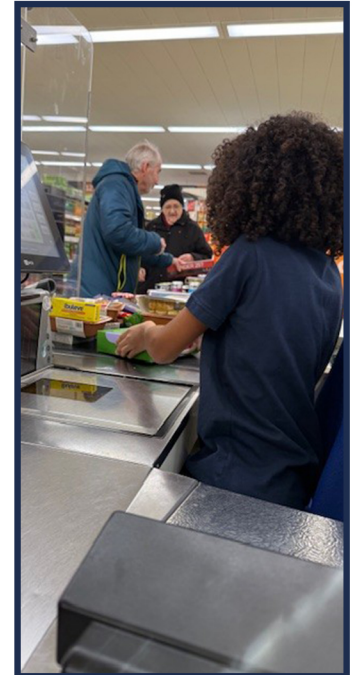
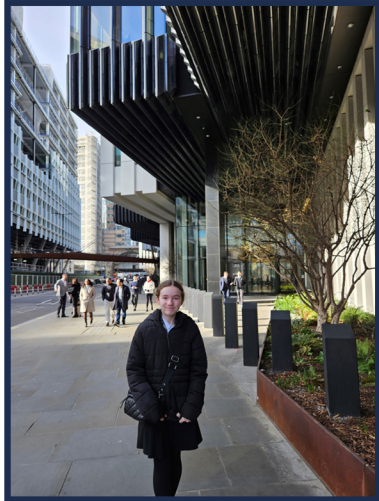
The potential risks to young people from social media are well-documented, and we have spoken before about the need for parental intervention around settings, and monitoring activity. As Designated Safeguarding Lead, I have recently learned that young people are now sharing their log-in details for their social media apps amongst their friends. This obviously multiplies the risk, particularly of malicious sharing of images, and we would urge parents to have conversations with their children about these risks and to ensure that they are not engaging in this practice. Log-ins should be private and not shared with friends, or those who might be thought of as friends.





# Year 7 Take your Child to Work Day:

On Wednesday, over 100 of our Year 7 pupils stepped out into the world of work with their parents or a trusted adult. The pupils had a great day, spending time with their family and learning new skills. It was wonderful to see pupils undertaking a variety of different roles, such as working at Southend hospital, in local shops and schools, the library and several even travelling up to London! A huge thank you to all our parents and carers who supported our pupils this week. We look forward to seeing what adventures our Year 8 pupils get up to at our next 'Take your child to work day' on Wednesday 12 March.



## Dates for your Diary:

- 10.02.25 Art and Technology Pop Up Event/Student Voice Meeting
- 10.02.25 – 14.02.25 Celebration Assemblies
- 12.02.25 Year 12 Work Experience Drop Down Day
- 13.02.25 – 15.02.25 Somme Trip
- 17.02.25 – 21.02.25 Half Term
- 24.02.25 - Inset Day



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# What Parents & Educators Need to Know about SCAMS AND FAKE NEWS

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

"Fake news" refers to falsified or misleading material presented as a legitimate account of events. It's often used by malicious actors online to push an agenda, or even by criminals as a way of making scams more persuasive. Scammers can trick us into handing over personal information, security details and even our hard-earned cash.

### "CLICKBAIT" PHISHING SCAMS

A message arrives saying "Have you seen this video of yourself?" or you might be sent an attention-grabbing headline about a celebrity that's been shared on social media. This kind of "bait" is produced by scammers to drive us to click on an unsafe link, where malware could be downloaded to our devices. These scams rely on our curiosity and our "need-to-know" instinct.

Have you seen this video of yourself?

### SALES, DEALS & DISCOUNTS

Some scams appear as adverts, offering a chance to buy something – such as designer products, expensive gadgets or tickets to a popular show – at a reduced price. Such ploys often include a time limit or countdown, urging us to hurry so we don't miss out on the deal. This pressure encourages us to input personal details or payment information before pausing to check if it's legitimate.



### YOU'RE A WINNER!

This kind of scam involves fake giveaways, opportunities or freebies. It could be a message saying we've won a prize draw or competition. Or it could be a gift, free trial, bonus credit, and suchlike. It might claim that a package or refund is waiting. All these techniques are used to prompt us to share our personal information, thinking that there's something to be gained by doing so.



### FALSE FRIENDSHIPS

Scammers often pretend to be someone they're not to gain their victims' trust. They might attempt to convince any children they connect with that they're a child of similar age with shared interests. Warning signs include a high volume of messages (often with an intense tone), secrecy, inappropriate levels of intimacy, guilt tripping, emotional manipulation, threats or blackmail.



### PANIC MODE

To trigger a sense of panic, scammers may claim that a child's account has been hacked, or a virus has been installed on their device, or any number of other scary scenarios. They may claim to be able to fix the problem or offer a solution – if the child hands over control of the device or sensitive information. Similar scams involve impersonating a friend or relative, claiming that they're in trouble and need help.



### FAKE CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENTS

Impersonating influential people online is a common tactic for scammers, who can use technology to create fake photos, audio and even videos that look authentic. These can be used to convince us, for example, to buy products, sign up for so-called "business opportunities" or invest in cryptocurrency schemes – all of which are fake or otherwise malicious. Many scams also involve the impersonation of popular companies' social media accounts, as well as those of individuals.



## Advice for Parents & Educators

### STAY INFORMED

Stay up to date with the latest information and best practice on cyber-security. See what scam stories are reported in the news and make note of what tactics were used. Keep up with young people's digital lives: talk about what they're doing online and use properly endorsed resources to learn what risks certain sites and apps pose to their younger users.



### TALK TOGETHER

Chat often and openly with young people about fake news, online scams and how they both work. Encourage them to talk to you about anything they're unsure of or worried about online. If a child claims to have been scammed, don't pass judgement. Blaming the victim may deter young people from asking you for help. Remember: adults are scammed just as often, if not more.



### ENCOURAGE HEALTHY SCEPTICISM

Most scams rely on emotional or psychological manipulation, tapping into our human instincts – whether that's to keep ourselves safe, help others, find answers, make friends, avoid losing out or to secure something we really want. Encourage children to recognise that pressure to act and to always consult with an adult – especially if what's on offer sounds too good to be true.



### BE PROACTIVE

Children increasingly use digital devices for education, socialising, shopping and play. Don't wait for a problem to arise before you discuss the risk of scams, false information and fake news. Highlight what to look out for and clearly communicate under what circumstances the child ought to speak to an adult. Finally, ensure that they're aware of the support services that are available to them (such as Childline).



## Meet Our Expert

Dr Holly Powell-Jones is the founder of Online Media Law UK and a leading expert in digital safety, media law and young people. Her PhD investigates children's understandings of risk online. She works with schools, businesses, and universities to provide award-winning education on the criminal, legal and ethical considerations for the digital age. Visit [OnlineMediaLaw.co.uk](https://OnlineMediaLaw.co.uk) for more.



# #WakeUpWednesday

The National College

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