



# The Coppice Whole School Newsletter

## Friday 23rd January 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope that you have all had a good week and are looking forward to the weekend with your children.

### **Future Medics Assembly for Years 4-6:**

Years 4–6 recently took part in an introductory assembly for an exciting new after-school club starting after the February half-term (Monday 23rd February).

In the Future Medics Club, children will take part in a range of hands-on, practical activities using specialist equipment, including listening to the heart with an ultrasound Doppler, viewing veins using infrared technology, and observing the back of the eye.

During the club, children will also use medical mannequins to practise 'taking blood', learn how to read an ECG chart, and explore many other fascinating aspects of medical science. This club offers a fantastic opportunity for budding doctors, paramedics and psychologists of the future to develop their curiosity and enthusiasm for healthcare and science.

Spaces are limited, so please sign up using the QR code that is on the leaflet, which will be sent home. This will also be available digitally at the end of the newsletter.



### **Oracy Framework Praise Postcards - look out for them!**

In last week's newsletter, I did a one-page special all about our very exciting Voice 21 Oracy development journey. If you didn't get a chance to read this, I strongly encourage you to do so as Oracy is going to be a very significant part of your child's education at The Coppice both now and in the future.

As part of the teaching and learning of Oracy skills, we will be rewarding children with praise postcards linked to each of the four strands of Oracy skills that we are developing: Examples of the these postcards are below:



Please praise your child greatly if they receive one of these postcards. It will mean that they really are embracing the Oracy learning that we are doing with them. Also, look out for them using their Oracy skills at home - please let us know if you notice them doing so!

# What Parents & Educators Need to Know about TECHNOLOGY ATTACHMENT

In today's digital age, children are increasingly forming emotional and habitual attachments to their devices. With 96% regularly accessing the internet and nearly half engaging in live streaming or content sharing, their online presence is greater than ever. This guide explores the phenomenon of technology attachment in young people and offers expert advice on fostering healthier digital habits.

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### WIRED FOR REWARD

Children's brains are particularly sensitive to reward-based stimulation, and some digital platforms, especially those offering quick-hit content like short-form videos, are designed to exploit this. The instant gratification of likes, comments, and rapid scene changes triggers dopamine releases, making these interactions highly addictive. Over time, this may contribute to changes in attention patterns and a reduced inclination towards activities that involve prolonged focus or delayed gratification, such as reading, problem-solving, or creative play.

### NIGHT-TIME TECH HABITS

Screen use late into the evening can disrupt natural sleep patterns by suppressing melatonin, the hormone that regulates sleep. Children engaging with stimulating content may experience delayed bedtimes, lower sleep quality, and increased fatigue during the day. Additionally, fear of missing out (FOMO) on online interactions can cause anxiety and resistance to logging off, creating a cycle of late-night engagement and tired mornings.

### SHAPED BY SCREENS

For many children, digital spaces have become a key arena for identity exploration and expression. Social media encourages them to curate their image carefully, with likes, comments, and shares serving as social validation. This environment can tie self-esteem to online feedback, making children vulnerable to comparison, self-doubt, and pressure to present a perfect version of themselves, even when it doesn't reflect reality.

## DIGITAL WORLD DANGERS

The internet can expose children to unfiltered content, some of which may be inappropriate, misleading, or harmful. Online predators are all too common, and online predators are all risks children face, often without fully understanding the consequences. Misinformation can shape distorted worldviews, while constant comparison to others can erode self-confidence. Without guidance, children may internalise these digital dangers, impacting their emotional and mental health.

## DIGITAL DEPENDENCY BUILDS

Devices often become digital comfort blankets. In moments of boredom, anxiety, or loneliness, children may instinctively reach for screens to self-soothe. However, digital distraction limits their ability to develop healthy coping mechanisms, such as mindfulness, conversation or physical activity. As the habit builds, their dependency may displace real-world experiences and emotional resilience.

## FRIENDSHIPS & FILTERS

Technology transforms how young people socialise, often replacing face-to-face interaction with text-based or image-based communication. While messaging apps and social media enable connection, they may also limit emotional expression and the development of essential interpersonal skills, such as tone recognition, empathy, and reading body language. As a result, some children may become less confident with exchanges in person and more reliant on digital personas to navigate friendships.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### READ THE ROOM

Pay attention to behavioural changes that may signal unhealthy tech attachment. This includes mood swings, increased secrecy about online activity, withdrawal from family or hobbies, and visible distress when separated from devices. These cues can indicate deeper emotional reliance or even exposure to distressing content. Early recognition allows for proactive support and meaningful conversation.

### SHAPE DIGITAL BOUNDARIES

Create a balanced digital environment with clear guidelines on when and how devices can be used. This includes screen-free zones (e.g. bedrooms, dining tables), app restrictions, and time limits. More importantly, involve children in these decisions and explain the reasoning behind them, even reflecting upon your own digital use so they can see it's something we all have to manage. Turning boundaries into a dialogue, not just directives, helps build trust and encourages self-regulation.

### Meet Our Expert

Philippa Whitmell is an award-winning educator, author of *The Digital Ecosystem*, and founder of Education and Digital Bridge. Digital Bridge supports the relationship between families and technology, empowering everyone to be balanced and digitally well. With over 15 years in digital education and wellbeing, she supports families, schools, and governments to build balanced and safe digital cultures.

### DON'T WAIT, REACH OUT EARLY

If a child's relationship with technology starts affecting their emotional wellbeing, school performance, or social connections, don't hesitate to seek help. Open up discussions with teachers, pastoral staff, or digital wellbeing professionals. Early intervention is key, and a supportive network can provide tools, resources, and reassurance for both children and adults navigating this evolving digital landscape.

### SET THE STANDARD

Children often model the behaviour they see. When adults demonstrate healthy digital habits, such as prioritising face-to-face conversation, balancing screen time with other activities, and using devices with purpose, children are more likely to follow suit. Share your own positive uses of technology and invite children to do the same. This collaborative approach helps demystify tech use and encourages responsible engagement.

The National College

## Reception Celebration Assembly and stories

Mrs. Ashwell and I had a lovely time in Reception this morning when we presented celebration certificates and Team Point medals to some of our youngest children in school. Seeing the reaction of these children when they heard their names read out was an absolute joy.

Following the giving out of the certificates and team point medals, Mrs. Ashwell and I both read a story to the children which, as always, we absolutely loved! Our choice of story on this occasion was 'The Rainbow Fish' by Marcus Pfister - a tale of sharing and kindness. We are already looking forward to doing this again very soon. There is nothing like reading a story to children! :-)

As a key part of my continued desire to help support Parents and Carers to keep their children safe online, I am once again sharing some information regarding 'Technology Attachment' that I think you will find very useful. I have shared information on a number of occasions now, and I know from feedback that these are always well received.

As a school, and from some of the worrying things that we hear from talking to children in school, without a doubt, the growth for some children in terms of technology attachment is a huge concern. Therefore, we want to continue to share guidance that may help this situation improve.

If there is ever any area of technology use by your child that you would like us to provide helpful information on, please just let us know and we will do our best to source it.

In the meantime, should anyone like a PDF or Jpg version of this factsheet, please contact the school office and we will make sure that we get this information sent to you.

## Car Parking on Shawhurst Lane and surrounding roads - please be considerate.

I have had a few Parents and Carers recently mentioning to me about inconsiderate parking on Shawhurst Lane and surrounding roads. This has involved people, a number of whom are definitely Parents and Carers of children at our school, parking so far up on grass verges that it is making it virtually impossible for those with pushchairs to get past, particularly when they are also trying to escort other children as well.

I fully appreciate that parking at drop-off and pick-up times can often be difficult. However, it is not an excuse to be inconsiderate and make things difficult for those who are walking. Can I therefore appeal again to you all to park safely and responsibly - thank you.

# Celebration Time

## Marnie and Violet star in Irish Dancing Competition!

Last weekend both Violet (4DR) and Marnie (3K) entered an Irish dance 'Feis' competition in Birmingham.

Marnie, who dances for Scanlon School of Irish Dance, received a selection of 1st, 2nd and 3rd trophies for her dances in the under 8's category.

Violet received a 1st and 2nd and various medals for her under 9's category. Violet dances for McCarron Irish Dance School.

The girls' Parents reported that it was lovely to watch both the girls supporting each other, even though they dance for different schools - dance rivals but Coppice buddies all the same!:-)

Both of these lovely, talented girls clearly adore their Irish dancing with a passion and I have never forgotten how wowed I was by them in the Children In Need school talent show. We are so proud of you for your fantastic achievements and your support of each other girls!



## Star of the Week - Hot Chocolate



# Attendance Figures

## **TOP ATTENDANCE 12th - 16th Jan (last week)**

	<b>1LR</b>	<b>98.67%</b>
	<b>5GB</b>	<b>99.35%</b>

## **TOP ATTENDANCE 19th-23rd Jan (this week)**

	<b>1T</b>	<b>99.31%</b>
	<b>5W</b>	<b>99.35%</b>

## Music Listening and Appreciation

This week's playlist was:

### Baroque (1600 - 1750)

- 1) Bach - Canon in D (Pachelbel's Canon) (1680)
- 2) Handel - Zadok the Priest (1727)
- 3) Allegri - Miserere Mei (1630s)
- 4) Strozzi - Che si può fare (1664)

Next week's playlist is:

### Woodwind

- 1) Elgar - Romance, Op.62 (1910)
- 2) Telemann - Concerto for Recorder and Flute (c.1720)
- 3) Bach - Oboe Concerto, D Minor (early 1700s)
- 4) Jimmy Hamilton - Blues for Clarinet (1956)

That just leaves me to wish you all an enjoyable weekend with your children. We look forward to seeing all of the children, and you, bright and early on Monday morning.

Kind regards,

Mr. Hutt (Headteacher – The Coppice Primary School)