School Office Friday Update

REMINDERS FOR THE WEEKS AHEAD	
Monday 24th February	• **INSET DAY SCHOOL CLOSED TO PUPILS**
Tuesday 25th February	• BACK TO SCHOOL • World Book Day Costume Swap – see PTFA Newsletter • KS1 Qualtias After School Club – Fundamental Skills – Book / pay on ParentPay • **Football Training after school until 4.15pm**
Wednesday 26th February	• **Class 2 MAD Fun Run – AM – Children to arrive at school in PE kit. CONSENT REQUIRED via ParentPay** • KS2 Qualitas After School Club – Athletics – Book / pay on ParentPay • **Walesby Forest meeting for Parents 5.00pm in school**
Thursday 27th February	• Little Smiles Toddler Group 9.00am – 10.30am • **FIRST SWIMMING FOR CLASS 3**
Friday 28th February	•
Monday 3rd March	• KS2 Qualitas After School Club – Archery – Book / pay on ParentPay
Tuesday 4th March	• KS1 Qualtias After School Club – Fundamental Skills – Book / pay on ParentPay • **Football Training after school until 4.15pm**
Wednesday 5th March	• KS2 Qualitas After School Club – Athletics – Book / pay on ParentPay
Thursday 6th March	• **World Book Day – Non uniform, dress up** • Swimming for Class 3 – please be mindful of changing for swimming when choosing World Book Day costumes • Little Smiles Toddler Group 9.00am – 10.30am
Friday 7th March	• PTFA book and cake sale

OTHER NEWS

- **INSET DAYS FOR 2025-2026 ACADEMIC YEAR**
  The five INSET Days for the next school year have been agreed as follows:
  Thursday 4th September 2025
  Friday 5th September 2025
  Monday 24th November 2025
  Monday 23rd February 2026
  Monday 1st June 2026
  School is closed to pupils on these dates. The first day of the Autumn Term will be Monday 8th September 2025.

- **Many thanks for your support for the NSPCC Numbers Day fundraising which raised a total of £48.55.**

- **ParentPay – Please ensure all accounts are cleared for the end of this half term. Accounts should be kept up to date by making regular payments to prevent balances increasing. Thank you for your continued support with this.**

- **WORLD BOOK DAY COSTUME SWAP** During the week commencing 25th February we are holding a costume swap ready for World Book Day which is on Thursday 6th March. Please donate any unwanted costumes and feel free to take one for your child.

- **Walesby Forest Residential – The next instalment of £30 is due at the end of February. Thank you if you have already paid. There are some outstanding payments from the January instalment – please pay these as soon as possible. There is a meeting for parents on Wednesday 26th February at 5.00pm in school. A separate letter has been sent about this.**

Please do not hesitate to contact us on 01629 56813 or by email with any questions or queries.

Friday updates can be found in the Newsletters section of our school website.

FURTHER DATES FOR YOUR DIARY	
Monday 10th March	KS2 Qualitas After School Club – Archery. Please book and pay on ParentPay
Tuesday 11th March	KS1 Qualitas After School Club – Fundamentals. Please book and pay on ParentPay
Wednesday 12th March	KS2 Qualitas After School Club – Athletics. Please book and pay on ParentPay
Friday 14th March	**Class 3 Benchball event - Ashbourne Leisure Centre. Children should arrive at school by 8.10am PROVIDE CONSENT on ParentPay**
Thursday 3rd April	No swimming Class 3
Friday 4th April	Last day of the Spring term
Monday 21st April	**Easter Monday**
Tuesday 22nd April	**Back to school – Start of the Summer Term**
Wednesday 30th April	Class 2 Multi Skills Festival at All Saints Juniors This Girl Can – Whitworth Park 9.30 – 11.30
Monday 5th May	**MAY DAY BANK HOLIDAY**
Monday 12th May	KS2 SATS – English Grammar Punctuation and Spelling
Tuesday 13th May	KS2 SATS – English Reading Paper
Wednesday 14th May	KS2 SATS – Maths Papers 1 and 2
Thursday 15th May	KS2 SATS – Maths Paper 3
Friday 16th May	Year 6 Celebration at Whitworth Park
Friday 23rd May	Break up for half term
Monday 2nd June	**INSET DAY – School closed to pupils**
Tuesday 3rd June	**Back to school**
Thursday 12th June	South Peak Sports – Darley Dale Primary School
Wednesday 18th June	Class 2 Dance and Gymnastics Festival at All Saints Juniors
Thursday 19th June	Reserve Date for South Peak Sports

Thursday 26th June	Year 6 Primary Athletics at Moorways, Derby
Tuesday 1st July	Highfields Transition Day for Y6 pupils
Wednesday 2nd July	**Walesby Forest Residential – Class 4**
Thursday 3rd July	**Walesby Forest Residential – Class 4** FINAL SWIMMING LESSON FOR CLASS 3
Friday 4th July	**Walesby Forest Residential – Class 4**
Wednesday 9th July	Class 2 Sports Day at All Saints Juniors
Thursday 10th July	NO SWIMMING FOR CLASS 3
Thursday 17th July	NO SWIMMING FOR CLASS 3
Thursday 24th July	**Last day of the school year** **NO AFTER SCHOOL CLUB**
Friday 25th July	First Day of the summer holidays
ACADEMIC YEAR 2025-2026	
Thursday 4th September	**INSET DAY – School closed to pupils**
Friday 5th September	**INSET DAY – School closed to pupils**
Monday 8th September	**First day of the Autumn Term**



At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about FORTNITE

AGE RESTRICTION: PEGI 12

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Fortnite was launched back in 2017, but it remains massively popular – with more than 650 million active players. That's partially due to the competitive nature of its player-vs-player combat, its pop culture crossovers and its constantly shifting map. Significant updates are rolled out with each new version of the game – known as 'chapters' – and within these sit shorter 'seasons'.

ALWAYS ONLINE

There's no single-player offline mode in Fortnite: it can only be played online. Internet access can sometimes be an issue when you're out and about (both in terms of connectivity and using up data), so you may find that dedicated young Fortnite players are often less enthusiastic about trips away – such as days out and holidays – than you might expect.

IN-GAME COSTS

Fortnite is free to download and play, but it does offer various additional purchases – cosmetic 'skins', music tracks and LEGO items – which don't really impact on gameplay but can cost a significant amount. These items are bought with in-game currency, V-Bucks – earned through completing the Battle Pass (which also costs V-Bucks) and can also be purchased from the game's store for real money.

POP CULTURE REFERENCES

Part of Fortnite's appeal is its ongoing crossovers with other popular franchises, ranging from movies and TV shows like Family Guy and Avatar: The Last Airbender to comic book characters including Batman to other games such as Street Fighter. This means you could have children asking questions about the monster from Alien or Geralt from The Witcher a little sooner than you otherwise might have.

CROSSPLAY AND PARTY CHAT

D@*#!

Fortnite is popular with many gamers of various ages. 'Crossplay' lets friends play with each other, regardless of whether they're on an Xbox, Playstation, Nintendo Switch or PC – while the 'party chat' feature allows them to talk to each other during the game. This can, however, put youngsters at risk of hearing inappropriate language from older players in the heat of virtual combat.

VIRTUAL VIOLENCE

At its core, there's no avoiding that Fortnite is about shooting other players to eliminate them from the contest. That said, there's no blood or gore. The violence is rendered in a cartoonish style, and there are frequent comical touches to lighten the mood, such as fishing mini-games and dancing emotes. Machine guns, shotguns and other weapons often look and behave realistically, however, so discretion is advised.

FREQUENT UPDATES

The game's developers release content in 'seasons' that usually run for around ten weeks. Each fresh update sees items added to the in-game store, changes to the environment's map and a different over-arching theme (such as 'medieval', 'pirates' or 'party'). These regular renewals help to hold players' interest – but also give young gamers plenty of reasons to keep coming back.

Advice for Parents & Educators

MATCH GAMING TIMES

Younger players tend to play Fortnite with their friends. With that in mind, it could be worth speaking to the parents and carers of a child's social group and coordinating their gaming around certain times of day. Safety in numbers is obviously a factor here, but it will also help children feel that they're getting adequate opportunities to socialise with their friends online.

SET SPENDING LIMITS

Fortnite's rotating store is a not-so-subtle mechanism for coaxing players into buying sought-after items before they disappear for weeks or months. This could lead to surprise transactions on bank cards if children are tempted into an impulse purchase. Parents could consider getting a prepaid card for the child or ensuring that purchases require adult authorisation. This can be done through parental settings on a console or account settings in the Epic Games app on PC.

USE UPDATES AS REWARDS

Fortnite's seasonal updates are free, but each also brings the option of a 'battle pass', unlocking exclusive rewards for playing the game and completing set challenges. The passes cost around £8 and are also available as part of larger bundles. The purchase of passes can be an effective reward to young Fortnite fans for good behaviour or academic performance, or as an incentive for completing chores like tidying their room.

BE WARY OF SCAMS

The immense popularity of Fortnite with younger audiences – that are generally more trusting – means there's no shortage of scammers looking to fraudulently obtain passwords and other personal data through techniques like phishing. As the developers point out on many of Fortnite's loading screens, they never ask for a player's account password outside of the game: make sure any young player knows this.

ENJOY FORTNITE TOGETHER

Fortnite also offers split-screen gameplay, meaning that two people can play simultaneously on the same console or computer. This can be a good option for siblings or for when a child's friends visit, but it also offers an opportunity for parents and carers to do something fun with their child, while also making sure they're playing the game safely. Who knows? You might even teach them a thing or two!

Meet Our Expert



Lloyd Coombes is Editor in Chief of gaming and esports site GGRecon and has worked in the gaming media for around four years. A long-time gamer, he is also a parent and therefore a keen advocate of online safety. Writing mainly about tech and fitness, his articles have been published on influential sites including IGN and TechRadar.

#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

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