



The Belfry CE VA Primary School

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Monday 22nd September 2025

Dear parent/carer

As I drove to work last Tuesday, an item on the radio piqued my interest. The BBC had conducted a survey of teenagers about their habits using the internet. As part of perhaps the last generation to go through teen life without readily available online access and with my own children only now starting to use devices, I don't inhabit the online world and was surprised by the results.

A fuller list can be found here ([BBC Radio 5 Live and BBC Bitesize to host a Teen Summit live from Bradford](#)) but a few headlines caught my ear:

- More than a third (38%) spend five hours a day or more on their phones. One in 20 spends eight hours or more on their phones per day.
- 65% of all respondents feel overwhelmed at least some of the time.
- 66% worry about fake news and misinformation online.
- 51% have encountered conspiracy theories online.
- More than half reported seeing harmful content of one form or another.

Of course, these are teenagers at high school, but it is not a switch that is flicked overnight – the habits start to form pre-teen and that includes all our children at The Belfry. Increased online usage is certainly something we notice our children talking about – games, watching YouTube or simply messaging in groups late into the night.

With the rise in messaging, gone, it seems, are the days where children can switch off from social pressures in the evenings when they are not at school – this could contribute to the overwhelm. With the increased use of online game and streaming services, through the roof have gone the opportunities for children to be exposed to inappropriate or harmful content, inadvertently or otherwise.

What can we do about it?

In school, as part of our computing and RHSE curriculums, we will teach the children about responsible use of digital media, reliable sources of information, healthy relationships, looking after themselves (mentally, emotionally and physically) and keeping themselves safe.

At home, as a parent, I think back to advice pupils, staff and parents have received from 'The 2 Johns' in recent years ([Home - eSafety Training](#)) – two ex-police officers now advising schools, children and parents on e-safety. Yes, it's about parental controls, etc. Most importantly, however, they talk about working *with* children to build an open, trusting communication about their online experiences. If my children are ever in front of a screen, I ask myself whether I know what they're watching and do we have the relationship where they would open up to me if something made them feel uncomfortable, or would they be worried about getting told off? I hope it's the former.

If you or your child(ren) are ever worried about e-safety, as a school we will always listen and do what we can to help, even if that is signposting to other supporting resources or organisations.

With kind regards

Steven Boast

Executive Deputy Headteacher
North Star Federation

Monika

Our much-loved cook, Monika, will be leaving us next week to take on a new challenge in a new role. Nourish, our catering provider, are in the process of recruiting a new cook. There will be no change to the menus or meals for the children, and the ordering process will remain the same.

I deliberately used the phrase 'new cook' rather than replacement because there is only one Monika and we will miss her presence in school. Whether that's greeting the children in the morning, helping with registers with our younger children or combining high expectations of manners and behaviour in the lunch hall with warmth, compassion and a keen sense of humour, we value all that she does for the children and will miss her. We wish her all the very best for her new challenge.

Beach Fest – an invitation from Cromer Church

Cromer Church are running an event called 'Beach Fest Extra' this coming Saturday, 27th September for primary age children. This is an event that is run regularly throughout the year and its climax is a week-long holiday club during the summer holidays. This free event will run from 4pm to 6.30pm at Cromer Church and will be an afternoon of games, crafts, songs, Bible stories, food and will end with 'The Big Quiz'.

Cromer Church enjoyed welcoming nearly 100 children plus their parents/carers to their week-long event over the summer and would love to welcome the children from our school along to their event on Saturday. It should be lots of fun!



Reading Well Event – North Walsham Library

Please see the attach flyer about an event at North Walsham Library promoting reading and wellbeing.

Dogs

As the proud owner of a fox-red labrador called Dave, I know the benefits of pet ownership – companionship and exercise, but also someone who will listen without answering back! For my own children, they are developing an understanding of how to care for another living thing, putting Dave's needs before their own when it comes to wet and windy dog walks on weekend mornings.

However, I never had a pet growing up and I was at best anxious and at worst fearful of dogs – on my paper rounds, there were some doors I dreaded delivering to. We might have children in our school who are as anxious and uncertain as I was as a child and a busy drop off or pick up time is not the ideal environment to acclimatise them to animals, should they even wish to. That uncertainty and anxiety could lead to a difficult situation for both child and dog and is why we ask that dogs are not brought onto the premises going forward. Thank you in advance for your understanding and support.

Out of school success

Congratulations to the following on their fantastic success outside of school!

- Ada, who earned her orange karate belt with full marks and who was also awarded the Best Overall Performance Trophy 🏆 Great work, Ada!



Celebration Assembly Winners

Class certificates

- Holly: Freya - for showing perseverance through challenges that starting school presents.
- Larch: Ted C - for stepping up brilliantly to becoming a year 1 pupil and having a positive attitude towards his work.
- Willow: Rose – you have settled into year 3 really well and shown me your determination to learn.
- Ash: Dougie because you have made a superb start to this year. You listen carefully, you always contribute when asked, you work hard. You are setting an amazing example! Well done.
Jenny because you have made an excellent start to Ash class. You are listening really carefully, concentrating well and working really hard. You have even managed to catch up on what you missed. Keep it up!
- Oak: Agatha – you have worked really hard this week as you do every week, consistently producing work of an exceptionally high quality. Thank you.

Compassion Cultivators

- Holly: Aadhiya for sharing feelings with children who have been nervous starting school.
- Larch: Skye for helping someone when they were upset at lunchtime.
- Willow: Harriet for playing with someone when they were lonely.
- Ash: Natalie for always being kind and caring.
- Oak: Harper for always looking out for your friends and others.

Forest School

Bertie Bee goes to Kelly for her quiet perseverance when whittling her music sticks and her lovely respect for nature.

Bella Bee goes to Skye for her quick development of her tool skills. She always listens so respectfully and answers questions enthusiastically.

Please help yourself to apples from the Calm Woods – they're in the box by the front door.

Diary Dates

September 25		
Tuesday 23rd September	Y 6	Cromer Academy Open Evening 6.30 – 8.30 pm
Wednesday 24 th September	Y 6	Aylsham High Open Evening 4.30 – 6.30 and 7 – 9 pm. Booking essential.
Wednesday 24th September	Willow & Ash	Trip to Norwich Castle
Thursday 25 th September	Yr R & 1	Little Wandle information meeting. 3.30 -4.30 pm
Friday 26th September	Yr R & Parents	Peep Talk (Speech & Language) session. 1.45 - 2.45 pm
Tuesday 30th September	All parents	The Friends AGM, White Horse, Overstrand 7pm

October 25		
Friday 3rd October	Yr R & Parents	Peep Talk (Speech & Language) session. 1.45 - 2.45 pm
W/C Monday 6 th October	Y 5/6	Bikeability for those Yr 5 & 6 that pre-booked last term
Thursday 9th October	Whole School	Tempest Photography: Individual pupil portraits. Siblings invited at 8.30 am
Friday 10th October	Yr R & Parents	Peep Talk CANCELLED
Wednesday 15th October		Parents evening 3.30 to 5.30 pm
Thursday 16th October		Parents evening 3.30 to 7 pm
Friday 17th October	Yr R & Parents	Peep Talk (Speech & Language) last session. 1.45 - 2.45 pm
Monday 20 th October	Y 6	Crucial Crew event: Gresham's, Holt. 9.30 – 11.30 am
November 25		
Monday 3rd November	Oak Class	Family café: pm
Monday 10th November	Ash Class	Family café: pm
Thursday 13th October	New Yr R	Open day for prospective new parents and their children
Monday 17 th November	Willow Class	Family café: pm
Thursday 20 th November	Whole school	Flu immunisations, 1 st visit
Monday 24 th November	Larch Class	Family café: pm
Thursday 27 th November	Whole School	Flu immunisations, 2 nd & final visit
December 25		
Monday 1 st December	Holly Class	Family café: pm
Monday 8 th December	KS2	Christmas performance dress rehearsal: pm
Tuesday 9 th December	KS1	Christmas performance dress rehearsal: 9 am
Wednesday 10 th December	KS2	Performances at 9 am & 6.30 pm
Thursday 11 th December	KS1	Performance at 9 am
Friday 12 th December	KS1	Performance at 9 am
Friday 12 th December	Y 4 parents	Friendship workshop for parents 1-2 pm
Friday 19th December		Last day of term
Tuesday 6th January 2026		First day of Spring term 2026