



# Newstead News

## Friday 10 November 2023

### Headteacher's Update

Today we came together as a school community at 11.00am for our annual act of remembrance. Students assembled on the field to pay their respects in our short service where we observed a two-minute silence. I would like to thank Tristan (13W) who played the Last Post for us as part of the service.

Remembrance is a time when we remember and give thanks for the people who help and protect others now, and who have done so in the past. We remember those who have been hurt or lost their lives as a result.

We remember the service and sacrifice of the Armed Forces. We pay tribute to the special contribution of families and emergency services. We acknowledge the innocent civilians who have lost their lives in conflict or acts of terrorism.

Sadly, there is still too much conflict taking place around the world today. Remembrance is also about hope for peaceful times and I'm sure you will join with me in hoping for peace.

### Attendance

The Children's Commissioner's new [report](#) was released last week and it emphasizes the importance of addressing school absences, arguing that attendance rates have reached crisis levels. Since the pandemic, the number of children regularly missing school has more than doubled. Over 120,000 children are missing at least half their time in school. The Commissioner says she is deeply concerned about the long-term impact of these absences on children's right to education. In recent years, more than a third of all Key Stage 4 pupils were persistently or severely absent for at least one year.

The report delves into the correlation between school attendance and academic achievement. It has found a significant link between attendance and GCSE results. 78% of children with rare absences passed at least 5 GCSEs, including English and maths. In contrast, only 36% of persistently absent children and a mere 5% of severely absent children achieved the same.

Improved attendance in Year 11 significantly boosts the likelihood of achieving qualifications. 54% of pupils who improved their attendance in Year 11 passed at least 5 GCSEs, compared to 36% who remained persistently absent.

As you will be aware, we take attendance really seriously at Newstead and students have made a very good start to the school year in comparison to the rest of the country. We have a particular focus on exam year groups and one further finding of the report is that pupils whose absence improved in Year 11 achieved better GCSEs than pupils whose absence did not improve. 54% of pupils who were persistently absent in Year 10 and then rarely absent in Year 11 passed at least 5 GCSEs, including English and maths. We know that every little improvement in attendance really does make a difference and I would like to thank you for your continued support in respect of this.

It's important that we maintain a culture of regular school attendance following on from this strong start. Mr Williams is our Attendance Lead, and he works very closely with Mrs O'Brien and Mrs Burchill to support great attendance. They will be in contact should your child's attendance drop, or if we need to follow up on an unexplained absence. Please do contact them directly if you have any queries.

And finally...

It was a long day yesterday, but it was lovely to finish with the Year 7 and 8 disco. Nearly 200 students filled the Main Hall and danced and sang the evening away. Thank you to our wonderful Parents Association who organised and supervised the Disco and thank you to Mr Lewis who gave his time so generously to supervise the evening as well.

If you'd like to get involved in the work of the PA, please so contact our Chair, Victoria Cattermole, at [pa@newsteadwood.co.uk](mailto:pa@newsteadwood.co.uk)

Wishing you a restful weekend,

Alan Blount  
Headteacher

## Dates for your diary

5-17 November	Y11 Mock Exams
Tuesday 14 November	Learning Together Forum
Thursday 16 November	Year 7 Singing Showcase Evening
Thursday 23 November	Sixth Form Open Evening for current Newstead Wood students
Thursday 30 November	Year 13 Parents'/Carers' Evening
Tuesday 5 December	Year 8 Curriculum Evening – Studying for Success in Year 8
Thursday 7 December	Christmas Concert
Thursday 14 December	Carol Service
<i>21 December-2 January</i>	<i>Christmas Holiday</i>

Term dates for 2023-4 and 2024-5 can be found on our website [here](#).



guest  
speaker



**We have some fantastic speakers for you in our Autumn Term Guest Speaker Programme. These talks are open to students and parents. To book a place, click on the name of the speaker.**

**Monday, 20 November, 4pm:**

[Farooq Ullah](#), Senior Sustainability Development Advisor at the International Institute for Sustainable Development: *Sustainable Solutions*

Farooq Ullah is a senior Sustainability Development Advisor at the International Institute for Sustainable Development, having previously led on sustainable development for The B Team, and having held the positions of Executive Director for the Centre for Development Results and Chair of the Engagement Committee for Future Earth, among other significant roles in this area.

For anyone interested in the history of sustainable development and contemporary sustainability challenges, this talk is essential!

**Wednesday, 29 November, 4pm:**

[Zara Loughridge](#), Senior Economist at Oxford Economics: *Economics improving lives*

Zara Loughridge is a Senior Economist in Oxford Economics' Economic Impact Consulting team. Recently, she has worked with Amazon and the US Department of Labor. Prior to joining Oxford Economics, Zara spent three years as a Government Economist, working at the Department for Education and Department for Work and Pensions. She is passionate about economics that is accessible and improves lives. For anyone studying Economics or looking to study it in the future, this is a must!

**Wednesday, 13 December, 4pm:**

[Dr Emily Emmott](#), Lecturer and Teaching Fellow in Biological Anthropology, University College London: *Adolescent Sociality across Cultures & Academic Career Advice*

Dr Emily Emmott is a Human Behavioural Ecologist at one of the leading universities in the world, who studies how the social and physical environment influences human development and behaviour. Her academic interests focus on child-rearing systems and their implications for health and wellbeing. She will be talking on her research into fascinating areas of biological anthropology, as well as giving academic career advice. Anyone interested in attending a top university, establishing an academic career, or who is interested in Dr Emmott's areas of study should absolutely attend!

## Around Newstead

### Trip to Hemel Hempstead SnowDome

On Friday 3 November 30 students went to Hemel Hempstead SnowDome for skiing lessons. The students were able to use the lift, ski in a straight line and some even managed a couple of turns. Quite a few fell over, a few boots were put on the wrong feet and one helmet was the wrong way round but it didn't dampen spirits and there was a lot of laughter and enjoyment from the group. Many thanks to Mrs Bongout, Mrs Buick, Miss Morland, Mr Giles and Mrs Meader for organising the trip, helping with transport and giving up their Friday evening to enable this trip to occur. We are all now ready and eager for our ski trip to America in February 2024!



## Year 7 DT

7S have been finishing off their block-bot robots this week, focusing on learning workshop safety and how to use the hand tools as well as work with timber. Here are a couple photos of their fantastic outcomes.

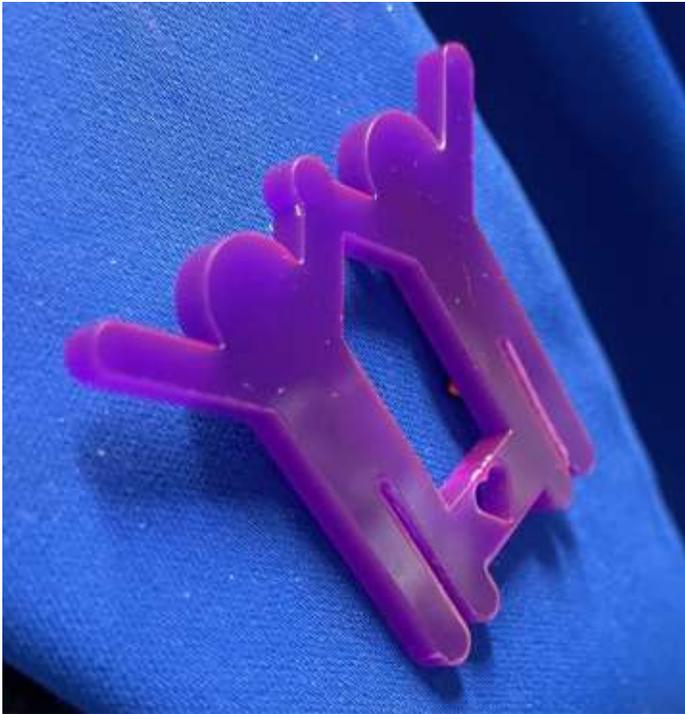


DT have been preparing to celebrate Diwali with 7S creating beautiful paper lanterns in their D&T lesson last Friday. We have also been busy putting together a traditional sand Rangoli under the expert guidance of Mrs Kolte. We would like to wish everyone celebrating this weekend a happy Diwali.



## 8W Fundraising

8W are selling charity badges as part of their First Give enterprise project, all in aid of raising funds and awareness of a fantastic local charity, The Maypole Project. Thank you to everyone that has already bought a badge – they have raised £70 so far. Badges are available in lots of different colours all next week outside ES5 for £1 each. 8W will also be running a school-based treasure hunt next week. If you would like to take part in the treasure hunt, bring £1 to outside ES5 at lunchtime and collect your map and instructions. Prizes available!



## Maths Books Donation

The Maths Department are thrilled to announce that there are now a whole host of new maths books in the library thanks to the Jack Petchey grant that was awarded to Nella D in Year 13. Titles range from 'Alex's Adventures in Numberland' to 'The Infinite Book' to 'How to Study for a Mathematics Degree' as well as a range of books from the UKMT (United Kingdom Mathematics Trust). We hope students across all year groups can get stuck into reading about all sorts of maths beyond the curriculum! Thank you again to Nella for choosing the maths department for the Jack Petchey grant.



## Tennis Success

Our senior Tennis Team played in the South East Finals 2023 on Thursday at Sutton Sports Village. Our students played brilliantly and we managed to finish in 2nd place overall in the South East region. Well done to Eloise N, Nikita P, Chloe C and Anvita D.

## Congratulations:

- Tilly F-J (10W) has just passed her Grade 5 organ with Distinction.
- Mila N (7N), played in an international Tennis Europe competition in Nottingham over half term and came first in her box, reaching the quarter finals. She also competed in a Grade 1 U12 national competition in Bolton and reached the finals of the doubles event.
- Six Year 8 students won the Faraday Challenge: Aisha, Annika, Rose, Aria, Prreethi and Shubhangini, all from 8F. The competition was held at St Olave's and the girls designed a device that detects rainfall and alerts road users and authorities to heavy rainfall and flooding. They won in a very closely-contested competition.
- Angelina V (7P) has successfully joined the cast of Cavalleria Rusticana / Pagliacci at the Royal Opera House. She will be in the children's chorus performing on the main stage of the Royal Opera House. The details and dates of the show are here: <https://www.roh.org.uk/tickets-and-events/cavalleria-rusticana-pagliacci-by-damiano-michieletto-details>
- Rea B (10S) qualified to compete in the London Winter Regional Swimming Championships held at the London Aquatic Centre, Stratford Olympic Park on 4-5th November. These championships are difficult to qualify for because they are only for the fastest and there are only two categories – Junior (age 16 and under) and Senior (17 and over). Rea raced in 200m Backstroke and 50m Backstroke events, achieving personal best times and improving her rankings.

We're keen to celebrate students' successes outside school – please email us with any achievements at [news@newsteadwood.co.uk](mailto:news@newsteadwood.co.uk).



## Newstead Wood School celebrates receiving Computing Quality Mark

Newstead Wood has been recognised for delivering high-quality computing education to young people, developing their digital skills and preparing them for the future.

We have achieved the national Computing Quality Mark after evaluating its computing education and demonstrating high-quality provision. The Computing Quality Mark is awarded by the National Centre for Computing Education and recognises excellence of computing education offered by a school as part of their curriculum development through the Computing Quality Framework (CQF).



Claire Garside, senior lead facilitator at the NCCE, said:

“Congratulations to Newstead Wood School, on becoming an NCCE ‘Computing Quality Mark’ school! They’re among the schools leading the way to deliver high standards in computing education. The Computing Quality Mark recognises the quality of their provision to ensure all students receive the computing skills and knowledge so valuable for today and in their future careers.”

**The Computing Quality Framework (CQF)** is part of the National Centre for Computing Education’s (NCCE) support to schools. [www.computingqualityframework.org](http://www.computingqualityframework.org)

## London STEM Computing/Science Conference

On Tuesday, the London, Surrey & West Sussex Computing Hub (along with the Science Learning Partnership for North and South London) played host to a STEM London Computing Conference at the UCL Faculty of Laws building in Euston.

Over 135 delegates attended multiple workshops and briefing sessions throughout the day, including demos on our physical kits that we loan out to local schools (BeeBots, Micro:bits, Raspberry Pis, Crumbles) and informative sessions on on-line safety, preparing for Ofsted and the Computing Quality Framework (an NCCE programme to help schools review their progress in developing an exemplary computing curriculum).



Lots of exhibitors were on hand with information from the STEM Ambassadors, Isaac Physics and Computing, to Oxford University Press, Pearsons, and many more.

It was a great day and a good opportunity to collaborate with our Science colleagues to make this happen.

## Medicine, University and Finance Society Speakers

This week we had two alumni visiting: Oluchi Ijeh, a summer analyst from Lloyds Bank, and Nina Thompson who is currently doing an apprenticeship at PWC. They shared their experiences within the field of finance and gave the students an insight into the world of finance. It was a very successful event, and we are very grateful to both speakers coming.



## Sparks Update

Newstead Wood are once again at the top of the United Learning leaderboard with a 95.7% completion rate!

Well done to this week's top 10 Sparx Readers:

- Saadia S 8W
- Senumi W V 8S
- Isabella W 7G
- Zainab R 7F
- Nmesoma O 8S
- Holly H 7P
- Diyansa A 8S
- Azkadellia Y 8N
- Isla D 8S
- Christina B 9N

## Year 7 Singing Showcase

Year 7 parents are cordially invited to our Year 7 Singing showcase on Thursday 16 November 2023 from 6-7pm in the Main Hall. Throughout the first half term, students have been learning the elements of music through singing. This showcase will be their group assessment.

We will expect all Year 7 students to attend and it would be wonderful to have as many parents and carers as possible. Students are welcome to stay in school before the showcase and will be supervised. Please ensure that they have a suitable snack before the performance. If not, please students need to arrive by 5.40 and parents should be sat down by 5.45pm.

## D-CYPHR

This term United Learning is supporting D-CYPHR, an exciting and important project for children and young people aged 0-15 to help health research.

Your child can be a hero – just by spitting in a tube. The information in their DNA has the potential to transform the lives of millions of young people through health research, creating better treatment and care. Together with the NHS, the NIHR BioResource is building a movement to help us unlock the power in our DNA to better understand everything from mental health to diabetes. Your child can be part of it.

To find out more, please visit the D-CYPHR website: <https://bioresource.nihr.ac.uk/dcyphr/>

*Be a hero and help health research by talking about it, learning about it or joining in!*



**D·CYPHR** The DNA, Children + Young People's Health Resource

Your child can be a hero – just by spitting in a tube. The information in their DNA has the potential to transform the lives of millions of young people through health research, creating better treatment and care. Together with the NHS, the NIHR BioResource is building a movement to help us unlock the power in our DNA to understand everything from diabetes to mental health. Your child can be part of it.

**NIHR | BioResource** **NHS**  
Schools programme in partnership with **Anna Freud**

**Express interest or find out more:**  
[bioresource.nihr.ac.uk/dcyphr/](https://bioresource.nihr.ac.uk/dcyphr/)

**Be a hero and help health research by talking about it, learning about it or joining in!**

## Achievement Points

Here are this week's Achievement Point totals. Congratulations to the following students and tutor groups.

 <b>House Totals for the Week</b> 		
<b>Phoenix</b>		263
<b>Swift</b>		222
<b>Nightingale</b>		208
<b>Wren</b>		201
<b>Griffin</b>		175
<b>Falcon</b>		164
<b>Top Tutor Groups of the Week</b>		
Year 7: 7P Year 8: 8F Year 9: 9N Year 10: 10G & 10S		
<b>Top Students of the Week</b>		
<b>★ Year 7 ★</b>		
Hannah D 7W Anisah A 7W	Elizabeth B 7P Diyasha M 7P	Priyanka C 7W Jasmitha J 7P
<b>★ Year 8 ★</b>		
Leia I 8F Tara N-M 8G	Innaya W 8F Anaaya G 8N	Olivia D 8F Charlotte B 8G
<b>★ Year 9 ★</b>		
Reem D 9N	Rishika K 9W Lilly-Rose S 9N	Neha K 9N
<b>★ Year 10 ★</b>		
Joanna O 10G	Shreya B 10F Scarlett H-J 10G	Ivanya G 10S



## Languages News

### Word of the week

Answers to this week's words of the week:

French: des friandises - candy/sweets

German: der Hagel - hail

Spanish: melocotón - peach

Chinese: 餐厅 - restaurant

Japanese: おいしい - delicious

Latin: emere - to buy

The words for next week are:

French: des viennoiseries

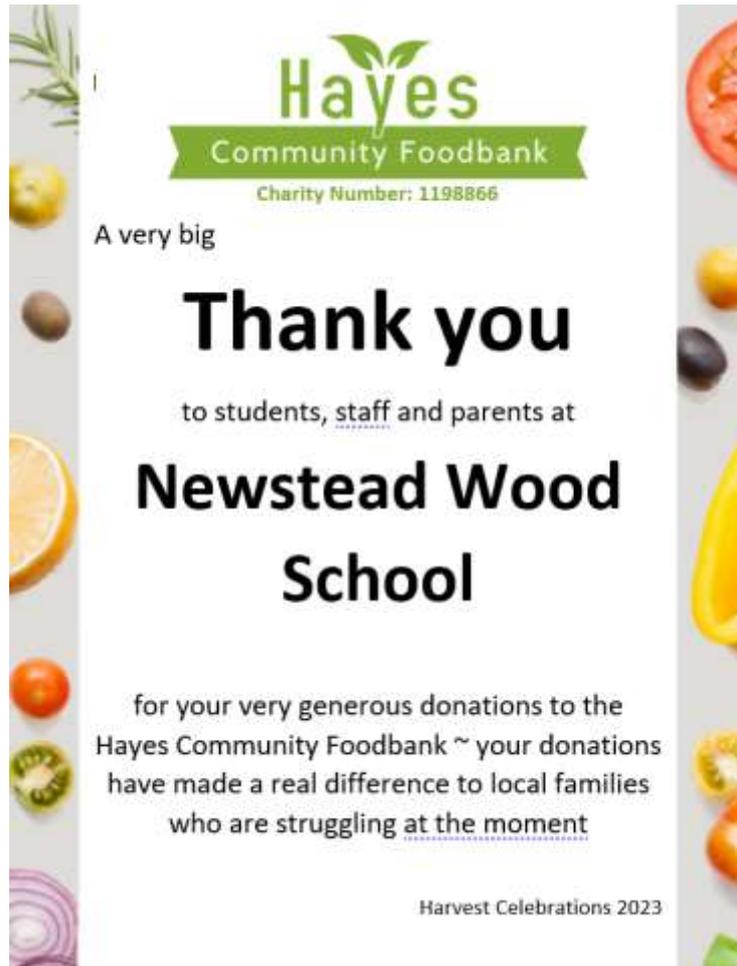
German: unentschieden

Spanish: floristería

Chinese: 买东西

Japanese: 難しい (むずかしい)

Latin: fidelis



A very big

# Thank you

to students, staff and parents at

## Newstead Wood School

for your very generous donations to the Hayes Community Foodbank ~ your donations have made a real difference to local families who are struggling at the moment

Harvest Celebrations 2023

# Please take care of your library books

Treat them like you would treat your phone - with care and respect.

Treat them carefully when taking them home and reading them.

Keep them safe - they are your responsibility when borrowed.

Make sure they are kept clean.

Remember - other students want to read your favourite books too!





# Newstead Wood School Parents' Association News



Our next meeting will be on zoom at 7pm on Wednesday 29th November: all parents and carers are welcome to attend! Joining details to follow, check this page next week!

We now have a full **committee team** in place, though several vacancies will be coming up next summer, so please consider getting involved. Chair – Victoria; Vice-chair – Anmol; Vice-chair – Wealth; Treasurer – Kapil; Vice-treasurer – Arindam Secretary – Sara; Vice-secretary – Bola

We're currently looking for **helpers for the uniform sale** on Tuesday 5th December at 3.15pm. If you can't make that but would like to do some sorting before then, please get in touch and just suggest a date and time that suits you.

We are also looking for **volunteers to organise a quiz** in Feb/March, and to help with the **familiarisation tests** on some May/June Saturdays next year.

If you have any questions about the Parents' Association, would like to know how to join your class parents' WhatsApp group, need information on uniform, or would like to volunteer to join one of our teams, **please get in touch** at [pa@newsteadwood.co.uk](mailto:pa@newsteadwood.co.uk) Thanks!

**STIKINS® Name Labels**  
SIMPLY STICK IN & STAY IN  
NO SEWING & NO IRONING

Save time and money with one multipurpose name label for clothes, shoes, lunch boxes, and all school items

SUPPLIED SINCE 2003  
MILLIONS IN USE  
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Stikins® Actual Size

Each order placed quoting the school reference number **14318** will provide the school with 30% commission. If you use the link on our school website's [Uniform Page](#) to order your labels online, the number is filled in automatically for you!

Price	Quantity	Price
£1.00	100	£10.00
£1.50	250	£22.50
£2.00	500	£40.00
£2.50	1000	£75.00
£3.00	2000	£120.00
£3.50	4000	£140.00
£4.00	8000	£280.00
£4.50	16000	£540.00
£5.00	32000	£1000.00

Order online at [www.stikins.co.uk](http://www.stikins.co.uk) • Pay by Credit/Debit Card, PayPal, or Apple Pay  
Order by phone on 01273 648876 • Pay by Credit/Debit Card

The PA are excited to announce that we have teamed up with Stikins to offer parents the opportunity to purchase quality labels for your children's school uniform, whilst earning the school commission at the same time! This money can then be used to continue to help purchase some of the fantastic resources that benefit our children's learning.

As we all know, lost property is a problem in all schools and I am sure we are all familiar with our child, at some point, coming home from school with a missing item. As parents, we are aware that time is precious, which is why we think these labels are such a great idea; they simply stick onto the wash-care label of clothing. They can even be used in shoes! Naming of clothing is a school requirement and we are hoping that with this opportunity we can start to eliminate some of parents' frustrations that surround these issues.

### How it works:

Each order placed quoting the school reference number **14318** will provide the school with 30% commission. If you use the link on our school website's [Uniform Page](#) to order your labels online, the number is filled in automatically for you!



**Revision books, uniform, PE kit: for sale from the PA Hut on**

**Tuesday 5 December 3.15 - 4pm**

***Volunteers are needed from 2.30pm to 4pm***

*Great condition... great prices... great for the environment...and great for the school!*

Jumpers (£3 each/2 for £5), 6<sup>th</sup> form blazers (£5), Skirts (£3/£4), shirts (£2 each, 3 for £5), trainers and astroturfs (£3), umbrellas (£1) and other items are also available, plus textbooks and revision books (£2 each, 3 for £5) in many subjects. Payment by cash or card.

**VOLUNTEERS** to help for an hour or so occasionally would be very welcome, please email [pauniform@newsteadwood.co.uk](mailto:pauniform@newsteadwood.co.uk) for more information. No special skills needed, all training given!

**DONATIONS** of uniform, PE kit, coats etc. all welcome and can be left at reception anytime. Please remove or cross out names if possible and label the bag 'donations'. Thanks very much for all the donations we've had so far; keep them coming!

**Thank you for your support as we help the school, help the environment and help you with your shopping!**

# CAREERS

*Please note that the Careers Team at Newstead regularly pass on career information that we receive from external companies but we do not endorse these. It would be prudent for parents/carers and students to check all the information before signing up.*



**PwC  
GRADUATE SCHEME  
INFORMATION EVENT  
FOR STUDENTS  
OF AFRICAN  
CARIBBEAN  
HERITAGE**



PricewaterhouseCoopers (the second-largest professional services network in the world) is seeking to raise awareness of their **degree schemes**.

We are writing to school leaders and careers advisors to help to highlight this scheme to their students of African Caribbean heritage, noting their underrepresentation on these programmes and in these environments nationally.

If you have Black A-level students in years 12-13 who are seeking to attend a top-tier university whilst gaining invaluable corporate training, without the financial burden of a student loan, the PwC **Technology** and **Accounting** degree schemes on offer could provide a particularly compelling option for them.

Each Flying Start university has different entry criteria. For technology, entry requirements range from AAA to BBB for the study first pathway in, Birmingham, Belfast, and London, or 112 UCAS points (96 for those from lower socio-economic backgrounds) for the Manchester work first pathway. Accounting admission criteria range from AAA to AAB.

We will be running an introductory event to the scheme as follows:

**Friday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2023**

**16:30 – 19:30 (registration from 16:00)**

**PwC Headquarters, 1 Embankment Place, London WC2N 6RH**

Places are limited and will be allocated on a first-come first-served basis. Schools are able to register and facilitate groups of students to attend this event. Alternatively, students can register and attend independently so please do disseminate details among relevant students and parents.

The event will help students gain a better understanding of the schemes and working in professional services, and they will be able to interact with current scheme members and senior Black PwC staff. In addition, the event will include hands-on, guided sessions with advice on the application process and personal statements.

### **About the degree schemes**

Working as part of PwC's world-class team, students will have the opportunity to work with high-profile clients whilst experiencing the full-time student lifestyle with integrated paid placements. As well as gaining a funded degree, there is also the possibility of securing a graduate job on completion.

This is an exceptional opportunity for students, especially those who are more likely to find access to these high-profile spaces more challenging, and who might have concerns around financing their tertiary education.

**To take advantage of this opportunity, please register for the event [here](#).**

### **About ACEN**

By way of introduction, The African Caribbean Education Network (ACEN) is a national network of Black parents, students, teachers, and professionals seeking to improve experiences and access to top educational institutions and workplaces for Black students. In the past, our focus has solely been on independent & grammar schools, however, with racial equity (via systematic change) at the heart of what we do, we are expanding our focus to include all top academic institutions, as these are the spaces where Black students are typically underrepresented. As you know, this then perpetuates underrepresentation in top universities, and then the workplace, which subsequently impacts the various structural deficits faced by the Black community.

Visit [www.aceducationnetwork.com](http://www.aceducationnetwork.com) for more information. To stay up to date on schemes like this, students, parents, and schools can register using the links below:

**Students:** [Student Registration](#)

**Parents:** [Parent Registration](#)

For more information contact [amber@aceducationnetwork.com](mailto:amber@aceducationnetwork.com)

Kind regards

**Amber Wager**

Network & Operations Manager, African Caribbean Education Network

# Streetwise - Launch Event

**BROMLEY  
YOUTH  
SUPPORT  
PROGRAMME**

**NEW**  
Where to find our new venue!  
123 Anerley, Anerley Town  
Hall, Anerley Rd, SE20 8BD



**Attendance is FREE for every young person!**

**Join  
us!**

**Join our launch event for  
fun games and activities  
at our new home!**

**When?**



**Friday 24 November**



**6:00pm to 8:30pm**

**Who?**

**Our Youth Hubs are for  
ages 10 to 19 who live or go  
to school in Bromley.**

**What?**

**T-Shirt printing, pancake  
decorating, painting and  
crafts activities.**

**[www.bromley.gov.uk/youthsupport](http://www.bromley.gov.uk/youthsupport)**

# How to get here:



Let your friends and family know about us too!



**Closest Bus Stop (towards Beckenham or Norwood Junction):  
Anerley Road / Anerley Station (C)  
Bus Routes: 157, 249, 354, 358, 432.**



**Closest Train Station:  
Anerley Station, which is a 3 min  
walk away from Streetwise at  
Anerley Town Hall.**



**Need support or more info?  
Call: 020 8461 7165  
Email: [bromleyyouthsupportprogramme@bromley.gov.uk](mailto:bromleyyouthsupportprogramme@bromley.gov.uk)**



**@BromleyYouth**



**@BromleyYouthActivities**

# What technology is there to help parents & teachers support children?



St. Nicholas Church Hall (Village Hall) • Church Lane • Chislehurst BR7 5PE

**Wed 15<sup>th</sup> November 2023**

**Doors open 7.45pm**

**Event starts at 8pm**

Speaker  
Arran Smith



Advice and Support from the Dyslexia Association of Bexley, Bromley, Greenwich & Lewisham

☎ 0300 999 1800 ✉ [info@dyslexiawise.co.uk](mailto:info@dyslexiawise.co.uk)

🌐 [www.dyslexiawise.co.uk](http://www.dyslexiawise.co.uk)



# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about



In October 2022, the enormously popular social media network Twitter was purchased by tech tycoon Elon Musk. That sparked a host of changes to the platform – not all which have been received positively by its fans. The alterations have continued with each passing month, many of them raising online safety concerns among the 530 million users of Twitter (now rebranded as simply X). With further adjustments reportedly in the pipeline, X has attracted more than its usual share of controversy and caution in recent times.

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### A BLOCK ON BLOCKING

X has announced plans to remove its blocking feature. Previously, this stopped other users from viewing your profile or sending you direct messages, while also hiding their posts from your feed. Only this latter function will now remain. The decision has been criticised by some members, who feel that blocking (in its current form) protects them from X users who 'promote denial and hatred'.

### LIMITED REPORTING FEATURES

X offers a premium membership, with some functionality (such as controlling who can view and reply to your posts) increasingly being made exclusive to those who pay the subscription fee. Several commentators have speculated that X could one day become an exclusively paid-for service, with access to accounts being revoked for anyone unwilling or unable to take out a subscription.

### AGE-INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Many of X's less age-appropriate posts can feature anything from extreme political views to pornography. While accounts marked as 18+ are restricted from non-members, it's still fairly easy to stumble across this material accidentally. X's new 'For You' page also shows content from accounts that a user doesn't already follow – meaning that almost anything could end up on a child's feed.

### VERIFICATION FOR SALE

Historically, Twitter's moderators granted account verification: certifying someone as authentic by placing a blue tick next to their username. One of X's earliest changes was to place verification behind a paywall; this caused the number of celebrity impersonators to rise and left no way to distinguish, say, a legitimate influencer from a copycat fake account seeking to exploit other users.



## Advice for Parents & Carers

### PROTECT PRIVACY

Unsavory characters may try to gain access to a young person's X account – either to view their posts and gather information on them, or to completely take control of it. To minimise risk, ensure the account has a strong password and enable the 'Protect Your Posts' feature (via the account settings), so that strangers can't view your child's posts without first being approved as a follower.

### DON'T RISE TO THE BAIT

To gain more views and followers, some X users post deliberately inflammatory comments on sensitive topics such as race, sexual orientation and gender issues. Many young people could find this upsetting. Emphasise that, if your child encounters someone spreading hate on X, it's best not to give that person what they want: an argument. Ignore them, mute their account and move on.

### STAY ALERT FOR IMPOSTERS

Make sure your child understands that X's blue ticks no longer guarantee the identity of anyone on the platform. While it might be exciting if a celebrity liked your child's post, it could just as easily be an imposter with malicious intentions. If your child's not 100% sure that an X user actually is who they claim to be, advise them to err on the side of caution and avoid interacting with that account.

### ONLY FOLLOW TRUSTED ACCOUNTS

Using the 'Following' tab on X helps to ensure that the only content your child sees has come from accounts they've chosen to follow; this should reduce the chance of them inadvertently being exposed to harmful, violent or explicit content. Show your child how to report another user's account if, say, they're behaving inappropriately by spreading misinformation or offensive opinions.

### BE READY TO TAKE ACTION

If your child suffers harassment on the platform or becomes the target of a hack, you could consider deactivating their account entirely. Recently, X's safety features have been criticised for allegedly failing to protect users' wellbeing – so if your child is being subjected to abusive messages or similar mistreatment on the platform, it might be prudent to remove them from X altogether.

### 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. Always eager to test out the latest apps, games and online trends, he's also a parent who understands the importance of online safety. Writing mainly about tech and fitness, his articles have been published on influential sites including iFixit and TechRadar.



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