

A Note from the Headteacher

Preparing for Adulthood: Work Experience

You will remember last week that we shared lots of wonderful highlights from our year 11 students' work experience. On page 2 of this newsletter, you will find yet more amazing comments about their successes; please read the many fabulous things that have been said. I would like to give a special mention of thanks to Mrs Park who has organised the placements for the whole year group which is no small job. Mrs Park has spent the last fortnight visiting each student and making sure everyone is happy and enjoying their work. Well done and thank you Mrs Park.



Roar

When we return after Easter, we begin our new quest, 'Roar', which sees us through to the beginning of July and transition. 'Roar' is a humanities focused quest where students in school will develop an understanding of another country and culture. The story of The Lion King will be used to explore these differences and, as you know, we will be embarking on a whole school trip to see the show in London, in June. Mrs Russell is currently making plans for our own school performance based on the story, too. I am certain the students will thoroughly enjoy the quest ahead.

MAT Awards Ceremony—Thursday 26th March

Last night, I had the privilege of attending the inaugural SEN Trust Awards ceremony in Lancaster school's new hall. The awards night will become an annual fixture in the school calendar and was an opportunity to celebrate the achievements of students from across the four schools within our Trust. You can see a list of the St. Nick's winners on page 6 of this newsletter; huge congratulations to all of them.

Introduction of the Crest Star Science Award

Mrs Curtis, our fabulous science teacher, has introduced a new award for science this term. The winner of the 'Crest Star' award was announced in assembly today for the first time and will be a new feature in our end of term presentations. More information about this award can be found on page 7. Be sure to check out all the winners of our end of term awards on pages 4 & 5.

I wish you all a fabulous Easter holiday break

Mrs L. Fox, Headteacher

How to contact us:

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Telephone: 01702 462322



Our year 11s finish their 2 week block of work experience today and I am pleased to share with you that a majority of our students have completed a very successful placement. The pupils have been dedicated, hardworking and punctual. They have listened to instructions and have been able to follow them to a high standard. Mrs. Park has met with employers who have told her that they have been the best they have ever had and all are keen to work.

Caleb: A parent at the pre-school has emailed and said "He is an absolute asset and he should be so proud of the impact he made and the way in which he has conducted himself."

Jamie: His employer at the school in which is working has said "He has exceeded all expectations. He has noticed the children in need and has shown empathy towards them and has consistently encouraged them to get involved. He is a natural." I am pleased to share that his employer has offered an extended placement.

Tyreece: SouthEast Autos has said "He is the most impressive work experience student I have ever had. He came ready for work and no task has been too much for him." He has also been offered an extended work placement.

Will: He has enjoyed a placement in Waitrose where he has followed instructions. His employers have commented on how hard he works and how respectful he has been.

Leo: He has impressed his employers at the 'Hang Out' Southend by working the till and serving customers. His confidence has grown over the fortnight. His employer said "He is very hard working and is eager to work."

Ryan: He has been very industrious and used his initiative in a placement with The Isaiah Project. They were particularly impressed with his work ethic and his idea of arranging a sensory toy area for their young customers.

Abigail: Abigail has attended a week of placement at 'Bake Bakery' where she undertook various duties conscientiously. She enjoyed communicating with the general public and was very polite and respectful.

Well done to all of them!

We are incredibly proud, they have been a credit to themselves and to the school. We look forward to welcoming the year 11s back after Easter for their last term with us.

By Mrs Park





KS3 HOME ECONOMICS COSTS

As part of our school's curriculum, we offer home economics to all students in KS3 (years 7, 8 & 9). This requires a small fee from parents for ingredients. Students are able to bring home their food, if a contribution is received.

The cost is **£10 per term**.

This can be paid for using our online payments system. Please contact the school office if you need help in getting set up on this system.

Thank you for your contributions.

INSET DAYS 2025-2026

29th June

TERM DATES 2025-2026:

Spring term ends: Fri 27th March
Summer term starts: Mon 13th April
Summer half term: 26th—29th May
Summer term ends: Mon 20th July

KEY DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

April

13th		RETURN TO SCHOOL
13th-24th		Y11 BTEC Cooking Assessments
22nd	9:00am-1:00pm	Y7/8 Dodgeball Competition
24th	9:00am-1:00pm	Yr11 Hepatitis B Vaccinations
29th	9:00am-1:00pm	Y9/10 Dodgeball Competition
	5:00pm-6:00pm	DofE Expedition Parents Information Meeting

May

5th-12th		Y11 L1 and L2 English and Maths Functional Skills Exams
6th	9:00-1:00pm	Girls' Dodgeball Competition
12th		Jack Petchey Awards Evening
13th-21st		Y11 Art GCSE Exams
22nd	9:00am-1:00pm	Whole School Hepatitis B Vaccinations

June

1st - 5th		Annual 'Procorda' Residential
5th		DofE Assessment Practice Walk
10th		SESSSA Athletics Competition
11th - 12th		DofE Assessment Expedition @ Belchamps
18th - 19th		DofE Assessment Expedition @ Danbury
19th	9:00am-1:00pm	Whole School Hepatitis B Vaccinations

DATES IN **RED** ARE ADDITIONS OR EDITS SINCE LAST WEEK'S NEWSLETTER



END OF TERM AWARDS



SPRING 2026

Quest Champions

Quest champions are nominated by the class teacher and are students who have gone 'above and beyond' with their learning during this half term's quest

Adventurer: Scarlett

Discoverer: Brandon

Explorer: Harvey

Hunter: Kosi

Pathfinder: Ethan

Pioneer: Toby

Researcher: Emily

Seeker: Zaki

Voyager: Ellie-Rose

Engagement with Reading Awards

'Engagement with Reading' can be awarded to a student for showing an independent effort to improve their reading engagement by whatever independent means. This could be, for example:

- reading regularly independently when they perhaps didn't before
- reading for pleasure
- reading new texts

Adventurer: Iniyah, Samuel

Discoverer: Charlie

Explorer: Hannah, Jenson

Hunter: Kate

Pathfinder: Billy, Bethany

Pioneer: King, Nathaniel

Researcher: Bella

Seeker: Regan

Voyager: Mia, Tegan-Demi

Monthly Class Attendance Award

Congratulations to **Researcher** for the highest class attendance with

96.72%

for the month of March

Most Improved Attendance Award

A family prize of a £25 voucher is awarded at the end of every term to a student with the most improved attendance for the term.

Congratulations to

John in Seeker

and his family for winning the voucher this term.

99 or 100% attendance for the Spring Term

Well done to the following students who achieved 99% or 100% attendance for the whole of the Spring Term.

Adventurer: Lucas, Callum, Maisie, Mason

Discoverer: Edward, Caleb

Explorer: Harvey, Jenson, Jacob, Ellie

Pioneer: Hamish, Kieron, Adele, Nathaniel, Jake

Researcher: Oliver, Valentina

Seeker: Jack, Regan, Mia, Jaidan, Kyrell

Voyager: Preston, Jasmyn

Pathfinder: Bethany, Billy, Kaci-Lea

Hunter: Sammy, Marie, Dylan

One name is drawn from a hat to win a £50 family voucher. Congratulations to **Hamish** who won it this term.

There are 43 students who achieved 99% or 100% attendance for the whole half term. Well done to all of you.

Quest Crystal Awards—Spring 2026

Students are nominated for the quest crystal awards at the end of each term and staff agree on who will receive the trophy. The quest crystals recognise the learners' values and attitudes that we encourage our students to develop during their time with us at St. Nicholas. The quest crystals themselves remain in school but the winners receive a miniature keepsake as their memento of their achievement.

Independence Crystal

Nominations: Charlie.C, Michael.S

Winner: Charlie.C

Respectful of the Environment Crystal

Nominations: Ellie, Lucian

Winner: Ellie

Caring and Polite Crystal

Nominations: Billy.C, Ellie-Rose, Jacob.H, Scarlett, Xander

Winner: Ellie-Rose

Motivation for Learning Crystal

Nominations: Brandon, Harvey.B, Jacob.S, Scarlett, Valentina

Winner: Valentina

Perseverance Crystal

Nominations: Ashley, Bethany, Edward, Michael.D, Toby

Winner: Bethany

Resilience Crystal

Nominations: Levi, Reece, Samuel

Winner: Samuel

Confidence Crystal

Nominations: Harvey.T, Salahuddin, Willow

Winner: Harvey.T

Learning from Mistakes Crystal

Nominations: Jaydon, Leon

Winner: Jaydon

Congratulations to all our nominees and the winners.



Southend SEN Trust Awards Winners

Preparing for Adulthood Award

Brandon - Discoverer

Independence Award

Will - Hunter

Resilience Award

Elijah - Researcher

Community Spirit Award

Abigail - Hunter

The Nathan Cresswell Award
For Creative Arts

Lucy - Seeker

Personal Growth Award

Ashton - Pathfinder

Sporting Excellence Award

Jake - Pioneer

Student Choice Award

Jamie - Discoverer



It has been a pleasure to see so many of our pupils achieve their CREST Star Award certificates.

The British Science Association offers a range of CREST Awards to recognise young people's achievements in scientific thinking and investigation. To earn their CREST Star Awards, our students have taken part in a variety of hands on science activities during their lessons—exploring topics such as the most absorbent tissue, whether bread really does always land butter side down, and identifying the most streamlined shape, to name just a few.

Through these practical investigations, both we and the CREST organisation aim to spark curiosity, build confidence, and help students make meaningful connections with real world STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) careers.

We look forward to seeing their enthusiasm continue as they work towards their CREST Superstar Awards throughout the remainder of the year.

Our first winner of this award for Spring 2026 is Michael in Pathfinder



SCHOOL MEALS

Monday 13th April will be week 3 of the menu.

WEEK 1		WEEK 2		WEEK 3	
MONDAY		MONDAY		MONDAY	
MAINS	Beef Burger in a Bun	MAINS	Shepherds Pie	MAINS	Lasagne
VEGETARIAN	Vegan Burger in a Bun	VEGETARIAN	Tomato Pasta	VEGETARIAN	Vegetarian Lasagne
SIDE	Diced Potato - Peas	SIDE	Baked Beans - Peas	SIDE	Garlic Bread - Broccoli
JACKET	Baked Beans or Cheese or Tuna Mayo	JACKET	Baked Beans or Cheese or Tuna Mayo	JACKET	Baked Beans or Cheese or Tuna Mayo
SANDWICH	Ham or Cheese or Tuna Mayo *Extras	SANDWICH	Ham or Cheese or Tuna Mayo *Extras	SANDWICH	Ham or Cheese or Tuna Mayo *Extras
DESSERT	Chocolate Sponge and Custard	DESSERT	Carrot Cake	DESSERT	Flapjack
TUESDAY		TUESDAY		TUESDAY	
MAINS	Sausages	MAINS	Chicken Nuggets	MAINS	Sausages in Tomato Sauce
VEGETARIAN	Quorn Sausages	VEGETARIAN	Quorn Nuggets	VEGETARIAN	Vegetarian Sausages
SIDE	Mash - Carrots - Gravy	SIDE	Pasta - Sweetcorn - Peas	SIDE	Pasta - Sweetcorn - Peas
JACKET	Baked Beans or Cheese or Tuna Mayo	JACKET	Baked Beans or Cheese or Tuna Mayo	JACKET	Baked Beans or Cheese or Tuna Mayo
SANDWICH	Ham or Cheese or Tuna Mayo *Extras	SANDWICH	Ham or Cheese or Tuna Mayo *Extras	SANDWICH	Ham or Cheese or Tuna Mayo *Extras
DESSERT	Fruit or Yogurt	DESSERT	Plain Sponge and Custard	DESSERT	Fruit or Yogurt
WEDNESDAY		WEDNESDAY		WEDNESDAY	
MAINS	Garmon	MAINS	Roast Chicken	MAINS	Garmon
VEGETARIAN	Quorn Fillet	VEGETARIAN	Cauliflower Cheese	VEGETARIAN	Quorn Fillet
SIDE	Roast Potatoes - Carrots - Peas	SIDE	Roast Potatoes - Carrots - Cabbage	SIDE	Roast Potatoes - Carrots - Cabbage
JACKET	Baked Beans or Cheese or Tuna Mayo	JACKET	Baked Beans or Cheese or Tuna Mayo	JACKET	Baked Beans or Cheese or Tuna Mayo
SANDWICH	Ham or Cheese or Tuna Mayo *Extras	SANDWICH	Ham or Cheese or Tuna Mayo *Extras	SANDWICH	Ham or Cheese or Tuna Mayo *Extras
DESSERT	Iced Sponge	DESSERT	Fruit or Yogurt	DESSERT	Jelly
THURSDAY		THURSDAY		THURSDAY	
MAINS	Chicken Tikka Massala	MAINS	Spaghetti Bolognese	MAINS	Cheese & Tomato Pasta
VEGETARIAN	Stir Fry Noodles	VEGETARIAN	Tomato Pasta	VEGETARIAN	Tomato Pasta
SIDE	Rice - Peas - Sweetcorn	SIDE	Garlic Bread - Peas - Sweetcorn	SIDE	Peas - Sweetcorn
JACKET	Baked Beans or Cheese or Tuna Mayo	JACKET	Baked Beans or Cheese or Tuna Mayo	JACKET	Baked Beans or Cheese or Tuna Mayo
SANDWICH	Ham or Cheese or Tuna Mayo *Extras	SANDWICH	Ham or Cheese or Tuna Mayo *Extras	SANDWICH	Ham or Cheese or Tuna Mayo *Extras
DESSERT	Ice Cream	DESSERT	Angel Delight	DESSERT	Muffin
FRIDAY		FRIDAY		FRIDAY	
MAINS	Fish Fingers	MAINS	Pepperoni Pizza	MAINS	Cod Fillets
VEGETARIAN	Fishless Fingers	VEGETARIAN	Cheese Pizza	VEGETARIAN	Fishless Fingers
SIDE	Chips - Baked Beans - Peas	SIDE	Chips - Baked Beans - Peas	SIDE	Chips - Baked Beans - Peas
JACKET	Baked Beans or Cheese or Tuna Mayo	JACKET	Baked Beans or Cheese or Tuna Mayo	JACKET	Baked Beans or Cheese or Tuna Mayo
SANDWICH	Ham or Cheese or Tuna Mayo *Extras	SANDWICH	Ham or Cheese or Tuna Mayo *Extras	SANDWICH	Ham or Cheese or Tuna Mayo *Extras
DESSERT	Fruit or Yogurt	DESSERT	Fruit or Yogurt	DESSERT	Fruit or Yogurt

***Extras - Lettuce, Cucumber, Tomatoes, Peppers or Savoury Snack**

FRESH FRUIT, YOGURTS AND WHOLEMEAL BREAD ARE AVAILABLE DAILY.

MOST DISHES ARE MADE DAILY AND ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

Free mental health support for your child

Please note, this programme is for 10-13 year olds only.

Register your child onto our 6-week tier 1 EmpowerU mental health programme.

EmpowerU helps your child with:

- Stress & Anxiety Management
- Improved Emotional Wellbeing
- Problem-Solving
- Focus & Motivation
- Reduced Risk of Harmful Coping Mechanisms

Location:

Blenheim Family Centre, School Way
Southend-on-Sea, Leigh-on-Sea SS9 4HX

Dates: Every Monday, 13 April - 1 June (excl. bank holidays)

To refer your child, please visit: mots.fillout.com/empoweru

Email: jaylan@mindofthestudent.org.uk

Phone: 07891187883



Mind of the Student is a registered charity (1165035) in England and Wales.

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EVENING
EVENT

SAT 30 MAY: 6pm - 9pm

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people with SEND & their families**

**DISCOVER OVER 150 SPECIES FROM AROUND
THE WORLD SET IN OVER 60 ACRES OF PARKLAND
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REALM - OUTDOOR PLAY AREAS - LOST MADAGASCAR
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**BOOK
ONLINE**



This guide explores ZEPETO, a fast-growing virtual world app. It highlights the associated risks for younger users, such as chatting with strangers, exposure to inappropriate content, and spending real money.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about ZEPETO

FOR SALE

ZEPETO is a fast-growing app blending social networking with a virtual world experience – attracting around 20 million monthly users, with 15% from Europe. Players create 3D avatars to explore immersive environments, play games and interact with others; however, with minimal safety controls, anonymous chat and monetised content, ZEPETO poses a number of online safety concerns that parents and educators should be aware of.

AGE RESTRICTION 14+

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

NO PARENTAL CONTROLS

Although ZEPETO is intended for users aged 14 and up, it lacks built-in parental controls or age verification, instead relying on safety features on the device it's played on. This lack of a parental controls feature raises concerns about whom children may be interacting with on the platform.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

As a mix between a virtual world and a social media platform, ZEPETO features a wide range of user-generated content. Some areas may reference mature themes, such as TV series aimed at adults, or include inappropriate material created by other users – all of which children may stumble across without warning.

STRANGER DANGER

By default, users can message and interact with anyone else. This open communication creates an environment where predatory individuals can pose as peers to gain trust, potentially leading to grooming, scams, and exploitation, such as blackmail.

CYBERBULLYING RISKS

As with many social platforms, children can be targeted for bullying, harassment or exclusion by both strangers and their peers. Unfiltered chat and avatar-based interaction can allow bullying and other forms of harassment to continue, impacting children's wellbeing and mental health.

ADDICTIVE GAMEPLAY

Daily log-in rewards, such as coins, and in-game incentives can encourage compulsive behaviour, with some users feeling pressure to check in constantly to avoid missing out. This can lead to excessive screen time and conflict with schoolwork or offline hobbies or commitments.

SPENDING REAL MONEY

While the game is free to play, ZEPETO includes a store offering virtual clothing and accessories for avatars. These items are bought with 'ZEMs' – a paid currency – and the appeal of exclusive items or branded collaborations can make it easy for children to overspend.

Advice for Parents & Educators

ENABLE PRIVACY SETTINGS

Visit the child's profile settings to restrict who can send messages – options include Everyone, Followers Only, or No-one. Encourage children to avoid sharing any personal information on their profile, as this is visible even on private accounts.

CONTROL SPENDING

To prevent accidental purchases, set up purchase approval systems such as Apple's Ask to Buy or Google's Purchase Approvals. Alternatively, consider removing payment methods or using pre-paid cards with set budgets.

LIMIT IN-APP TIME

Use parental controls on Android (Google Family Link) or iOS (Screen Time) to restrict app usage by setting hours or daily limits. Encouraging breaks can help children develop healthier habits and reduce app dependency.

HAVE REGULAR CONVERSATIONS

Talk openly with children about whom they interact with online and the kinds of things they see or experience. Encourage them to speak up if someone makes them uncomfortable or if they come across inappropriate content. Teach them how to recognise red-flag behaviours such as asking for secrets, giving gifts, or requesting personal information.

Meet Our Expert

Alan Martin is an experienced technology journalist who has written for the likes of Wired, TechRadar, The Telegraph, The Evening Standard, The Guardian and The New Statesman.

#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

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