Marldon C of E Primary School

'Within the love of God, working together, growing together, for all to flourish.'

Dates for the diary:

Friday 19th December
School Christmas Service led by Y5
Last day of Autumn Term

Tuesday 6th January
First day of Spring Term

Friday 9th January
Start of Y5 and Y6 Tag Rugby with Paignton Rugby Club

Tuesday 13th January
Y5 start Decider Skills with MHST

Thursday 15th January
Y5 and Y6 CPR Training with Jays Aim

Tuesday 27th January
Choir - Young Voices Concert

Wednesday 4th February
Reception and EYFS Reading Parent meeting

Tuesday 10th February
MHST online parents workshop

What a jam-packed half term we have had. It is hard to believe we have reached our Christmas break.

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report:

As a school we are proud of the outcome of our recent SIAMS inspection and the report shared last week. If you haven't had chance to read it yet, I have summarised it below:

Marldon Church of England Primary School is a caring and inclusive community where the Christian vision, "Within the love of God, working together, growing together for all to flourish," is clearly lived out each day. Pupils and staff feel valued, supported and encouraged to be their best, with wellbeing, compassion and strong relationships at the heart of school life. High-quality teaching, inspiring worship and a rich curriculum help pupils grow in confidence, resilience and understanding of others. Children are proud to serve their community, speak thoughtfully about justice and show kindness in their actions. Strong partnerships with families, the church and the federation ensure that Marldon is a place where everyone is nurtured and able to flourish together.

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND EDUCATION OFFICE

Methodist Schools

Nativity:

What can I say, other than WOW! What an amazing performance and afternoon this was. The children shone; singing, dancing and speaking with confidence and more importantly joy. Watching children overcome their nerves, support and encourage one another and share in their achievements really was a pleasure to see.

I want to thank you for your support in this event, without your help with costumes and fundraising, the children could not have had this amazing experience. An extra special thank you must also go to our PTFA who worked tirelessly to allow it to happen.

Mrs Hare:

After more than 20 years at Marldon, today we say a fond farewell to Mrs Hare as she retires.

Mrs Hare has been a much-loved and highly valued member of our schol community, showing endless warmth, patience, and unwavering support for all in her care. Over the years, she has helped countless pupils grow in confidence, develop a love of learning, and truly flourish, always taking the time to encourage and reassure them.

Mrs Hare has also been a wonderful colleague, whose kindness and commitment have been greatly appreciated by staff and families alike. She will be greatly missed by everyone—although we are quite sure she will be back to visit us!

We thank her sincerely for her outstanding contribution to our school and wish Mrs Hare a very happy, healthy, and well-deserved retirement.

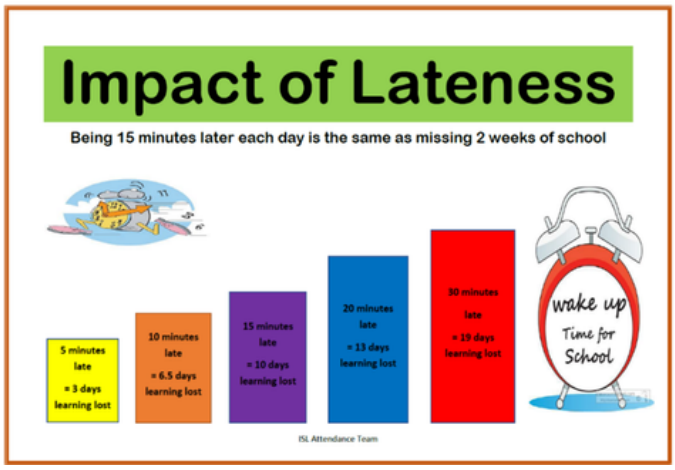
Punctuality:

Arriving late for the start of the school day can be very distressing for a child and disruptive to the whole class. Parents are asked to make every effort to ensure their child is in school on time. The main school gates close at 9.00am.

Therefore, if your child arrives to school after this time, they will need to be accompanied by an adult into school via the school office to be signed in.

Lateness, alongside poor attendance, is monitored regularly by the Attendance Officer.

You may not realise, but persistent lateness really does add up...



A message from Mrs Alix Harding, our Federation Mental Health Lead:

Separation Anxiety – A Normal Part of Growing Up It's completely normal and very common for children to feel worried or upset when saying goodbye to a parent or carer, especially during times of change, like starting school, moving up a year group or returning to school after a holiday. Separation anxiety happens because children feel safest when close to their loved ones, and it can take time to build confidence and trust in their own abilities.

You can help by keeping goodbyes calm and consistent, praising your child's bravery, and talking about what you'll do together later. Short, positive routines can make all the difference.

For more helpful tips, watch this short video from children's mental health charity Place2Be:

https://parentingsmart.place2be.org.uk/article/helpyour-child-manage-separations-and-goodbyes

Online Safety:

WhatsApp is one of the most popular messaging apps available and, as of 2024, has been made accessible to users as young as thirteen. With end-to-end encryption preventing even the platform itself from viewing any messages that users send on it, this app has been regularly utilised by those looking to keep their conversations private.

Unfortunately, the service poses several risks to its younger users – from misinformation and bullying to potential criminal exploitation – and it's vital that parents and educators understand these concerns and how to address them. This free guide delves into the online safety risks of WhatsApp and offers expert advice on how to safeguard any young people who use the platform.

I would like to end my newsletter by thanking you for your support through this first term of the year and by wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

Kind regards,
Jon Arnold
Head of School

ARTICLE 28 - Every child has the right to an education

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 WHATSAPP

AGE RESTRICTION 13+

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

WhatsApp is a free messaging service owned by Meta which allows users to send text and voice messages, make video calls, share multimedia – such as images, videos, documents and polls – and have group chats. WhatsApp messages are encrypted, meaning only the sender and the recipient can view what is sent. While this privacy may sound attractive on paper, this app comes with several associated risks that must be considered – especially for younger users.

GROUP CHATS

Group chats let friends talk together but can pose problems for young users. They might feel excluded – like discovering events they weren't invited to. Hurtful comments can also escalate quickly, as more people join in, amplifying the impact through a wider audience.

EVOLVING SCAMS

WhatsApp's popularity makes it attractive to scammers. Tactics include impersonating a child in an 'emergency' to request money, or triggering a login code, then pretending to be WhatsApp and asking for it – giving them access to private messages and personal data.

CHANNELS

'Channels' let users follow topics anonymously, interacting only through polls or emoji reactions. However, fake channels can mimic real ones, spreading misinformation, hate speech, or phishing for personal data. WhatsApp may also collect and share channel-following info with third parties, raising privacy issues.

DISAPPEARING MESSAGES

Disappearing messages help share sensitive info, but young people may wrongly assume they're fully private. Senders can opt for their message to vanish after 24 hours, 7 days, or 90 days – or for media, after one view. However, recipients can still save them by bookmarking or taking screenshots, reducing their privacy.

FAKE NEWS

WhatsApp's simplicity makes sharing news quick – accurate or not. To help curb misinformation, messages forwarded over five times now show a 'Forwarded many times' label with a double arrow. This alerts users that the message isn't original and may be unreliable.

CHAT LOCK

The new 'Chat lock' feature lets users store specific messages in a separate passcode- or biometrically-protected folder. While useful for privacy, it could be misused by younger users to hide conversations or content they know parents and educators might find inappropriate, including age-restricted material.

VISIBLE LOCATION

WhatsApp's 'live location' feature helps friends meet up or parents check a child's route home. However, anyone in a child's group chats can track their location, potentially revealing their home address or regular travel patterns to strangers.

AI INTEGRATION

Meta AI on WhatsApp poses risks to children, including exposure to misinformation, inappropriate content, and data privacy issues. AI responses may be inaccurate, and kids might share personal information unknowingly. It can also hinder critical thinking by offering ready-made answers.

ONLINE

...ONLINE...

SECRET CODE

Advice for Parents & Educators

EMPHASISE CAUTION

Encourage children to treat unexpected messages with caution. Get them to consider, for example, whether it sounds like something a friend or relative would really send them. Make sure they know never to share personal details over WhatsApp, and to be wary of clicking on any links in messages. Setting up two-step verification adds a further layer of protection to their WhatsApp account.

THINK BEFORE SHARING

Help children understand why it's important to stop and think before posting or forwarding something on WhatsApp. It's easy – and all too common – for content sent to one user to then be shared more widely, and even publicly on social media. Encourage them to consider how an ill-judged message might damage their reputation or upset a friend who sent something to them in confidence.

ADJUST THE SETTINGS

It's wise to change a child's WhatsApp settings to specify which of their contacts can add them to group chats without needing approval. To do this, go to 'Privacy', then 'Groups'. You can give permission to 'My Contacts' or 'My Contacts Except...'. Additionally, if the child needs to use 'live location', emphasise that they should enable this function for only as long as they need – and then turn it off.

CHAT ABOUT PRIVACY

Have a conversation with youngsters about how they're using WhatsApp, emphasising that it's for their own safety. If you spot a 'Locked Chats' folder, you might want to talk about the sort of messages that are in there, who they're with and why they have been hidden. Also, if a young user has sent any 'view once' content, discuss their reasons for using this feature.

Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian Government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.

#WakeUpWednesday®

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Source: See full reference list on guide page at: https://nationalcollege.com/guides/whatsapp-2025

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ARTICLE 28 - Every child has the right to an education